



# Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 8

AUGUST 2018

## Around The Horn from The President's Desk



Tony Diaz  
President

**Brothers and Sisters**, we have had a rash of safety related violations leading to accidents throughout the city and the district. This is a good time to review a few of the Suncoast District's Safe Driving Rules for Postal Drivers.

Let's review and breakdown actual reasons contributing to accidents. Of course while being in observance of the Suncoast District's Safe Driving Rules, we **must** observe and obey all city, county, and state rules and regulations (Rule #7). **We must use common sense first and foremost when dealing with an accident.**

It is very important to:

- Immediately report **any** accident to your supervisor, regardless of the cause or severity of the accident.
- Do not leave the scene of an accident, no matter how minor (Rule #16).
- Remember, the accident and your involvement in the accident is more than likely on a video.
- Be truthful with your assessment of the accident, specific details (timelines, contributing factors) are important.

The introductory paragraph of the Suncoast District's Safe Driving Rules is very clear with a definitive objective:

*When you drive for the postal service, you are constantly under observation by the general public. You are expected to drive in a dependable, efficient, reliable, safe and courteous manner – A professional driver. In order to meet this challenge, you must use defensive driving techniques and follow these safe driving rules.*

As a proud Million Mile Award recipient, defensive driving was the key. Being aware of my surroundings, anticipating another driver's next move, making others aware you are approaching and are in the area (flashers/horn), yield to impatient (in a hurry) drivers, be alert, do not become distracted (texting or on the cell), pay attention to weather conditions, to name a few. This is covered in Suncoast District's Safe Driving Rule #25 that states: Drive defensively at all times, make allowances for existing conditions and especially the unsafe and careless actions of others.

Suncoast Safe Driving Rules

and city, county, and state rules and regulations are intended to

protect us all. Remember there are NO special privileges or rights for postal drivers. Police citations for traffic violations are your personal responsibility. There is a perception that Postal vehicles are immune, untouchable, invulnerable, and protected from rules and regulations. After you receive a \$150 ticket you will realize the reality.

Carriers are observed with the following violations the most: Seat belts and shoulder harnesses not being worn while the vehicle is in motion (Rule #4), vehicle doors not being secured/locked when vehicle's not in full view (Rule #13), doors not being closed when entering or passing through an intersection(s) (Rule #5), and hand brakes not being engaged before exiting the vehicle (Rule #9).

The most frequent accidents reported: striking stationary

*(Continued on page 3)*

Branch 599  
serving  
Brandon  
Plant City  
Sun City  
Tampa

**Branch 599  
Meeting**

Thursday  
August 2  
7:30 PM

**Branch 599 Office**

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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 and also to the Branch Office at nalc599@verizon.net no later than the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

# Officers

Position	Officer	Phone	Email
<b>President</b>	Tony Diaz	813.875.0599 cell 813.598.9635	tony_diaz599@yahoo.com
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	Warren Sumlin	813.486.7612	
<b>Presidents Emeritus</b>	Garland Tickle • Orbe Andux Donald Thomas • Michael Anderson James Good • Alan Peacock		

# Shop Stewards

Station	ZIP	Steward	Station No.	Steward's No.
Tampa Stations/Branches		Chief Steward, Brian Obst		727.458.0679
Brandon	33510/11		813.661.1636	
Carrollwood	33618		813.961.2962	
Commerce	33602	Andre Hinton	813.242.4507	931.980.5169
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	Troy Figuero	813.879.4309	347.403.1644
Hilldale Annex	33634	Varick Reeder	813.879.4309	315.491.6234
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	Michael Smith	813.239.4084	813.326.0717
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Melinda Alejandro	813.634.1403	386.237.2715
Seminole Heights	33603	Walt Rhoades	813.237.4569	813.389.1708
Sulphur Springs	33604	Steve Hall	813.237.4569	813.494.4669
TCA/Hyde Park	33606	Thomas King	813.873.7189	727.504.3866
TCA/Peninsula	33609	Mike Williams	813.873.7189	813.541.3092
TCA/West Tampa	33607		813.873.7189	
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	Andre Hinton	813.242.4507	931.980.5169

## Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

objects (basketball hoops, fences, fire hydrants, parked cars, trash cans, tree limbs, high curbs, carpools, and landscape timbers); not yielding to oncoming traffic (pulling out in the path of a car); and not allowing proper clearance (merging into traffic and striking a moving object and striking cars stopped at a stop light). These are all preventable accidents; how do we prevent them? Let's analyze a few key contributors:

**Distraction(s)** creates many bad decisions, while placing a driver in a situation that could have been avoided. While texting and talking on cell phones are big contributors, they are not the only ones. I have observed carriers with mail on their laps looking down while driving from box to box, with one or no hands on the steering wheel (Rule #20). Can an safe immediate reaction be made while delivering in that manner? No way! A reaction could require an immediate response, and without total control of the vehicle that decision to avoid an accident may be too late. The inattention from distractions causes: not being alert, not paying attention to detail, not noticing a hazard(s), not noticing pedestrians, not noticing the needed proper clearance (Rule #19), not noticing and reacting to situations in real time/speed. Distractions are definitively an issue: a split second can make a huge difference. When investigating an accident to get to the core/root cause, many of the bad decisions are traced back to a distraction(s). Again, stay defensive, stay alert.

