



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2020

Around The Horn from The President's Desk



Tony Diaz
President
Branch 599

Brothers and Sisters, as I look to write about something new and fresh, I return back to COVID-19. I feel an obligation to update the membership on the challenges and concerns facing letter carriers. This second wave of the COVID-19 has brought new challenges we did not encounter with the first wave. With the economy opening up, it has subjected and exposed carriers and their family members to the outside elements. In June's newsletter, my article read **The Economy vs. Life or Death, Is it too soon to open?** It appears it was, just too soon.

There are new records being broken every day around the United States, with 36 states showing a spike. Florida is worse off than when COVID-19 began. Many states are rethinking the next phase to reopening, and many reopened businesses have been shut down. I worry with schools opening, for the students and the teachers. For those kids who live with grandparents or who have

elderly parents, it puts them at greater risk. Some people are not wearing masks and not observing social distancing. While there may be 2 different beliefs, this is not political, it is a health issue. Democrats and now Republicans alike are calling for face coverings. Is there really a belief all the nations' infectious doctors are lying? And are all the emergency care doctors fabricating their stories? Is Doctor Fauci clueless? Of course not...look what has happened to the COVID-19 numbers. What we are seeing in the Suncoast District, the largest district in the country, now has a record number of quarantines, a microcosm of society. The required and self quarantines, which are 80 hours, never reached today's totals the first go around.

The quarantines have left the stations and the plants short-handed. When COVID-19 was on the decline, before the social openings, the Suncoast District had climbed back up to 83% of the employees returned to work.

With this wave, the percentage has dipped to 72%... think

about that. There are issues with getting mail to the offices from the plant, issues with clerks working the mail in the offices to get it to the carriers for delivery, and issues with separating the parcels to the carriers for delivery. Management is moving employees around to assist where needed; sometimes there is no one to move. Suncoast District Manager has sent out a mandatory indoor facemask policy to prevent the spread of COVID-19 from employee to employee. This is vital, should COVID-19 begin to be spread from employee to employee an entire office can be affected, wiped out.

We are having issues at a few stations where the employees are refusing to wear facemasks. Calls are coming in from carriers wearing their masks to report those

Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

Branch 599
Meeting
Thursday
August ?
7:30 PM

Branch 599 Office

3003 W Cypress Street
Tampa FL 33609-1617
813.875.0599
Fax 813.870.0599
www.nalc599.com

Tony Diaz
President

tony_diaz599@yahoo.com

Office Hours

Monday – Friday
7:30 AM – 4 PM

Rodna Kimelman Kirk
Office Secretary
nalc599@verizon.net

Tampa Letter Carrier

Tony Diaz
Publisher

Phyllis R. Thomas
Editor
editor@nalc599.com

Branch 599 Office
813.875.0599

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3003 W Cypress Street, Tampa FL 33609-1698, publishes the *Tampa Letter Carrier* monthly. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Branch 599, NALC. It is the policy of this publication that all articles submitted for print must be signed by the writer.

Please submit any and all articles to be published in the *Tampa Letter Carrier* to the Editor via email at editor@nalc599.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	Tony Diaz	813.875.0599 cell/813.598.9635	tony_diaz599@verizon.net
Vice President	Brian Obst	727.458.0679	erif_lor@hotmail.com
Recording Secretary	Michael Brink	813.875.0599	nalc599@verizon.net
Financial Secretary	Alan Peacock	813.892.9378	apeacock.nalc@verizon.net
Treasurer	John Gebo	813.503.1256	jjg7d7@aol.com
Sergeant-at-Arms	Michael Williams	813.541.3092	mwilliams4215@gmail.com
MBA/NSBA	Michael Anderson	813.681.5688	mikey020@msn.com
Health Benefit Rep.	Detlev Aepfel	813.505.7914	dcaepfel@aol.com
Director of Retirees	Alan Robinson	813.843.9762	arob715@gmail.com
Trustees	Lori McMillion, Ch.	813.263.7101	lorraine.mcmillion@gmail.com
	José Oliva	813.299.8442	joliva1938@gmail.com
	Jim Good	813.417.8877	jgood1206@gmail.com
Labor Management	Nick Cullaro	813.541.8159	nicull@msn.com
	Michael Smith	813.326.0717	mosmith46@gmail.com
Presidents Emeritus	Garland Tickle • Orbe Andux • Donald Thomas Michael Anderson • James Good • Alan Peacock		

