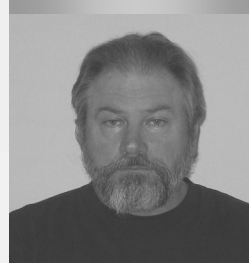


Tampa Letter Carrier

Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

From the Desk of the President

The new year has begun and I now come to you with my article in a new position. Let me begin by thanking the entire membership for the faith and confidence you have shown me by selecting me as your new president for the next three years. I am humbled by your acceptance of me as the individual to help move our Branch into the future and I will endeavor to prove myself worthy of your faith.



Brian Obst
President
Branch 599

As we begin the next step in our Branch's history, I will need the help of all our members both active and retired to ensure we are able to meet the challenges of an ever-changing Postal Service and how those changes affect our members on a daily basis.

I must sadly acknowledge the loss of our newly elected Recording Secretary, Maggie Lancaster, who passed away after a brief illness. Maggie was a staunch union advocate and was working hard preparing for her new position in service to the Branch membership; she will most assuredly be missed.

The newly elected members of the Branch's executive board and station stewards have been preparing and are setting about the tasks to represent the membership to the best of their abilities. With that said, please remember that we are all new to the jobs we are undertaking and any and all help is always welcome. We have many previously elected members that are always available and I personally want to let all of them know that we are all hopeful that your service to the Branch has not completely ended.

I address this portion of my article to those newly hired and relatively new union members of our Branch. I recall over twenty-five years ago when I was a newly hired employee of the Postal Service and I joined the union with no idea of what it was or did. I was worried about keeping my job and doing things right so as not to get fired, so I asked questions and my stewards gave me input to help me find my way in the beginning. I took an interest in the union and became a steward to help those that came after me as well as looking out for me. It wasn't always fun and games, but I learned and was able to help those I represented.

Reading the contract, going to training and ensuring that management complied with the contract kept me busy these many years and I received advanced training and was elected to represent in various positions from then until now. The message here is: ***You are the future of not only this Branch but the Postal Service as a whole.*** As your president, one of my jobs will be to provide as much training to as many members as I can during my term so as to provide for the future of this Branch and the Union as a whole. I was always taught that my most important job was to ensure that my successor is more knowledgeable and better prepared for the job than I was, then I would know I had done a good job.

(Continued on page 3)

Branch 599
Meeting

Thursday
February 2
7:30 PM

Branch 599 Office

3003 W Cypress Street
Tampa FL 33609-1617

813.875.0599

Fax 813.870.0599

www.nalc599.com

Brian Obst
President
erif_lor@hotmail.com

Office Hours
Monday – Friday
7:30 am – 4 pm

Rodna Kimelman Kirk
Office Secretary
nalc599@verizon.net

Tampa Letter Carrier

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Publisher

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Please submit any and all articles to be published in the Tampa Letter Carrier to the Editor via email at editor.nalc599@gmail.com and also to the Branch Office at nalc599@verizon.net no later than the 5th of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

Officers

<i>Position</i>	<i>Officer</i>	<i>Phone</i>	<i>Email</i>
President	Brian Obst	813.875.0599 cell 727.458.0679	erif_lor@hotmail.com
Vice President	Michael Smith	813.326.0717	
Recording Secretary	Matt Fernandez	786.247.4185	
Financial Secretary	Alan Robinson	813.843.9762	
Treasurer	Tony Diaz	813.598.9635	
Sergeant-at-Arms	Luis Cruz	813.431.3223	
MBA/NSBA	Michael Anderson	813.681.5688	
Health Benefit Rep	Detlev Aeppel	813.505.7914	
Director of Retirees	John Gebo	813.503.1256	
Trustees	Lori McMillion	813.263.7101	
	Alan Peacock	813.892.9378	
	Milly Minsal	813.446.2572	
Labor Management	J.D. Lewers	813.528.5519	
	Clement Cheung	813.758.5910	
Presidents Emeritus	Garland Tickle · Orbe Andux · Donald Thomas Michael Anderson · James Good · Alan Peacock · Tony Diaz		