**Rushing/Impatience** creates many bad decisions as well. While there are issues with morning estimates, and the time it takes to finish your route, every carrier must adopt a speed that is safe and productive at the same time. There are similarities between these two contributing factors, rushing and distractions. A split second of inattention is prevalent in both; rushing

and impatience leads to making a rushed split-second decision also without proper awareness of the situation. Perhaps missing a key factor, not seeing a stop sign, an oncoming car moving at a faster speed with only one glance, instead of left-right-and left again (Rule #26), not providing proper clearance, not seeing a pedestrian, or cyclist, or a child. Slamming on breaks and sliding/skidding into a curb mailbox. Take an extra second, analyze your situation.

**Backing/U-Turns** creates danger, creates guessing, uncertainty with what is behind you, uncertainty if you can make this U-Turn before a car appears. Suncoast District's Safe Driving (Rule #21), **Avoid Backing**; do *not* back unless absolutely necessary. You *must* sound your horn before beginning any backing maneuver. Uncertainty as to what is behind you, and you need to back: shut off the vehicle, set emergency brake, and walk around the vehicle to see with your own eyes (Rule #23). Same with U-Turns: sound your horn before beginning any U-Turn maneuver, avoid a U-Turn in the middle of an intersection, and during your maneuver continue checking all mirrors.

**Loading Vehicle Improperly** creates potential danger (Rule #6). Do not overload the front tray with mail trays (DPS/flats) or parcels. Do not overload the area above the gauges with parcels. There are several hazards this could create. It obscures vision, totally eliminating the use of mirrors on the left side of the vehicle, hampering changing lanes and checking passing traffic. A sudden reaction with your brakes could shift the mail causing a tray striking the windshield (distraction), a tray sliding onto the driver (distraction), a parcel(s) flopping onto the driver (distraction). These distractions could and will divert attention from the road ahead, causing a potential preventable accident.

### Information you should know:

License suspension is temporary and it can be reinstated, but a revoked license is a permanent seizure of a person's driving privilege. With a revoked license, a person can never legally drive in that state. If a driver violates the laws and rules of driving again and again then his/her license is revoked.

**Any action taken against your driver's license must be reported to your supervisor/manager. Your steward and the union office should also be notified immediately.**

### Quick Hits:

#### Information you should know

\* The United States Postal Service reports there are 1.1 billion scans daily throughout the country.

#### \* Food Drive Facts:

The Food Drive collected 71.4 million pounds of food nationally, about 2 million pounds down from last year. This marks the 10th year in a row of over 70 million pounds collected nationally. The Suncoast District was #1 nationally again for the 7th year in a row! The State of Florida collected a little over 10 million pounds. That's over 14% of the food collected nationally.

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



Do you have the NALC member app?

### Water. Rest. Shade.

OSHA's Campaign to Keep Workers Safe in the Heat

*They have an app for that!*

[www.osha.gov/heat/index.html](http://www.osha.gov/heat/index.html)

# NALC Branch 599 Labor Day Picnic

See your shop steward to signup.  
Retirees, call the Branch Office, 813.875.0599.



**Sunday September 2 12-4 PM**

**Food ♦ Music  
Activities & Crafts for Children, Games & Prizes**

\$5 donation per immediate family of 5 *plus*  
\$5 for each additional immediate family member is *required*, to benefit MDA.  
\$10 per Guest.

**Deadline to signup is August 17.**

# Unionism...The National Convention

Every two years, currently the even years, the membership of the National Association of Letter Carriers meets for the National Convention. Many of you readers are wondering why we have to send delegates to this meeting every two years. Why do we have to give delegates a paid vacation at various cities around the country every two years? What do the delegates do at this *Convention* every two years? How do I get to be a delegate for this *Convention* every two years? There are probably more questions, but for now these will suffice for the purpose of this article.

First, what is the National Convention for and why is it so important for the branches to send delegates to it every two years? Well the National Convention is a weeklong meeting of all the national officers of the National Association of Letter Carriers and elected delegates from as many branches of the union nationwide that can afford to send members to the meeting. The *Convention* meetings are used to set the direction of the union as a whole, with the national president directing the course of the 5 days of meetings. It is during these meetings that the membership has the opportunity to address our national officers about issues confronting the union throughout the country. The national officers prior to the convention week will put together books on proposals submitted from around the nation for consideration by the membership at-large during the convention. Proposals are submitted on issues of a contractual nature that help set our national union's bargaining strategy for contract negotiations. Items are submitted of a constitutional nature addressing our union's constitution and its terms. Additional suggestions and submission of new ideas are brought to the membership for consideration and vote. Basically, the convention is used to set the direction of the NALC for the next two years by giving

our national officers their marching orders from the membership. Remember, the national officers don't set policy, the membership does and this is done by taking part in the democratic process by submitting suggestions, ideas and concerns to the national officers through your convention delegates.

