



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2015

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

Hail to the Retirees

Brothers and Sisters, I would like to share some thoughts with you from our recent Retirees Banquet. I want to acknowledge all the retirees who attended this year's Retirees Banquet on January 17, at our beautiful union hall. Don Thomas, Director of Retirees, hosted the event; he wanted to bring the event back to our beautiful hall. There were about 100 in attendance; retirees and their guests which was more than our last Retirees Banquet at a local restaurant. It was a wonderful time for all, the evening provided a fabulous dinner, guest speakers were from national headquarters, regional, state, and local level. The hall was decorated and looked awesome. Ron Watson, National Director of Retired Members, raved about the hall, and his speech was full of energy, great one liners, and an appreciation for the retirees. New Region 9 Business Agent Kenny Gibbs and Florida State Association of Letter Carriers President Al Friedman gave great speeches focusing on the importance the retirees have been to the NALC organiza-

tion. I have looked forward to attending the Retirees Banquet for a number of years before I retired to recognize the carriers who served before and with me. The conversations and stories are priceless, it is nice to reminisce and *catch up* with all these proud retirees. We recognized past Branch Presidents, Branch officers, Branch stewards, and retirees who were involved in the union. We recognized the new retirees as well as those retired for 15, 20, 25, and 30 years. I am pleased to mention several of the retirees said they continue to read my monthly articles and try to keep up with the changes going on in our union. There was a special moment when Pat DeSarno walked into the building, moments after I had announced the passing of his wife, which was just a couple of days before the banquet. He needed the camaraderie and friendship in a very difficult time and he received exactly that.

Legislative News
There are several *hot topic* issues we are fac-

ing that you may want to pay attention to this year—the on-going preserving of six-day delivery and door delivery.

114th Congress convenes

Last Tuesday, the 114th Congress convened and all 535 members of the House and Senate were sworn in. In the house, there are 247 Republicans and 188 Democrats; in the Senate, 54 Republicans and 44 Democrats, plus two independents who will continue caucusing with the Democrats.

With 74 new members of Congress coming in, letter carriers have a lot of work to do as we prepare for this session and the proposals that are sure to come quickly. With regard to letter carrier issues, our continued emphasis will be on addressing the pre-funding burden, the importance of maintaining



Tony Diaz
President
Branch 599

Branch 599 Meetings

Thursday
February 5
7:30 PM

(Continued on page 3)

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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.com no later than the 5th of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

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Shop Stewards

Station	ZIP	Steward	Station No.	Steward's No.
Tampa Stations/Branches		Chief Steward, Brian Obst		727.458.0679
Brandon	33510/11	Grant Daniels	813.661.1636	850.210.4906
Carrollwood	33618	Freddie Nemphius	813.960.8894	813.263.7895
Commerce	33602	Detlev Aepfel	813.242.4507	813.505.7914
Forest Hills	33612	Alan Robinson	813.935.2954	813.843.9762
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
Hilldale/Annex	33614/34	Varick Reeder	813.879.4309	315.491.6234
Hyde Park	33606	Joe Bitz	813.873.7189	813.465.0004
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Clement Cheung	813.831.2034	813.758.5910
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Clement Cheung	813.831.2034	813.758.5910
Palm River Annex	33619	Pam Benton	813.663.0048	813.475.0753
Plant City	33564	Christopher Woodside	813.719.6793	813.924.6869
Produce	33610	Elvin Rodriguez	813.237.4280	646.346.3288
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Aric Person	813.634.1403	813.545.7779
Seminole Heights	33603	Walt Rhoades	813.237.4569	813.389.1708
Sulphur Springs	33604	Steve Hall	813.237.4569	813.494.4669
TCA/Peninsula	33609	Troy Figueroa	813.873.7189	347.403.1644
TCA/West Tampa	33607	John Lacko	813.873.7189	347.453.4562
Temple Terrace	33617	Warren Sumlin	813.988.0152	813.486.7612
Town 'N Country	33615/35	Brian Obst	813.884.0973	727.458.0679
Ybor City	33605	Detlev Aepfel	813.242.4507	813.505.7914

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

services such as six-day mail delivery and door delivery, and fighting against operational cuts while promoting initiatives that would allow the Postal Service to innovate to serve the needs of residential and business customers. If your member of Congress is new, we encourage you to make contact and apprise him or her about the importance of the U.S. Postal Service in your district.

As you know, House and Senate recesses and district work periods provide an ideal opportunity for you to engage with members of Congress while they are at home, and we encourage all letter carriers to use those opportunities during these in-district dates.