Shop Stewards

<i>Station</i>	<i>ZIP</i>	<i>Steward</i>	<i>Station No.</i>	<i>Steward's No.</i>
Brandon	33510/11	David Rivadeneira	813.661.1636	813.403.9525
Brandon	33510/11	Osceola Williams Sr.	813.661.1636	210.445.1369
Carrollwood	33618	Tina Bausch	813.961.2963	813.892.2282
Commerce	33602	Cynthia Williams	813.247.2416	813.778.4373
Forest Hills	33612	J.R. Sanchez	813.935.2954	773.849.6229
Forest Hills Annex	33613		813.935.2954	
Hilldale	33614		813.879.4309	
Hilldale Annex	33634		813.879.4309	
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Mike Dennis	813.831.2034	813.525.1685
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Marie Brown	813.831.2034	727.331.9907
Palm River Annex	33619	Dianna Todd	813.663.0048	813.505.5647
Plant City	33564	Todd Solor	813.754.3590	508.615.6517
Produce	33610	Matt Rodkey	813.237.4084	813.562.8744
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Bert Fristad	813.634.1642	813.541.8514
Seminole Heights	33603	Matt Fernandez	813.237.4569	786.247.4185
Sulphur Springs	33604	J.D. Lewers	813.237.4569	813.528.5519
TCA/Hyde Park	33606	Josh Villa	813.873.7189	203.278.6485
TCA/Peninsula	33609		813.873.7189	
TCA/West Tampa	33607		813.873.7189	
Temple Terrace	33617		813.988.0152	
Town & Country	33615/35	Vic Figueroa	813.884.0973	845.380.6386
Ybor City	33605	Maurice Rice	813.247.2416	813.334.3189

Do I Really Have a Grievance?

As stewards, we often hear carriers use the term, *I want to file a grievance*, when things are not going the way they feel it should. Well, every time a carrier uses this term, it may or may not be a valid grievance. As stewards of the National Agreement, we are charged with investigating and pursuing every request for a grievance. Understanding what constitutes a grievance is very important in the execution of our duties. Let's look at the different types of grievances and a few violations which require filings.

Article 15 Grievance-Arbitration Procedure of the National Agreement defines a grievance as a dispute, difference, disagreement, or complaint between the parties related to wages, hours, and conditions of employment. A grievance shall include, but is not limited to, the complaint of an employee or of the union which involves the interpretation, application of, or compliance with the provisions of this Agreement or any local Memorandum of Understanding not in conflict with this Agreement.

There are three different grievances which can be filed in conjunction with the National Agreement. They are as

follows:

Contractual

A contractual grievance that involves a violation of the National Agreement, or any manual used in the execution of daily duties. The National Agreement is straightforward about what a violation is and is not. Common violations may involve overtime, removing a City Carrier Assistant (CCA) off a hold-down, or the eight-hour guarantee. It is important when a violation of the National Agreement occurs that the carrier immediately inform the steward of the violation. Upon notification from the carrier, the steward shall investigate to determine if a violation has occurred. Additionally, if the steward is aware of a violation, a grievance must be filed on behalf of the affected carrier(s). Time is of the essence when filing the grievance and it should not be put off until tomorrow.

Disciplinary

A disciplinary grievance is probably the most common grievance filed. Disciplinary grievances may involve unscheduled absences, tardiness, unprofessional estimates, or performance. When a carrier is given a letter of warning, 7-day suspension, 14-day

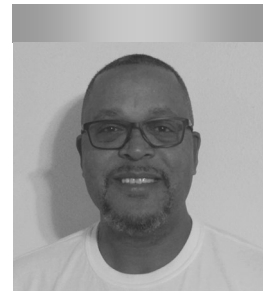
suspension or removal, this is classified as disciplinary. Disciplinary grievances directly affect the carrier and can lead up to removal from the Postal Service. Once management has conducted their investigation and determined the carrier has not performed as expected, the result is a letter of warning or more.

Carriers are their own worst enemy when receiving disciplinary actions. Emotions intercede and they may not inform the steward that a disciplinary action has occurred. Stewards must act immediately and if they are not aware of the disciplinary action, the allotted timeframe may pass, and the carrier is subjected to a disciplinary action on their permanent record.

Class Action

Class action grievances involve/affect more than one carrier at an office. The Branch may also initiate a class action grievance on behalf of all affected

(Continued on page 4)



Mike Smith
Vice President
Branch 599

From the Desk of the President

(Continued from page 1)

To the other members of the Branch, I ask you to remember:

The purpose of a Union is many varied individuals pulling together for a common goal.