Shop Stewards

<i>Station</i>	<i>ZIP</i>	<i>Steward</i>	<i>Station No.</i>	<i>Steward's No.</i>
Tampa Stations/Branches Chief Steward, Varick Reeder 315.491.6234				
Brandon	33510/11	David Rivadeneira	813.661.1636	813.403.9525
Brandon	33510/11	Luis Cruz	813.661.1636	813.431.3223
Carrollwood	33618	Lori Thompson	813.961.2962	813.777.8008
Commerce	33602	Cynthia Williams	813.242.4507	813.778.4373
Forest Hills	33612	JR Sanchez	813.935.2954	773.849.6229
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
Hilldale	33614	Michael Smith	813.879.4309	813.326.0717
Hilldale Annex	33634	Latoya Dupuy	813.879.4309	305.414.3527
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Jonathan Jones	813.831.2034	813.293.2208
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	Varick Reeder	813.719.6793	315.491.6234
Produce	33610	Vanessa Andujar	813.239.4084	813.521.9209
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Cherry Berry	813.634.1403	585.230.0266
Seminole Heights	33603	Walt Rhoads	813.237.4569	813.389.1708
Sulphur Springs	33604	Milly Minsal	813.237.4569	813.446.2572
TCA/Hyde Park	33606	Tom King	813.873.7189	727.504.3866
TCA/Peninsula	33609	Michael Williams	813.873.7189	813.541.3092
TCA/West Tampa	33607	Michael Williams	813.873.7189	813.541.3092
Temple Terrace	33617	Michael Cipriano	813.988.0152	401.787.1510
Town 'N Country	33615/35	Brian Obst	813.884.0973	727.458.0679
Ybor City	33605	Maurice Rice	813.242.4507	813.334.3189

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM
August 4
September 1

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM
August ?
September 3

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM
August ?
September 3

Sunday Work Party

at our Hall 9-11 AM
Date to be Announced

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday *Date to be Announced* 9 AM
Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce
2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday *Date to be Announced* 8 AM
Bob Evans Restaurant off Fletcher
12272 Morris Bridge Road, Temple Terrace 33637



NALCe-Activist *at nalc.org*
Network

Get involved! Your future depends on it!

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

who are not. Management has been tasked with making sure all employees are complying indoors. As we see Florida experiencing a record number of cases and hospitalizations, where does it all end? **Wear your masks and practice social distancing.** Had there been a National COVID-19 plan unveiled early in the process, maybe the country would be on the decline like New York is experiencing. Stay tuned, stay safe.

Quick Hits:

Information you should know
The **National Oceanic and**

Atmospheric Administration, NOAA, is the agency of the United States federal government responsible for monitoring our climate and our environment, and taking steps to preserve them.

This year is on course to be the world's hottest since measurements began, according to NOAA, who estimate there is a 50% to 75% chance that 2020 will break the record set four years ago. Plenty of summer heat will continue to move in as the season progresses.

Compared with the summer of 2019,

which brought grueling heat at times with above-average temperatures for the season, the second half of 2020's summer is likely to be a little hotter.

Why is Tampa so hot? There is a ridge which is warming temperatures high in the atmosphere, this delays the development of thunderstorms each day. This delay gives the air more time to heat up, and it's why temperatures have soared above mid-August averages already.

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

New Postmaster General making quick changes

The new PMG took office on June 15 and has released some **PMG's expectations and plan:**

www.postaltimes.com/postalnews/meet-the-new-boss-better-than-the-old-boss/

- POT (Penalty Overtime?) will be eliminated. This is not cost effective and will be taken away.
- Overtime will be eliminated. Again we are paying too much in OT. If the plants run late they will keep the mail for the next day. If you get mail and your carriers are gone and you cannot get the mail out without OT it will remain for the next day. It must be reported in CSDRS (Computer program).
- The PMG stated some of the most influential people in the USPS are the DM (District manager), AVPs (Area Vice President) and corporate support. They are the people he will be looking at first for savings.
- Level 18 offices that have a customer service window open more than 8 hours will close for lunch to meet the 8-hour time. Once we get through the level 18s they will be looking at level 20s and possibly 21 offices for the same process. You all have the information to be timely on the submission on the signage and times you are proposing to close.
- **Any employee who is not working a full day, regardless of craft or EAS (executive administrative schedule – supervisors and up I believe) and you are abusing time, this will be reported and investigated. This is again, not cost effective and just not proper integrity**

for any employee from the craft to the highest levels of corporate management. The PMG states this is inefficiency in the organization and will be looked at. This is something I have gone over countless times and focus will be hard on this.