Six-day mail delivery

Once the 114th Congress was sworn in, in the House of Representatives, Reps. Sam Graves (R-MO) and Gerry Connolly (D-VA) wasted no time in renewing their commitment to preserving six-day mail delivery by quickly introducing H.Res. 12.

One of the first pieces of legislation introduced in this session of Congress, H.Res. 12 is identical to previous sessions' resolutions that called on Congress and the Postal Service to take all appropriate steps to continue six-day mail delivery.

The current resolution already has 45 co-sponsors (see below). The last version, introduced early in the 113th Congress (2013-2014), wound up with 228 co-sponsors from both political parties.

We are encouraged to see our friends in Congress once again take up the fight to maintain Saturday mail delivery service, NALC President Fredric Rolando said. We hope that the rest of the members of the House and Senate see any attempts to eliminate this or any other postal service for

what they truly are: short-sighted excuses for failing to address an onerous pre-funding mandate that perpetuates a cut-cut-cut mentality.

Maintaining six-day mail delivery service meets the demands of American households and businesses, Rolando said. We applaud Congressmen Graves and Connolly for leading the effort to preserve this service.

Door delivery

Reps. Susan Davis (D-CA), David Joyce (R-OH) and Peter King (R-NY) are reintroducing their door-delivery resolution for the 114th Congress, calling on the House and Senate to take all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers.

The resolution, H.Res. 28, is identical to H.Res. 711, which was introduced last August during the 113th Congress and which ended up with 75 sponsors from both parties. In the 113th Congress, proposals to cut mail services such as door delivery were common. The NALC and our allies in Congress and among postal stakeholders have been instrumental in the so-far successful fight against these and other service cuts that, if implemented, would be detrimental to postal customers, especially to senior citizens (who rely on prescription medications being delivered to their door) and to disabled customers.

For businesses, eliminating door delivery would undercut the success of the Customer Connect program, where letter carriers use their personal connections to solicit new business in person. Besides, a Government Accountability Office report found that cluster boxes were so unpopular that less than 0.8% of business door-delivery customers last year opted to make the switch.

(The report found the percentage was even lower for residences: 0.1%.)

We are grateful to Representatives Davis, Joyce and King for introducing this resolution right out of the gate in this session of Congress, NALC President Fredric Rolando said. Cutting vital services like door delivery is not the way to save the Postal Service, and preserving the guarantee of door delivery will be crucial in fending off such attacks. We urge every member of the House—on both sides of the aisle—to sign on to this resolution. —nalc.org

Don't take your jobs for granted, keep in touch with what is going on. Sign up for the e-Activist network! It's free—log on to nalc.org.

Holiday Delivery update

Parcel delivery went very well, thanks to hard working letter carriers, regular and CCAs. The Suncoast District was #1 Nationwide in the total pieces handled. Suncoast was also the #1 District in parcel scanning percentages. As a District we were up between 22% and 23% from last year, this includes Amazon. Sunday parcel delivery for this 2014 holiday rush delivered 733,000 parcels compared to 72,800 parcels during the same period in 2013, includes Amazon. The Tampa Installation was tops in scanning in the District at 99.3%; that is quite an achievement—congratulations to all the carriers in Branch 599!

Quick Hits:

Information you should know

*) Hopefully, by the newsletter next month, I will be announcing the conversion of more CCAs to fulltime regular. Hopefully at least three more will join the ranks of the regular workforce.

*) In the coming months, look for starting times to be moved earlier with

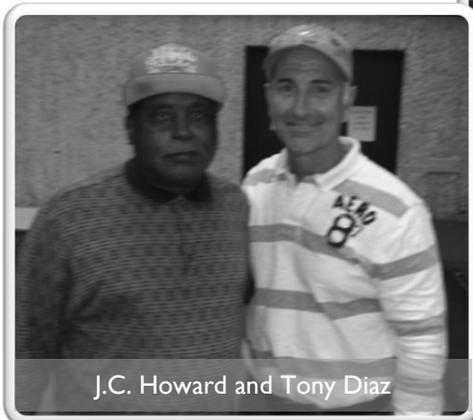
(Continued on page 4)

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy

and prayerful support is extended to **Pat DeSarno** [retiree] at the passing of his wife, Adeline, January 15.

J.C. Howard, Patricia Jennings & Ray King Retired!



J.C. Howard and Tony Diaz



Patricia Jennings and Tony Diaz



Ray King and Tony Diaz

President Diaz recognized **J.C. Howard** [Palm River], **Patricia Jennings** [Interbay], and **Ray King** [Ybor] during our January Branch meeting and presented each of them with a check from the Branch for their retirement.

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 3)

new operational changes. The goal is to get the carriers back earlier and get the mail processed earlier, wow, what a concept, sounds like what we used to do 25 years ago. The earlier starting times not only will get the carriers back earlier, but the overtime desired list (ODL) carriers should now have additional time to carry trips without forcing non-ODL carriers.

