



Tampa Letter Carrier

From the President's Desk

Bylaw proposals will be voted upon at the meeting on September 1, 2011; they were read at the July 2011 meeting. The August publication was delayed for various reasons and was not published in time for the membership to be informed within the requirement of the National Constitution. In the interim, if the membership votes at the special called meeting for TLC Inc., to dissolve TLC Inc., a Transition Committee comprising the top executive officers of the branch including trustees, along with the top executive officers of TLC Inc. including trustees, will be appointed. This committee will assure a smooth transition until all bylaws are in place as directed by the membership. Hopefully we can become a united institution that can move beyond dissension that prohibits our best efforts in fraternity and in solidarity for the interest

of all our members. In order to do this it will require some sacrifice of some personal interest for the betterment of all members. We have to begin by thinking where we are going as a Union versus where we were in the past. Change in all aspects of our lives has been affecting so much for so long that we just hope for some light at the end of the tunnel, but there is still much work to do.

The first rounds of adjustments have begun and there are some offices that are having major territory changes. In the current memorandum there is an option known as expedited bidding that can be invoked by the Branch President, where that has been the case. So far, the Brandon office as well as Produce Station are two offices where this process is to take place. Where there are huge territory changes with no regard



Alan W. Peacock
President, Branch 599

for the carrier's seniority, those offices are prime locations for expedited bidding. This was not an option in the past and when senior carriers' routes have had their total identity changed from what they bid on, they had no recourse. It is not mandatory for anyone to bid from their current assignment, but the bidding is done only within the zone impacted, by seniority from the top down. Once a senior carrier bids to another assignment, then the junior carrier who lost that assignment must bid on a new assignment that is available. There can be a domino affect and there can be changes to carriers' scheduled days off. If you are involved in an office where this process may take place, be sure to know the changes that have or are

(Continued on page 3)



Branch Meeting
Thursday
September 1
7:30 PM

Branch 599 Office

3003 W Cypress Street
Tampa FL 33609-1617

813.875.0599

Fax 813.870.0599

www.nalc599.com

Alan W. Peacock
President

apecock.nalc@verizon.net

Office Hours

Monday-Friday

8 AM – 4:30 PM

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Tampa Letter Carrier

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National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 599, 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 no later than the 5th of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

Officers

Position	Officer	Phone
President	Alan W. Peacock	813.765.0599 office 813.875.0599
Vice President	Tony Diaz	813.598.9635
Recording Secretary	Michael Brink	813.661.1639
Financial Secretary	Gilbert Cabanas	813.855.0516
Treasurer	Ray Garcia	813.787.3640
Sergeant-at-Arms	J.C. Howard	813.310.0689
MBA/NSBA	Al Guice	813.422.4967
Health Benefit Rep.	Terry Franklin	813.758.3061
Director of Retirees	Lance Jones	813.220.1292
Trustee Chair	John Gebo	813.503.1256
Trustees	Joe Oliva	813.299.8442
	Lori McMillion	813.263.7101
Labor Management	Sam Santilli	813.215.7595
	John Rowland	813.770.7769
Presidents Emeritus	Garland Tickle • Orbe Andux Donald Thomas • Michael Anderson James Good	

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM
September 1
October 6
November 3
December 1

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM
August 30
October 4
November 1
November 29

Shop Stewards

Station	ZIP	Steward	Station No.	Steward's No.
Brandon	33510	Terry Franklin	813.661.1639	813.758.3061
	33511	John Lykins	813.661.1639	727.542.4092
Carrollwood	33618	Brian Obst	813.960.8894	727.458.0679
Commerce	33602	Pedro Jimenez	813.242.4507	813.727.9280
Forest Hills	33612	Alan Robinson	813.935.2954	813.843.9762
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
Hilldale	33614	Sam Santilli		813.215.7595
Hilldale Annex	33634	Julio Acosta	813.889.3913	
Hyde Park	33606	Tom Cobert	813.873.7189	813.694.0711
Interbay	33611	Loney Cason	813.831.2034	586.668.0131
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Sammy Graham	813.831.2034	813.454.3319
Palm River Annex	33619	J.C. Howard	813.663.0048	813.310.0689
Plant City	33564	Varick Reeder	813.719.6793	315.491.6234
Port Tampa	33616	Loney Cason		586.668.0131
Produce	33610	John DeRosa	813.237.4280	813.850.8418
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Jack Hencoski	813.634.1403	813.928.9034
Seminole Heights	33603	Tony Diaz	813.237.4569	813.598.9635
Sulphur Springs	33604	John Rowland	813.237.4569	813.770.7769
TCA/Peninsula	33609	J.R. Harazin	813.873.7189	727.418.8090
TCA/West Tampa	33607	George McClelland	813.873.7189	
Temple Terrace	33617	Warren Sumlin	813.899.2405	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