The many varied individuals are you, the readers of this article, and I ask that you all rededicate yourselves to step up and assist your elected brothers and sisters in the representation of your union in our constant struggle with management in the performance of the duties of letter carriers here in Tampa. Don't be afraid to step up and become a station steward or take a

position with the executive board, remember we all had to start somewhere and we all had to learn. I, as your president, am here to ensure you get the help you might need to develop and learn so you can help the membership. The job itself is extremely rewarding and you will be able to help people who will then be able to do the same for others in the future.

I know that this job will have its moments of difficulty and there will be trying times during the next three years, but I also know that as long as the membership is with me that I will not fail. I will take a moment to para-

phrase former president John F. Kennedy when I say:

Ask not what your Union can do for you...Ask what you can do for your Union!

I look forward to continuing my service to the membership as your new president and I shall leave you as I have done in the past:

Remember.....

Knowledge is the Key!

Brian Obst
President

Calendar

Notice: Meetings are subject to change due to any upsurges of COVID.

Shop Stewards

Tuesday

January 31	7:00 PM
February 28	7:00 PM
April 4	7:00 PM
May 2	7:00 PM

Executive Board

Thursday

February 2	6:30 PM
March 2	6:30 PM
April 6	6:30 PM
May 4	6:30 PM

Branch 599

Thursday

February 2	7:30 PM
March 2	7:30 PM
April 6	7:30 PM
May 4	7:30 PM

Retirees' Breakfasts

Tampa

Monday

February 6	9:00 AM
March 7	9:00 AM
April 3	9:00 AM
May 1	9:00 AM

Denny's Restaurant

at Dale Mabry & Spruce
2004 N Dale Mabry Highway

Temple Terrace

Tuesday

February 14	10:00 AM
March 14	10:00 AM
April 11	10:00 AM
May 9	10:00 AM

Bob Evans Restaurant

off Fletcher near I-75
12272 Morris Bridge Road

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to the family and friends of **Maggie Lancaster** [Recording Secretary] whose passing was December 28; to **Alan Robinson** [Financial Secretary] and family at the passing of his father, Frank, December 22; to **Kerry Bolio** [Interbay] and family at the passing of his brother, Brian, November 18; and to **Angel Hernandez** [Carrollwood] and family at the passing of his brother, Carlos, October 10.

Prayers and well wishes are extended to **Sam Kroll's** [Retiree] wife, Barbara, as she deals with health issues.

Retired...But not Tired

Dear Retired Members of Branch 599,

Hope you all had a Merry Christmas and have a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

I have a question for you: How can we get more retirees involved in our Branch functions, like attending our Branch meetings; our Retirees Breakfasts; and other functions?

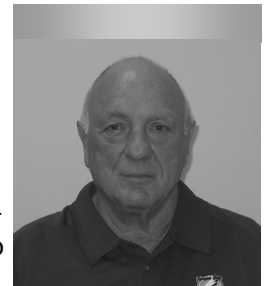
One idea I have is, to get one retiree to call another, and that retiree calls another and on and on to remind them of our Branch meetings, our Retiree Breakfasts, and whatever other activities that may be taking place. In other words, we need retirees to become more involved in OUR Branch!

Let's see if we retirees can come up with new ideas. Maybe have cookouts, go deep sea fishing, play cards, or just get together to BS.

I am open to all and any ideas you may have. Please think about it. Let us all get involved...it is OUR Branch, too.

So, as Roy Rogers and Dale Evans said, *Happy Trails to you until we meet again.*

Fraternally,
John Gebo



John Gebo
Director of Retirees
Branch 599

Do I Really Have a Grievance?

(Continued from page 3)

carriers citywide. If management forces several carriers to work overtime when carriers on the Overtime Desired List (ODL) are available to work, a violation occurs. The steward should classify this as a class action and file the grievance accordingly. It is important to remember that if more than one carrier is affected by the actions of management, a class action grievance must be filed.