*) CDRAAP has begun in several local stations, the 3999 teams are only con-

ducting street inspections (3999), not an office count (1838C). Tampa opted in 8 zones, 134 routes. As a District 108 zones were opted in 1553 routes. We will monitor the adjustments; Warren Sumlin is the Branch local contact. I will be visiting all stations during their selected week.

*) The USPS has been rated higher than UPS and FedEx in a satisfaction consumer poll recently released for the holiday deliveries.

*) A total of 194 LLVs district-wide

will be sent from the carrier craft to the rural craft. As many of you have noticed, new vans are being brought in to fill in these routes. Tampa has received many and we are monitoring what routes these vans are being placed on.

*) **Next work party** – February 8

Look forward to talking to you again on the next *Around The Horn from the President's Desk*



Join together with tens of thousands of other letter carriers to make your voice heard! NALC will send you email alerts when it's time to act on issues affecting active and retired letter carriers and the future of the Postal Service. www.nalc.org

The Birdseye View

Starting 2015 off with a flurry, the new 114th Congress has already initiated a new bill for preserving six-day delivery H. Res. 12, which has 45 co-sponsors at this time. The current climate is considered to be the most favorable to finally reach some decision for reform legislation for the US Postal Service. Perhaps the forecast is improving on the back of record setting package delivery that has taken place in the first quarter of fiscal year 2015 with over 545 million packages delivered during the holiday Christmas season. On December 22 alone over 28 million packages were delivered, which is the single one-day record in history of the organization. With the changes that are already taking place and coupled with consistent periods of operational profit being made, the USPS is showing great recovery heading in the right direction. There still remains concern that if the reform doesn't take place soon that the agency will continue to cut services such as overnight standards that were vacated on January 5, 2015, and push towards more plant closures. The change being introduced at this time is to have delivery starting times begin to shift to an earlier time in order to provide earlier delivery to the customers. The postponement of plant closures until at least April or later will provide time to see if the changes will require the plant closings that are currently scheduled to take place. This also allows the new congress time to evaluate the current status of the USPS. Suncoast District exceeded the national average of 18% increase in its package delivery with 22% in the district. We continue to convert more City Carrier Assistants and hiring is also continuing in almost all categories of the supplemental workforce as well. As of this date, we are at a point where only one of our Tampa former transitional employees still remains to be converted to

career status from his/her current CCA status. There still may be some former TEs that transferred from other areas that remain close to conversion.

Of Local Importance

Locally, our branch continues to have a huge number of grievances filed, as we have just finished consecutive years of above 600 cases. This record is causing a filing space issue as many of these cases are pending or held for National level arbitration or interpretive issue decisions. More than likely there were years in the distant past that exceeded these numbers, but that was prior to the Dispute Resolution Process that was supposedly designed to resolve grievances at the lowest level. The past filing numbers didn't take the time and documentary levels that the current process requires for the success of protecting our contracts. Other factors that lowered those numbers were that we haven't had constant years of having six-day unilateral route inspections due to all the minor adjustments through different alternate route adjustment memorandums. We are currently back in a joint agreement to do minor adjustments that are less costly and less disruptive and hopefully will reduce the kind of grievance workload we have had the past two years. Another issue that should help the trend of fewer disputes is the new generation scanners that are definitely more accurate than the dinosaurs the carriers were using in the past. The fact that they are more accurate is also emphasized to mention that they know where you are and can be updated every ten seconds so management has their eyes on you and on your pulse, and that makes us the most supervised employees in the world. This leads to the point of your ability to be consistent about everything you do because they will use all the data that they can to compare

your route and your delivery time and question every move you make. Big Brother is watching... Get It! Do the job, take the hard fought-for breaks and lunches, and at any time you deviate, make sure you are authorized to deviate...be CONSISTENT!



Alan Peacock
Vice President
Branch 599

2014 in Review

Reflecting on the past year and what we accomplished for our community from the national food drive to supporting the Marine Reserve collecting Toys for Tots, and through two events donating over \$5,000 dollars to help Make a Muscle for Muscular Dystrophy Association, we should take pride in all our efforts. We also accomplished something after two years of hard fought debate to finally do some badly needed repairs to our union hall and continue to be a center that is available to our members and the community. The members can take solace that they have dedicated leaders in our Branch that will diligently represent what the members want and continue to protect all the active and retired interests in your Branch and all its assets.

Our Future

As we move forward, be assured that any changes or efforts to improve our financial situation will be done reverently to assure that we ultimately protect and preserve all accounts and property for the members' benefit and continue to provide excellent representation at all times.