From the President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

to be implemented before you make any decision. The other process available to the local contacts during the thirty days following implementation, provide for them to fix minor discrepancies in-house. If there are issues that go beyond the 30-day period, then the procedure will be to address any issues after 120 days and a request must be made to the District Lead Team for them to review and to decide if further corrections will be made to the adjustments.

Other issues locally are being dealt with on the multitude of contractual violations that are occurring on a daily basis, both at the station level and with citywide grievances. My advice is not to play into the current practices that are being implemented that would in any way deny anyone their rights under our contract. Management believes that we have too many inefficiencies, even after all the reviews and analysis have actually lead to minimal time found in offices and has created some new assignments as well. The cost and destructive nature that seems to prevail by mandated decisions does no more than deteriorate the dedication our craft devotes to this company and its customers, through adversarial times.

Our nation has resolved its financial default deadline for now and there is a lot of room for improvement to our nation's economic condition. Hopefully, congress can direct some of its attention to the economic ills of the Postal Service and do so in a manner that is appropriate for the burdens it has placed upon it. We all

have to be diligent and do our part whether by contributing to COLCPE and/or contacting our representatives and voicing our concerns. I attended the AFL-CIO Florida Kickoff for 2012, at the IBEW hall in Tampa, on August 2. The agenda was lead by the West Coast Central Labor Council, President Lynn Webb, who introduced the Florida AFL-CIO President Mike Williams, who spoke on the current political climate for working families



Florida Letter Carriers Make a Muscle in support of the fight against Muscular Dystrophy at our state convention.

and was followed by his staff. The purpose was, organizing the working class family's lobbyist and pushing the labor agenda in contrast to the assault on working class families in our state as well as in America.

I also want to thank the members for sending all the delegates and stewards, who attended the FSALC State Convention and Training Seminar in St. Petersburg, hosted by Branch 1477. An outstanding job was done by the host branch as well as the presentation by all the state and national officers. There was also a great deal of information on the legislative side that was provided. All

the officers spoke highly on all the efforts of our members during such tumultuous times. President Fred Rolando stated that he understands what we are all going through right now because he said his life is very hectic, dealing with all the issues that currently exist. He gave great encouragement that we can be assured that NALC will fight with all that it has to see that we have a new negotiated contract, when the current one expires. Those negotiations were to begin in August and continue until we have a new agreement.

We will have a Labor Day Picnic on Sunday September 4, at our Union Hall; hopefully this will be well attended. All proceeds will go to the Muscular Dystrophy Association. We will do all the work for this function with union labor volunteers. Thank all of you in advance for your continued efforts.

Through efforts of our Financial Secretary Gilbert Cabanas, we will recognize 14 new Gold Card members for 50 years membership, at the September 1, 2011, branch meeting. It would be nice if they can attend and be recognized, if not we will certainly send their Gold Card memberships to them. Thanks to all our longtime dedicated members for their service to our branch.

Fraternally and in Solidarity,
Alan Peacock
President

Treasurer's Report for July 2011



Ray Garcia
Treasurer
Branch 599

BANKING ACCOUNTS

Mid Florida Credit Union	\$245.00
Mid Florida Credit Union CD	\$100,000.00
BB&T Money Market	\$215,414.14
Regions Bank CD	\$50,000.00