- Workers compensation cases will be looked at to either get them back to work or find another avenue for them.
- **All details, 204, OIC other than approved details will be discontinued.** This is all of them. We have people in sales, call centers and so on, they will all be terminated and you will work your form 50 job. We will be filling all EAS vacancies so if you have a vacant job, it needs to be posted and awarded. If you have a job being taken by someone on detail, they will be coming back. **ALL details will be terminated.**
- These are some of the first wave of changes that will be coming to the USPS this year. Many of the changes are good and should have been done years ago. We all need to embrace these changes to keep the USPS in service.

The PMG said this...

We all must have a different mindset to keep the USPS alive.

He did not say to keep it going with some savings, these changes need to be done to keep the USPS alive. If you think we are beyond untouchable I will remind you of US Steel. In 1975 they were the largest company in the world. They are gone. GM has closed many plants including 2 in Ohio. Packard Electric, they are gone. Many if not all of these closures are due to those companies not wanting to change and

be profitable. You all must be a part of this. Things will change and we need to stop thinking like we did decades ago.

- All routes will have no more than 4 park points. We will move towards that this summer. Park points are abused, not cost effective and taken advantage of.
- DUOs (Delivery Unit Optimization) are on the table again.
- **All routes will not start before DUT (Distribution Up Time).** So if you are getting DUT up late because of the work staff, you will change start times. The plants are not to send the mail late. DUTs must be met or you will move your carriers to the DUT. This means we may have carriers starting as late as 0900 in some cases but will not start them any later.
- SDO (Scheduled Day Off – city) usage will be decreased dramatically. The POOMS (Post Office Operations Manager) and only the POOMS can authorize SDO. Any PM from this point that uses an SDO on their own will have to answer for it. There is **NO SDO USAGE WITHOUT THE POOM'S APPROVAL... PERIOD.** If you are one of the leaders that assist me and feel I will not mind, you are wrong. **100% follow-up will be taken for using an SDO without permission from me.**

- If we cannot deliver the mail due to call offs or shortage of people and you have no other help, the mail will not go out and you will have to report this in CSDRS.

Unionism — An Unusual Lesson

(This month's article comes by way of an unsigned e-mail I received many years ago. I am unaware of who the author was, but I feel it bears repeating for all to read.)

A mouse looked through a crack in the wall to see the farmer and his wife open a package.

What food might this contain?, the mouse wondered. He was devastated to discover it was a mousetrap. Retreating to the farmyard, the mouse proclaimed a warning: *There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!*

The chicken clucked and scratched, raised her head and said, *Mr. Mouse, I can tell this is a grave concern to you, but it is of no consequence to me. I cannot be bothered by it.*

The mouse turned to the pig and told him, *There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!* The pig sympathized, but said, *I am so very sorry, Mr. Mouse, but there is nothing I can do about it but pray. Be assured you are in my*

prayers.

The mouse turned to the cow and said *There is a mousetrap in the house! There is a mousetrap in the house!* The cow said, *Wow, Mr. Mouse, I'm sorry for you, but it's no skin off my nose.*

So, the mouse returned to the house, head down and dejected, to face the farmer's mousetrap alone. That very night a sound was heard throughout the house — like the sound of a mousetrap catching its prey. The farmer's wife rushed to see what was caught. In the darkness, she did not see it was a venomous snake whose tail the trap had caught. The snake bit the farmer's wife. The farmer rushed her to the hospital, and she returned home with a fever. Everyone knows you treat a fever with fresh chicken soup, so the farmer took his hatchet to the farmyard for the soup's main ingredient. But his wife's sickness continued, so friends and neighbors came to sit with her around the clock. To feed them, the farmer butchered the pig. The farmer's wife did not get well and finally she died. So many people came for her funeral; the

farmer had the cow slaughtered to provide enough meat for all of them.