Look forward to better and greater success in 2015 for all of you and your families.

Fraternally in Unionism and Solidarity,
Alan Peacock, Vice President

A Blunderful Blizzard of Boz

When a letter carrier or other postal employee does something stupid, or chooses to cross over to the dark side, it makes headlines or becomes an online hit, and it tends to rattle our sense of self respect. Likewise, when a carrier performs some heroic act, we celebrate it, but often dismiss it as an isolated situation or extraordinary event. The persons whose disposition, attitude, work ethic and moral compass guide their way of life are the ones who rate in my book.

One such person is my coworker and pal, Sam Darrigo. Here is a fellow who puts his family on the top of his priorities, ever concerned about their wellbeing, safety and security. He does many repairs himself and seeks out overtime work to be a good provider to them as well. Sam also holds his customers in high regard, knowing them personally for well over two decades. He'll often do favors for

them and look out for their interests. He's there for his fellow employees, lending them a hand or sticking up for them when simple joking starts to become ridicule. Sam is not afraid to defend his fundamental beliefs and is capable of doing just that.

Sam is a kind of Renaissance man, with knowledge of a wide range of topics, from plumbing to zoology to military tactics to world geography. He's an uncanny judge of individuals, sometimes able to detect lies from a person's facial expression alone. In 2007, St. Petersburg Times reporter Alexandra Zayas referred to him as *the total package*. Sam's dedication to his job is legendary. He is known to keep a spare uniform in his car, just in case he's needed while away from home. Sulphur Springs should be proud.

Another such person is Glynis Alexander. This lady appears to be

just another body standing at a case, working her mail. But when you look a little harder you see the kindest, most loving individual

there can be. She has organized group brunches, chaired the station's CFC campaign, participated in Branch 599 activities, and served as house mother to us, her *little cats and kitties*. She too has genuine concern for her customers and fellow employees. At home she has taken care of close relatives when they were very ill. Oh, and by the way, she probably saved my life by not allowing me to drive home until I recovered from my diabetic low-sugar crash on December 30.

To these, and all uncelebrated heroes: Carry on!! —Boz



Jim Boczarski
Sulphur Springs
Member
Branch 599

2014 Holiday Parcel Update

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Postal Service exceeded its holiday delivery projections this season, delivering approximately 524 million packages in December—an 18% increase over last year.

On December 22 alone, the Postal Service delivered more than 28 million packages. This marked the most packages delivered in a single day in the organization's history. The package delivery record was set while also delivering approximately 463 million pieces of mail.

Improving tracking and reliability for customers was a key factor in preparing for holiday delivery demand. In advance of the holidays, the Postal Service also lowered some prices for businesses and frequent shippers.

The volume this holiday season demonstrates that retailers and consumers increasingly are turning to the Postal Service to deliver their packages, said Postmaster General and Chief Executive Officer Patrick Donahoe. We know how much our customers count on us to make sure cards, letters and gifts make it home, and I'm proud that we delivered on our promise.

In preparation for the holiday package volume, the Postal Service enhanced its network and made adjustments to mail processing and delivery operations, including delivering packages seven days a week beginning late November. More than 20 million packages were delivered on the five Sundays prior to Christmas to keep the mail moving and networks clear. An additional 118,000 packages were delivered Christmas Day.

The dedication and resolve of our employees is commendable, Donahoe said. They adapted and delivered heavier-than-ever volumes of packages. They worked extremely hard, many of them braving harsh weather. I'm honored by the commitment they demonstrated this holiday season.

The Postal Service is continuing to anticipate holiday volume through January as consumers use the mail to return holiday gifts. Merchants and retailers can take advantage of several return services, including Priority Mail Returns Service, to help customers make their returns easier. Consumers with gifts to return can pack items in Priority Mail packaging, which comes with insurance and tracking, and is available free at Post Offices or online.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. —Postal News

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM

February 3
March 3

Sunday Work Party at our Hall

9-11 AM

February 8
March 8

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM

February 5
March 5

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday February 2 9 AM
Coffee Cup Restaurant
4407 N Hubert Avenue, Tampa

Tuesday February 10 8 AM
Bob Evans Restaurant
SR-60 & Falkenburg Road, Brandon

ARSLAN UNIFORMS

Bill & Shirley Moran

Gold Card Member Branch 1477 St. Petersburg
Honorary Member Branch 599 Tampa

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Get on *Financial Track* in 2015!

Did holiday bills put a squeeze on your finances? One of the best ways to save money is to take a look at your current loans and see where you may be paying too much.



With our Debt Consolidation Program, you can:

- Save hundreds in interest
- Enjoy one easy payment
- Pay off debt quicker



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