	Deposit	Payment	Balance
BB&T Operating Account 7/1/2011			\$ 9,094.78
Secretary Treasurer NALC	\$9,962.89		19,057.67
AT&T Mobility		\$ 93.65	18,964.02
TLC Inc. Rent for July		600.00	18,364.02
Retirement Gratuity { 3 }		600.00	17,764.02
Intuit Payroll renewal 1 year		400.18	17,363.84
Union Meeting Expenses		79.93	17,283.91
President's Salary (PP14)		2,001.29	15,282.62
Branch Secretary (PP14)		978.27	14,304.35
Branch 599 newsletter ad (1)	50.00		14,354.35
Printing Lakeland newsletter	271.90		14,626.25
Dues in arrears {1}	250.00		14,876.25
US Treasury Taxes		1,855.75	13,020.50
Omega Engraving {1 badge}		6.50	13,014.00
CIT Technology		356.31	12,657.69
NALC Health Benefit Seminar fee		100.00	12,557.69
MBA/NSBA Seminar fee		60.00	12,497.69
Verizon office phones/internet		361.21	12,136.48
US Treasury Taxes		7,534.38	4,602.10
Florida Department of Labor		200.82	4,401.28
Secretary Treasurer NALC	9,933.71		14,334.99
Attorney/CPA		250.00	14,084.99
President's Salary (PP15)		2,001.28	12,083.71
Branch Secretary (PP15)		978.27	11,105.44
Salary Expense (24 hours at \$7.25)		174.00	10,931.44
Branch 599 newsletter ad (1)	150.00		11,081.44
Fund Raising Donation	10.00		11,091.44
2011 Tax Forms (50)		39.58	11,051.86
QuickBooks software renewal		183.96	10,867.90
Akita Copy Products		465.35	10,402.55
Staples Credit Plan		1,765.48	8,637.07
FSLCA Convention per diem (9 delegates)		1,032.75	7,604.32
FSLCA Convention per diem (8 delegates)		612.00	6,992.32
BB&T Money Market	1,759.50		8,751.82
Interest	0.20		
Totals	\$31,482.98	\$22,730.96	
BB&T Operating Account 7/31/2011			\$ 8,752.02
Grand Total in all accounts	\$374,411.16		

Official Notice of Nominations & Elections of Delegates to the 2012 NALC National Convention

Nominations for delegates to the 2012 NALC National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota will be taken at the regular branch meeting on October 6, 2011 and November 3, 2011, at the Union Hall located at 3003 W. Cypress St., Tampa FL 33609. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7:30 PM.

Members must be present to accept nominations or have a written notice on file prior to the time and the presiding officer declares nominations closed.

Any member having applied for, or served as a supervisor within the last two years, including detail to an acting supervisory position, is ineligible for nomination.

In the event the number of nominations exceed the number of delegates allowed to the branch, an election will be conducted with the results announced at the regular branch meeting in December.



Learn more here:
www.nalc.org
Click the *Gimme 5*
for COLCPE logo

to learn more or to sign up as
an *e-activist!*



Tony Diaz
Vice President
Branch 599

Special Thanks

Brothers and Sisters, I want to give a special Thank You to the volunteers who showed up at the Letter Carriers Hall for an outdoor work party on a scorching Sunday morning, August 7. All together there were eight of us, plus the son of one of the volunteers. Everyone brought a piece of personal lawn equipment to help with the cleanup. For three hours the weed eaters, blowers, chain saw, hedge trimmer, shovels, ladder, broom and pole saw shaped and revitalized the landscape. The grounds now look as we are accustomed to seeing it, neat and clean. I will be announcing another work party in the near future. If you were unable to make the first one, there will be other opportunities. The next work party date will be included in the monthly Newsletter soon. So Thanks to Alan Peacock, Pat Krenzle, George McClelland and his son Justin, Cash "Rocky" Randels, George McEndree, John Rowland, and Jaime Rodriguez for joining me and giving up their Sunday morning. Volunteer work parties such as this cleanup will be essential in preserving our beautiful hall. We are also looking for volunteers for the Labor Day Picnic. Please get involved, let's make it a memorable time!