The mouse looked upon it all from his crack in the wall with great sadness.

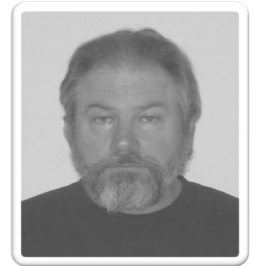
So, the next time you hear someone is facing a problem and you think it doesn't concern you, remember — when one of us is threatened, we all are at risk.

As a union steward I cannot find any more appropriate words to explain how something that may seem minor and unimportant to you individually, can be devastating to union members as a whole.

Remember: Each of us is a vital thread in another person's tapestry; our lives are woven together for a reason.

As always I ask you to remember:
Knowledge is the key.

Brian Obst
Vice President



Brian Obst
Vice President
Branch 599

Save the Date

**Our 7th Annual Branch 599 Golf Tournament
to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association
has been scheduled for
November 22
8 AM Shotgun Start.**

We are hopeful we will be able to host this great Sunday outing, so important to MDA. We have grown every year since we began this event, and Alan Robinson will again lead our charity effort.

Making a difference in our community

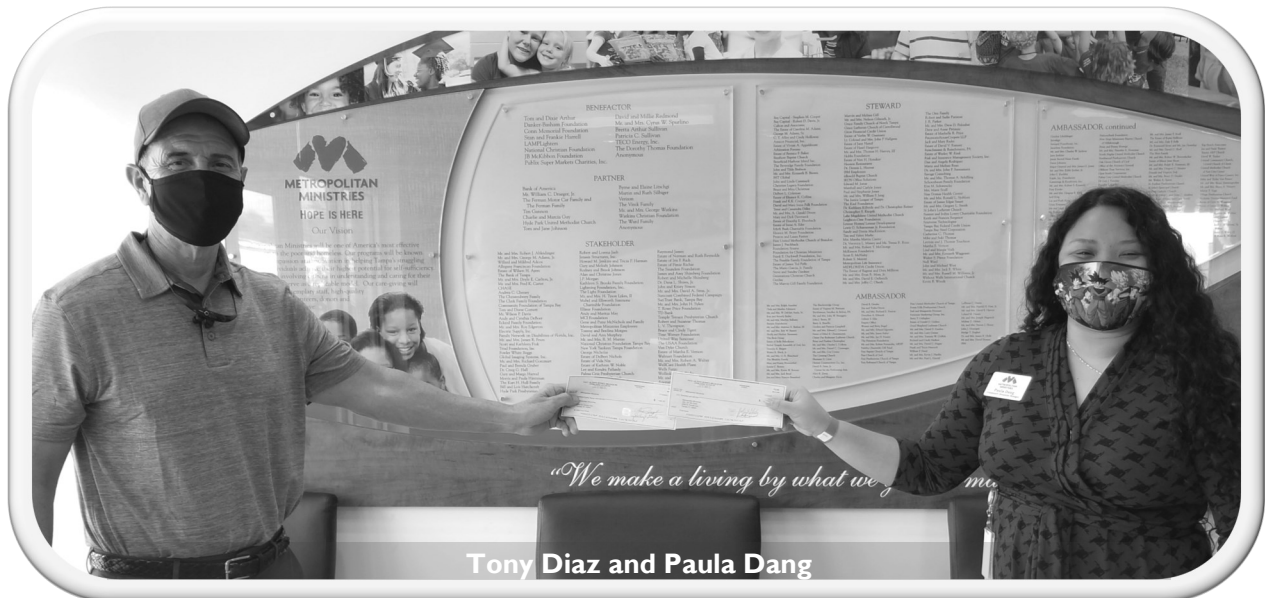
From *nalc.org*...

For the past 27 years the National Association of Letter Carriers has been proud to hold the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. This is the nation's largest one-day food drive, held annually on the second Saturday in May.

This year, due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, the Food Drive was cancelled.

In response, NALC created the Stamp Out Hunger *Donor Drive* to assist food banks in our communities. For the past 3 years our food bank has been Metropolitan Ministries and all their partners. **NALC will match the donations that come from the Branches throughout the country.**

Branch 599 membership approved a donation of \$1,000; National will now match that amount. In addition, stewards are still collecting at their stations...all these donations will make a difference!