Any request to file a grievance must be honored by the Branch. As stewards, we should pursue every grievance as if a violation has occurred. Upon completion of our investigation, and if there is no violation, then the steward shall inform the grievant

with a thorough explanation as to why the grievance is not valid. If there is a violation, the steward must file the grievance immediately and be prepared to negotiate with management on the violation and outcome. At no time should the steward inform the grievant that there is no grievance unless there is no violation; this is a disservice to the grievant. It is important to know that all grievances have an allotted timeframe attached. The steward only has 14 days to investigate, file, and negotiate with management. As a rule of thumb, if a violation happens, notify your steward immediately.

To get there we must work Together!

Mike Smith
Vice President

From the Treasurer's Desk

Brothers and Sisters, as I transition from Branch President to newly elected Treasurer, it is my desire to continue writing newsletter articles to stay connected to the membership. There will be a significant change in the leadership in our Branch after the recent election. The positions of President, Vice President, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Sergeant-at-Arms, Trustees (2), Labor Management Representatives (1), and Director of Retirees will all have new officers filling those roles. Without conducting any research, I would conclude this election has produced the largest change with officers in new positions, possibly in Branch history. I look forward to working with the returning officers in new positions and those officers elected for the first time. So, my initial article, as your Treasurer, will be to share the duties of my new officer position.

From the Branch's Bylaws:

Duties of Treasurer

Section 6:

(A) The Treasurer shall receive, receipt for and disburse all monies of the Branch and he/she is required to keep a regular account thereof.

(B) The Treasurer shall keep a proper accounting of all properties, investments and funds of the Branch which at all times shall be available for inspection.

(C) The Treasurer shall pay all warrants drawn on him/her by the Branch which are assigned by the President and all accounts receipted upon payment of same.

(D) The Treasurer shall whenever requested by the President, and at the end of his/her terms make a report showing his/her receipts, disbursements and amount of money on hand.

He/she shall deliver his/her books, papers and money to his/her successor in office, when qualified.

(E) The Treasurer is also required, at the President's direction, to perform additional duties as outlined or mentioned in other Articles and Sections contained within these By-laws.

(F) The Treasurer shall receive two percent (2%) of the total monthly dues collected for allowed expenses.

After training and a learning curve with QuickBooks, I will look to utilize the program and expand the Treasurer's reports.

Quick Hits:

Information you should know

National officers have been sworn-in and are now in place. It is important that you know your National officers. This month I will begin with a bio of our new **NALC President, Brian Renfroe.**

Brian Renfroe was elected president by mail balloting of NALC members in 2022. Renfroe is a second-generation letter carrier who began his career in 2004 in Hattiesburg MS, where he joined NALC as a member of Hattiesburg Branch 938. Just two years later, Renfroe was elected vice president of Branch 938. He also served as shop steward until 2008, the year his branch elected him president.

As the son of a letter carrier, I grew up learning about the issues letter carriers have faced over the years, he said. At a young age, I had a deep appreciation for the hard work and sacrifice of the men and women of our union and its positive impact on my father's job and my family. I quickly got involved in my

branch because I felt a responsibility to do all that I could to keep moving forward and improving the jobs and lives of letter carriers. I still feel that responsibility.



Tony Diaz
Treasurer
Branch 599

In addition, Renfroe served as a local business agent and arbitration advocate for NALC's Region 8, which covers Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana, and Tennessee. Renfroe worked extensively on route adjustments in his home state and focused much of his time on training members at the branch, state, and regional levels.

In 2011, the Mississippi State Association elected Renfroe as its president. A few months later, President Rolando appointed Renfroe to work at NALC Headquarters in the Contract Administration Unit, where he focused on city delivery issues. In 2013, Rolando appointed Renfroe as a special assistant to the president.

Renfroe was elected NALC director of city delivery in 2014 by acclamation during the union's 69th Biennial Convention in Philadelphia. NALC President Fredric Rolando had appointed Renfroe to that position earlier in the year to fill a vacancy. In 2016, Rolando appointed Renfroe as executive vice president to fill a vacancy. He was elected to the position via mail balloting of NALC members in 2018. Renfroe is a graduate of the NALC Leadership Academy, having attended Class 6 in 2008.
—nalc.org

Look forward to talking to you again on the next *Around The Horn*



Get involved! Your future depends on it!

Employee Assistance Program

at nalc.org

Choose Workplace Issues, hover over Safety & Health, and choose Employee Assistance Program.



What Do I Do If I Get Hurt On The Job?