3999s

Having completed the latest version of the JARAP process, it is now time to turn our attention to the 3999s that will follow. For those of you who are unaware, a Form 3999 is an Inspection of Letter Carrier Route. 3999s will first be completed on routes which had changes during the latest JARAP process. A supervisor/manager will accompany a carrier for the entire day, timing everything the carrier does on a small handheld device called a DCD. If you deliver your route the same way every day, then when the day comes and a 3999 is done on your route it should be the same as any other day. Consistency is the key word; being

consistent in your daily deliveries should help reduce the panic mode when you have a shadow following you the entire day. Panic and uncertainty seems to produce a more rapid pace than you would normally deliver on a daily basis. Learn your route and know where you should be at a given time. Know how much time it takes you between your delivery scan points. Your delivery scan points can assist you in determining the difference between delivering on a third-bundle day, on a light day or on a day you have utility bills. Knowing your route will give you confidence when you are subjected to a 3999. Knowing your route will give you the confidence to give a solid estimate in the mornings, and not guess at it.

I wanted to touch just briefly on how the evaluated street time is calculated during the JARAP process. The 3999 time is one of four parts when figuring an evaluated street time for your route. The four parts used by a District Evaluation team are the following: 1) the regular carriers actual street time for the two evaluated months, 2) the base street time, 3) the 3999 time, and 4) the carrier's input during the first carrier consultation. A bad 3999 time could affect your evaluated time, and definitely make negotiations tougher. For example, during the evaluation process let's say the four figures are, 6:00 - actual street time
6:05 - base street time
5:10 - 3999 time (let's say done on a 3rd-bundle day)
6:00 - carrier input

I can tell you with these figures, I would be on the defensive with my management partner. The 3999 in this case sticks out like a sore thumb; what happened on this day that would make the time so much shorter? I would ask to look closer at the 3999 and the work hour workload for that day. I would look to see if the mail volume was extremely low on that day. I would look for something to discredit that 3999 time.

Usually we get an immediate response from this particular carrier that the mail must have been light. In some cases yes, and at this point I am trying to take it out of the equation. However, when we look at the daily mail volumes and find the volume that day was a representative figure, a good average, it is difficult to throw it out. We then get questions such as: What was the carrier doing the days no one was following him? or Wonder why the average street time is so high?

I would argue it is only a one-day count, the carrier must have rushed that day with someone inspecting him. The mail volume was extremely low, and while there was a 3rd bundle, this day is not representative of the true time on the route. I hope this gives you a clearer picture of what negotiations involve. It is sometimes not an easy process.

Now should the four figures above been the same with a 3999 time of 6:20, or in that range, that would be consistent with the actual street time and the carrier input. An easy negotiated evaluation. Remember an 8-hour weekly average normally equates to over 8 hours early in the week and a little under 8 hours later in the week. There are exceptions, such as newspapers on Friday or a certain advertisement your Station may get on a weekly basis, later in the week. Again, consistency is key!!

Quick Hits:

Information you should know

*) Please stay in tune with our NALC website for the latest developments concerning our jobs. For many of you who are not e-Activist, www.NALC.org will keep you informed. Please stay in tune with what is taking place with the House Resolution bills; your job depends on it!!

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



Al Peacock & Bernie Bauman

Lois Strauss & Al Peacock

Al Peacock & Sam Barnhart

Pam Hardy, Al Peacock & Charles Roberts

President Alan Peacock recognized **Bernie Bauman** [Hilldale], **Lois Strauss** [TCA/W Tampa], **Sam Barnhart** [Forest Hills], **Pam Hardy** [Produce], and **Charles Roberts** [Plant City] and presented them with a check from the Branch for their retirement during our Branch meetings in July and August.



First Work Party this summer — Huge Thanks to the Volunteers!

TLC will Meet
 Tuesday September 23 7 PM
 Conference Room

Retirees Breakfast
 Monday September 8 9 AM
 Coffee Cup, 4407 N. Hubert Avenue, Tampa

Proposed Changes to Bylaws and to Standing Rules

ARTICLE VIII – Committees

Add: Section 7: The Building Trustees

(A) The President, the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of A.R. “Tony” Huerta Branch 599 NALC shall constitute The Building Trustees.