Tony Diaz and Paula Dang

Branch 599 President Tony Diaz proudly presents Metropolitan Ministries Event Coordinator and Food Drive Coordinator Paula Dang a check from Branch 599 in the amount of \$1,000. In addition, he presented Paula a check for \$387 from the carriers at Sun City Center Post Office.



Region 9 Updates

Greetings Sisters & Brothers,

As letter carriers, we are deemed as essential workers based on the fact that we provide a much needed service to our customers at every address every day. Letter carriers deliver medications, stimulus checks, parcels containing needed household supplies such as food, water, toiletries, and of course cards and letters from friends and family.

After every natural disaster, a sense of hope and normalcy is felt by our customers when they see letter carriers return to their routes. As letter carriers we have always faced all different kinds of safety concerns and obstacles as we complete our appointed rounds. We safely navigate around storm debris, torrential rain and lightning, wildfires, and the infamous *bad dog* to name a few. However, over the last several months letter carriers are facing yet another unprecedented safety concern with COVID-19.

While the entire country sheltered in place, letter carriers continued to be that sense of normalcy delivering an essential service every day. As stated earlier, we as letter carriers are diligent in working around safety issues. However, this unprecedented pandemic is different. COVID-19 has presented new obstacles in the fact we cannot see, hear, touch or smell where this virus might be lurking. I know, personally I could return to a route I had not delivered in years and remember the addresses that had the *bad dog*! I could prepare myself and take extra precaution when approaching that particular address. With COVID-19 you just do not know, how do you prepare yourself to stay safe from the unknown?

As this COVID-19 pandemic was spreading through the world, prior to the virus reaching our shores, NALC President Fredric Rolando approached USPS Headquarters to negotiate Memorandums of Understandings (MOU's) to keep letter carriers safe while we continue working and providing that essential service to our beloved customers.

Every aspect of our daily duties was considered. How can letter carriers work safely in a new COVID kind of way? At the onset of this pandemic, MOUs were being signed off daily, sometimes multiple MOUs daily = staggered start times, providing employees personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitizing our work areas/vehicles, social distancing, signing for our customers receipt of accountable mail on the MDD to name a few.

Not only did our work life change, the way we lived our personal lives changed as well. Groups of more than ten were disallowed and those ten must be able to social distance by maintaining a six-foot separation; restaurants, doctor's offices everything was temporarily closed.

NALC was forced to cancel or postpone union meetings, trainings, State and National Conventions to keep everyone safe and virus free. Wait! What? These meetings are the methodology used to bring letter carriers information concerning changes in the workplace!

NALC rallied at every level to make sure letter carriers had the information needed to work safe. Branches, State Associations, Region 9, and NALC Headquarters relied on communicating with letter carriers via the internet and written publications sent through the US Mail.



Lynne Pendleton
National
Business Agent
NALC Region 9

I always say, knowledge is power. I ask and encourage each of you to stay informed of all the resources being provided to keep you safe. The Families First Response to the Coronavirus Act provides additional leave above your earned leave bank, EAP has virtual sessions to help each of us through these unprecedented times and of course the many MOUs providing you new protections for liberal leave and safe work practices.

All of the MOUs are listed on NALC.org or the NALC app; a special COVID-19 page has been created for easy access. I have created a closed Facebook group for Region 9 members, entitled *Region 9 Updates*. In this group, I have listed all the MOUs, mandatory Stand Up Talks and USPS training materials for your knowledge. Additionally, across the cover photo is the Region 9 phone number (678-942-5295); if you have any questions give me a call!

Last but not least, there is our reliable monthly magazine the Postal Record which has always been a wealth of resourceful information. However, NALC has also made the Postal Record into an audible version which can be listened to on the PODBEAN app.

COVID-19 has changed the way we live our lives, the *new norm* as they say. Please continue to stay informed regarding all the changes implemented to keep letter carriers safe by choosing one of the resources listed above.

Until we can gather together again, I want to Thank You for your dedication. You are American Heroes!

Stay Well and Stay Safe.



A.R. Tony Huerta Branch 599

National Association of Letter Carriers
3003 W Cypress Street
Tampa FL 33609-1617

813.875.0599 • Fax 813.870.0599
www.nalc599.com

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