Getting hurt on the job is a regular occurrence if you are a Federal Employee. The challenging nature of the duties and responsibilities places employees in difficult working conditions daily. Getting hurt on the job and receiving treatment should not require the same difficulty. When a Federal Employee gets injured on the job there are few options and even less qualified Physicians to help navigate those options. 4FED-HURT and D.O.L. Injury Centers along with our team of federal injury specialists are here to help navigate the claims process while the claimant receives treatment. **So, what does a Federal Employee do if they get hurt on the job?**

A **Traumatic Injury (CA-1)** is an injury that occurs on one day that presents as a singular event. An **Occupational Disease (CA-2)** is an injury that takes place over several days or months.

If you are Injured, here are some very simple steps to follow.

1. Notify Your Supervisor Immediately.
2. File a CA-1 and CA-16 for a Traumatic Injury.
3. File a CA-2 for an Occupational Disease.
4. Write your Personal Statement describing the injury. Be specific.
5. Call 833-433-3487 to speak with a 4FED-HURT Injury Specialist.

Our team of Physicians and injury care specialists work for you, not OWCP. We will see you without an approved claim and provide OWCP with all the necessary documentation to get your claim approved the first time. We have 12 locations throughout the state of Florida ready to start your case immediately.



North Florida

- Tallahassee
2743 Capital Circle #106
Tallahassee, Florida 32308
- Jacksonville
6216 Sauterne Dr.
Jacksonville, FL 32210
- Daytona / Ormond Beach
305 Clyde Morris Blvd. Suite 220
Ormond Beach, Florida 32174

Central Florida

- Orlando / Altamonte Springs
482 E Altamonte Dr. Suite 1006
Altamonte Springs, FL 32701
- Orlando / Sanford
241 Bellagio Circle
Sanford, Florida 32771
- Orlando / Airport
500 N Semoran Blvd Suite 101
Orlando, FL 32807
- Tampa / Palm Harbor
33143 US Hwy 19 N
Palm Harbor, FL 34684
- Tampa / Temple Terrace
Bush Gardens
9780 N 56th St Suite A.
Temple Terrace, FL 33617

South Florida

- Fort Myers / Cape Coral
11621 S. Cleveland Ave #50
Cape Coral, Florida 33907
- Fort Myers / Cape Coral
706 SW Pine Island Rd. Suite 105
Cape Coral, Florida 33991
- Lake Worth / Palm Springs
3003 S Congress Ave # 2F
Lake Worth, FL 33461
- Fort Lauderdale / Davie
2240 SW 70 Avenue Suite D.
Davie, FL 33317



Are you a federal employee
injured while on the job?
Call our office ☎ 833-433-3487



4fedhurt.com

Addressing OWCP issues...let's get it right

There have been many articles in our newsletter over the years regarding on-the-job injuries. These are regularly asked questions you need to know:

1. What do I do first?
2. Who do I notify?
3. What paperwork do I need?
4. Who will help me through this?

Correcting OWCP issues are time consuming, frustrating, and if not corrected can delay medical treatment that could cause more severe prolonged injuries. So how do you avoid these issues? How do you get it right?

The **answers** to the above questions should help the process.

1. Report the accident immediately, explain exactly what happened, with a time and place (address).
2. Your supervisor or manager, and if you cannot reach anyone, your steward or our Branch office. It is important to notify someone.
3. The forms needed are, CA-1, CA-16, and CA-17, know your forms, ask questions, and do not rely on management to submit your forms without verification.
4. Your supervisor and/or manager should assist you, however, this is not always the case. Do not allow management to delay downloading your forms and filling them out; this is critical to you case.

Other tips:

1. **It is critical to make copies of everything; more times than not, paperwork is lost. It is difficult to re-create your paperwork.**
2. Write a detailed, thorough, complete, and legible statement. Some important information to consider, if applicable: the time, the place, the conditions, the surface(s), any contributing factors, possible witnesses, and any hazards.

On the Job Injury - Forms needed, simple math,

$$CA-1 + CA-16 = CA-17$$

CA-16 must be signed by management,

Authorization for Examination and/or treatment.

Any questions...call the Branch office; ask for Tony Diaz, 813.875.0599.



A.R. Tony Huerta Branch 599
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www.nalc599.com
Tampa Letter Carrier
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