- (1) The Building Trustees shall have supervision over the operation and maintenance of the building known as The Tampa Letter Carriers Hall, located at 3003 W. Cypress Street, Tampa FL 33609.
- (2) The Building Trustees shall have the authority to appoint a Building Manager, who must not be an officer or shop steward of Branch 599, to whom they may delegate such power as they deem advisable.
- (3) The Building Trustees shall have control over all physical and financial assets pertaining to the building.
- (4) The Building Trustees shall have the authority to invest funds into a financial institute which shall be known as the Building Maintenance Fund when such funds are available.
- (5) The Building Trustees shall report to the Executive Board and the Executive Council who will make recommendations to the membership at all regular meetings and submit all expenses over one thousand dollars (\$1,000) to Branch 599 members for a vote, and the members of Branch 599 will have a vote on Branch business at all regular Branch 599 meetings or any special Branch 599 meetings that are called.

Signed by: Gilbert Cabanas, Julius C. Howard, Al Guice, John P. Rowland, Marie Brown, and Donald H. Thomas Jr.

ARTICLE XI – Funds

Section 5 now reads:

All checks drawn on the branch checking account will be signed by two (2) authorized officers. These authorized officers shall be the president, treasurer and financial secretary. At the beginning of each term of office the treasurer will ensure that the authorized officers are registered as a signer with the bank at which the branch checking account is held. Any one of these authorized officers may make deposits into the branch checking account.

Section 5 proposed to read:

All checks drawn on the branch checking account will be signed by two (2) authorized officers. These authorized officers shall be the president, treasurer, and financial secretary. Any check drawn for one of the authorized officers cannot be signed by that officer. At the beginning of each term of office, the treasurer will ensure that the authorized officers are registered as a signer with the bank at which the branch checking account is held. Any one of these authorized officers may make deposits into the branch checking account.

Signed by: Gilbert Cabanas, Julius C. Howard, Al Guice, Donald H. Thomas Jr., Leslie Raymond Garcia, and John P. Rowland.

ARTICLE XXII – Tampa Letter Carriers, Inc.

Now reads:

The meeting of the board of Tampa Letter Carriers, Inc. shall be on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Any member of the branch, in good standing, who desires to attend may attend this meeting. Members attending the meeting are not entitled to be involved in discussion nor are they entitled to vote on issues before the board, they are simple entitled to attend and observe the proceedings. Members may petition to address the board on any issue that comes up during the meeting at a subsequent meeting of the board.

Proposed to read: Article XXII to be deleted.

Signed by: Gilbert Cabanas, Julius C. Howard, Al Guice, Donald H. Thomas Jr., Leslie Ray Garcia, and John P. Rowland.

STANDING RULES

2. now reads:

The Executive Board meeting shall be held on the first Thursday of each month and shall start promptly at 6:30 PM.

2. proposed to read:

The Tuesday prior to the first Thursday of the month, the Executive Board shall meet promptly at 6:30 PM, the Executive Council shall meet at approximately 7:15 PM, and the Shop Stewards’ meeting will follow immediately after the Executive Council meeting.

A Point of Personal Privilege

There are only 64 members of our branch donating moneys to COLCPE and currently only 20 retirees; and I am proud to be one of those retirees. Apparently, those that are not donating do not realize the significance and necessity for making a minimal \$5 a month donation. The significance is your JOB, your wages, your health benefits, your retirement and above all, your family. These donations are beneficial in that they support politicians that believe in our causes such as 6-day delivery, time and half pay, 40-hour work weeks, vacation and sick leave, our rights to collective bargaining and most of all the need for our Union. Without the Union all of us would not have earned or are earning the wages we did and do! After 39 years of being a Union member of which 14 years was a shop steward, there is no doubt in my mind as to the intent of Postal Management and the Private Sector to eliminate the jobs we had and currently do have. Our Union does not have the right to strike and the only way we can fight the issues at hand are through the donations to COLCPE. The cost to a member would be less than 15 minutes of overtime a month! Overtime which was negotiated by the Union, not by your supposed benefactor supervisor, manager, etc. of the USPS. If it was up to most of them, you'd be fired! Or for those retirees maybe not buying a pack of cigarettes, not buying a six-pack of beer or just donating because of the fact you had a well-paid job with all the benefits you now enjoy in retirement. For those 44 active members I applaud and want to thank you for your dedication to your family, your job and to this Union.

When I assumed the duties of Treasurer of this Branch, I seriously thought that having a basic knowledge of accounting and bookkeeping would be enough to properly perform this job. This is more than just a job. It is a larger responsibility than most realize because it maintains the finances of this Branch and ensures the membership that all moneys are properly accounted for during your term/s of office. The monthly

bills have to be paid, every pay period the president and branch office secretary are paid; monthly the stewards and officers have to be paid. Warrants have to be properly filled out for moneys paid out and deposit slips have to be properly filled out and made. Of course moneys have to be deposited monthly for federal unemployment taxes and be paid in full every 3 months on a *Form 941 Employer's Quarterly Federal Tax Return* (4 pages) to the Department of Treasury-IRS, *Form UCT-6 Florida Department of Revenue Employer's Quarterly Report* which is paid quarterly, of course you have to make sure everyone has properly filled out their form *W-4 Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate*. At the end of the year you have to properly fill out a form *W-3 Transmittal of Wage and Tax Statements*, mail out to all employees a form *W-2 Wage and Tax Statement*, fill out form *940 Employer's Annual Federal Unemployment (FUTA) Tax Return* (4 pages) for the Department of the Treasury-IRS, form *990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax* (12 pages) for the Department of Treasury-IRS and form *LM-2 Labor Organization Annual Report* (60+ pages) to the Department of Labor. Of course every month, reconciliation of the checking account is done, as well as every three months the Trustees are supposed to audit all the accounts. I have been told by several CPAs that because of the \$300,000+ moneys we have, the branch should have an outside audit done professionally, especially every three years prior to elections.

Since assuming the position of Treasurer we have been allowed to hire a tax attorney/accountant to streamline our checking account so that it was in compliance with the Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service. This was to ensure that all moneys paid out or received were specifically denoted as such with a code and name. For example the BB&T checking account is now denoted as the BB&T Operating Account with a numerical code. This account had \$2,106.96 on the evening of

January 15, 2011. The branch's sole income is through moneys received from National for dues and direct payment of dues by some retirees. We receive moneys from ads placed in the branch newsletter and for the printing of the Lakeland branch's newsletter. Any interest received for the two CDs are placed in the BB&T Money Market to help pay for Steward training, state, and national Conventions. The branch has assumed many of the bills that Tampa Letter Carriers, Inc. used to pay and we no longer receive any moneys from TLC Inc., as Bingo is no longer in operation because of new Florida State Laws and Federal Laws instituted January 2011. Suggestions have been made to allow dances to be held on Friday nights, car washes, renting to small churches on Sundays, having domino tournaments, a poker night, etc. to increase the necessary revenues that have to be replaced to maintain this landmark.

Several bylaw changes have been submitted, hopefully they will pass, which will disband TLC Inc. and turn full control of the Union Hall's operation over to the general membership. I believe that the overall welfare of the building and especially the maintenance of this landmark need to be maintained. Here are some of the issues with the building that need to be addressed: Over the years the roof has begun to deteriorate and one and maybe two of the three air conditioning units needs to be replaced with a more energy efficient unit(s); total estimated cost is \$95,000+. (The roof has a minor leak and the roof is waffling. It is estimated that we could leave a new energy efficient AC unit on all day and the electric bill would be lowered monthly.) The two gates need to be repaired as the *apparent maintenance* was not annually done; estimated cost is \$900. (This is to stop unauthorized individuals from using our waste management dumpster and from



Ray Garcia
Treasurer
Branch 599

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Things You Should Know



Gilbert Cabanas
Financial Secretary
Branch 599

Labor Day Picnic

I hope most of you have made plans to attend this year's Labor Day Picnic on the 4th of September. Let's come out and enjoy some good food, good friends and perhaps see some old faces you haven't seen in awhile. We will serve barbecue chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, along with potato salad. We will also serve just for the children: mac n cheese, cotton candy, ice pops and popcorn. Also for the children's enjoyment, there will be a gigantic water slide, face painting and a moonwalk all day. We will also have on hand, soft drinks, cake and water. So let the children play either inside or outside while you enjoy yourself with friends and family. We have about 20 volunteers that have signed up for the picnic and all will be needed for a successful day. In order to control the amount of food needed to purchase, a \$5 fee per family is required with all proceeds going to MDA. This is not a bad price for a good day of fun and food for your family. The Branch would like to do something for all our members to enjoy, so please go to our Union Hall on September 4 and let's enjoy this fine picnic that our

volunteers will work, for the benefit of all members. There are many jobs to man with a picnic this size, so I hope all volunteers and members with enjoy themselves with this effort by all of our volunteers. We simply cannot afford the prices of caterers, as in past ventures. We spent about \$4,000 on food alone 2 years ago. We then spent another \$3,800 for the entertainment, etc. for a total of \$8,000. The Union must stay under half of that total for all costs of this picnic. We can enjoy the same amount of food and fun with an entire volunteer staff. The Branch must stay within a stable budget and still provide our members with solid representation for their Union dues. So please help out any way that you can because this is also your Union.

Gold Cards

I must touch on another issue concerning our newest Gold Card members. I wrote to National 2 months ago concerning 14 members who were eligible for their gold cards (50 years). All these gold cards have arrived so I hope these members can attend our Union meeting on September 1 in order for us to honor

them on their golden achievement. I have also reviewed all of the old records to verify any of the eligible members for the next 3 years. If by chance anyone has overlooked this issue, please call me at any time to verify your Union card.

Important:

Advise Branch when you are out on an Injury

Now on the final issue that I must go over with you, because most of us one day will be affected with an injury. When you are out on an injury, please remember that the Branch is still charged with your Union dues by National during this injury. So please, just advise the Branch on your injury and the status of your injury. We will work out a payment plan with you until you are able to return to work. The Post Office does not deduct your Union dues from your OWCP check, but the Branch is charged with your Union dues. Only when you're on an active role are your Union dues deducted from your check.

Sharing Our Members' Joys & Sorrows

Get well wishes & prayers

are sent to **Bruce Balfour** [retiree] who is very ill at home; to **Michael Crowder** [Interbay] for recovery at Sable Palm Health Care Center, Largo, [visitors are welcomed]; to **Audie Childers**, [retiree] who is experiencing health issues; and to **Juan Morro** [Hyde Park] who is in ICU at Tampa Genera Hospital.

Our deepest sympathy

and prayerful support is extended to the family of **Eugene Loos** [retiree], whose passing was August 8.

Branch 599 LABOR DAY PICNIC

Sunday ♦ September 4 ♦ 12-4 PM

Deadline for tickets was August 18.

Unionism



Brian Obst
Former Chief Steward
Branch 599

Hello again faithful readers. This month's column will reference the *Dangers of Playing Favorites* and *Ways to Know You are in Trouble as a Steward*. Let us look at the *Dangers of Playing Favorites* first.

So you have just been elected as your station shop steward, what has changed? First is that you will have more input into your job and issues in the workplace. Second you are now tasked with looking out for the interests of all the carriers at your station. This is a big responsibility and it is easy to get sidetracked if you are not careful.

Let's look at your buddy, Bob, who has a grievance issue that you are trying to help with. Bob is your friend so you really put everything you have into the grievance trying to be successful for your friend. Understand there is nothing wrong with this...yet. Tomorrow a carrier that you don't really like, Frank, comes up to you with a grievance issue and you say sure you'll look into it for him and then you simply put it on the back burner and forget about it or just go through the motions because you don't really like Frank. This is where it becomes a problem. It's like the time when your other friend Bill wants to work only 2 hours on his SDO so he asks you to look the other way and you do. This is wrong because you represent the contract and this violation affects the other carriers, not just your friend.

As a representative of the carriers, it is your responsibility to look out for all the carriers, not just the ones you are friends with. Playing favorites will cause your downfall as a steward and hurt the Union as a whole. Here are four bad repercussions of favoritism that will come back to haunt you, should you fall into the trap of playing favorites.

1. It is inconsistent with the concept of the union. Unions are about fairness and equal opportunity for everyone. Live by this principle everyday, it is simply the right thing to do. If you fail to live up to this standard the Union loses credibility and gets weaker as a result.

- 2. It alienates the membership.** It is the job of the union to demonstrate daily that the Union is all of us and not some separate bureaucracy. If the membership sees that some are given preferential treatment they will simply conclude that they are not really a part of the Union.
- 3. It plays into the employer's hand.** Management is always looking for ways to weaken the Union and treating preferentially provides a divide in the membership that management will exploit to weaken the Union.
- 4. It is an invitation to meet lawyers in court.** The law requires stewards to carry out their duties competently, fairly and impartially even if particular members (and even nonmembers) end up unhappy. Making decisions on which grievances to pursue based on your personal feelings towards the potential grievant is an invitation for the unhappy worker to file a duty of fair representation legal action against you and the Union.

To help prevent these issues from occurring, always examine potential situations to ensure that you are not acting improperly. If you have concerns that you might not be able to properly represent an individual, then get assistance from your fellow Union officers and stewards so as to ensure that it doesn't happen to you.

Now let us look at some of the signs that you may be in trouble as a steward. Part of being a steward is not only representing the membership but it is also looking ahead and trying to anticipate potential problems and issues and trying to prevent them from becoming problems. As stewards we are always reassessing ourselves and the job we are doing. The following things should set off a red light to warn you that you have a potential problem that needs to be addressed.

1. Members don't come to you with their problems. If the people you represent don't think that you are available and willing to help they will stop bringing problems to you. Yes

not all problems they bring are legitimate grievances but your job is to be available to help and sometimes that just means being able to listen and explain things to the individual members. Remember to keep them informed on victories and issues involving them as often as you can.

- 2. Members seek help from other stewards.** When you are a new steward this happens more often, but as you develop, the members should be coming to you in your station. If the members stop coming to you it is a sign that they don't feel you are available to them or they don't trust you with the issue. If this is happening you need to find out why and address the areas of concern to get better because if your members refuse to come to you, you lose your value as a steward.
- 3. Management refuses to meet with you.** You need to develop a working relationship with management and show them that you represent the members with integrity and knowledge. They may not really like you but they will find you are a force to be reckoned with and they will develop respect for you and your ability.
- 4. Members and Management make private deals without your or the Union's involvement.** This is one of many ways that management tries to undermine the Union and these deals frequently violate the contract. The members need to understand that you are here to represent and protect them from management and this will stop these types of deals.
- 5. You never win a grievance.** While we all expect to lose some grievances, you should never lose them all. This shows a lack of education on your part as a steward. If you consistently lose, maybe it is your approach or

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simply a lack of knowledge. If this is the case **GET SOME HELP**. Your other stewards and Union officers are here to help and sometimes an outside eye will show you some angle you could use to help. Remember the members are watching and if you can't win they will look elsewhere if they have grievances issues.

6. **You miss Union meetings.** As an activist for the Union it is important that you set the example. How can you stay up to speed with issues

affecting the membership if you won't go to the meetings? How can you ask your members to go if you won't? Be a leader, set the example.

These are some of the more obvious issues that you should be on the lookout for as a steward to ensure that you are doing your job properly. I have said it before and I can't overemphasize it – **If you are having problems GET SOME HELP**. We all want you to succeed and that is why we make ourselves available. Remember, this is not rhetoric; if I didn't want you to call me I wouldn't post my phone number.

The information used to create this article comes from *The Union Steward's Complete Guide 2nd Edition* edited by David Prosten. This text is highly recommended for all stewards as a complete resource for the job of shop steward and is so highly thought of that it is provided to the attendees of the NALC Leadership Academy in Washington, D.C.

As always I'll leave you with –
Knowledge is the Key.
Brian Obst, Shop Steward
Town 'N Country and Carrollwood

A Point of Personal Privilege

(Continued from page 8)

parking their vehicles on our property.) The branch should not jeopardize the building by allowing any type of mortgage to be placed on it or be allowed to be used as collateral without direct approval of the membership. The worst case scenario would be to sell the building outright, rent a space and then build a smaller facility that would have offices

for the President and some officers with a capacity of about 100 individuals for meetings. (The average yearly attendance to our branch meetings is maybe 80 people.) The Tampa Letter Carriers Hall has been around since the late 1950s and I remember going to dances there in the 1960s. The building was built by dedicated letter carriers out of their own pockets, (block by block) many

of which have passed but are probably turning over in their graves at the thought of selling the building.

Your attendance at all Union Meetings is necessary and your ideas are needed to increase revenues and decrease expenditures under *new business*, so please make an effort to come to the Hall on the first Thursday of every month.

ARSLAN UNIFORMS

Bill & Shirley Moran

Retired Letter Carrier Branch 1477 St. Petersburg

Honorary Member Branch 599 Tampa

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