Additionally, there is another important item addressed at National Conventions and that is preparation for the union's national elections. Every four years, (every other national convention), our national officers' positions are up for election and the convention is an opportunity for those running for election to directly address the membership to announce their candidacy for whichever position they are running. The convention will address and set election protocols as per our constitution for any position requiring an election. Sometimes a position is uncontested, in which case the membership will vote to elect the only candidate by acclamation, thereby filling the position.

A common mistake made by many people is that this is a vacation for the delegates for a week every two years. I am here to tell you that nothing could be further from the truth. The delegates to the National Convention use their own annual leave to attend the convention and while the main convention floor opens and comes to order at 10 AM, there are numerous training classes covering a variety of topics that the delegates attend starting at 7:30 AM until 9 AM and again after the main floor adjourns at 3 PM; there are more training classes from 3:30 PM until 5 PM each day. While the delegates do get their evenings free, I wouldn't consider working from 7:30 AM to 5 PM for 5 days to be a vacation. Oh by the way, you eat on the fly during the main floor hours as there is no lunch break.

The business of the convention during the hours of 10 AM and 3 PM are working through the information presented

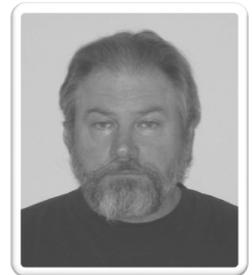
on the national issues as well as various guest speakers that always address topics of interest to our concerns

as a union. The most important thing is that all issues raised and addressed on the convention floor are used to help establish the direction of our union and help provide our national officers with direction that the membership wants the union to follow.

How do I become a delegate for this convention? This is addressed in our branch's bylaws; you must make 8 of 12 branch meetings each year for the two-year period preceding the convention. That stated, if one wants to attend the convention in 2020, one must attend 8 meetings each year in 2018 and 2019. The period to request to be a delegate requires one to sign up in October or November 2019, and if an election is needed, it will be held in December 2019 for the delegates to attend the 2020 convention. Any member can go to the National Convention as an unpaid delegate; the above guidelines are requirements to be a *paid delegate*. The National Convention is unionism in action and all members should consider attending at least one at some time during their career.

The National Convention is a veritable goldmine of information and experience that is available to all union members. While in attendance you can meet and discuss issues and concerns with members from all over the different locations where our union operates and find out what issues each area has in common or new issues not yet affecting the area you are from. Remembering that a union is all parties pulling together for the same common goal, it is understood that you might have information that could help

*(Continued on page 6)*



**Brian Obst**  
Vice President  
Branch 599

# Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to **Lance Berges** [TCA/Hyde Park] and family at the passing of his brother, Chris, June 28; and to **Kerry Bolio** [Interbay] and family at the passing of his sister, Kelly. July 1.



## Cordero transferred out

Town N' Country Station said farewell to carrier Jedrek Cordero (center of picture with baseball cap). He transferred from Tampa to Port Richey and Clearwater Branch 2008. Jedrek's final day in Tampa was Friday, July 6, and his coworkers celebrated with a send-off party. He was an alternate steward at Town N' Country and will continue to be active in the NALC. Jedrek will be missed.....

## Mark your Calendar! Branch meetings in 2018 will be...

August 2 • September 6 • October 4 • November 1 • December 6



**NALC**  
*e-Activist*  
Network

at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org)

Get involved! Your future depends on it!

## Unionism...The National Convention

*(Continued from page 5)*

brother and sister carriers in another area of the country and the same is true for members from other areas. If you never get to meet others from different areas, you unnecessarily limit

your knowledge and ability to assist members in your area. Knowledge is the one thing they can never take away from you and the more you have the better representative of your members you will become. As I have been heard

to say, I leave you with.....**Knowledge is the Key.**

*Brian Obst*  
Vice President  
Stations/Branches Chief Steward

# Outside the Lines...Birth — Death

I found the following poem to be thought provoking and inspiring, so am sharing it with you in lieu of an article:



Ray Garcia  
Member  
Branch 599

## THE DASH

I read of a man who stood to speak at the funeral of a friend.  
He referred to the dates on the tombstone from the beginning...to the end.

He noted that first came the date of birth and spoke the following date with tears,  
but said what mattered most of all was the dash between those years.

For that dash represents all the time that they spent alive on earth  
and now only those who loved them know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own, the cars...the house...the cash.  
What matters is how we lived and loved and how we spend our dash.

So think about this long and hard; are there things you'd like to change?  
For you never know how much time is left that can still be rearranged.

To be less quick to anger and show appreciation more  
And love the people in our lives like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect and more often wear a smile...  
remembering that this special dash might only last a little while.

So when your eulogy is being read, with your life's actions to rehash,  
would you be proud of the things they say about how you lived your dash?

by Linda Ellis, Copyright Inspire Kindness, LLC 1996, [www.thedashpoem.com](http://www.thedashpoem.com)  
*We received permission for this one-time printing in our Branch's newsletter.*

# Hole Sponsors needed for Golf Tournament

You can help us get a head start on securing hole sponsors for our 5th Annual Golf Tournament to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

For more information, contact our golf chairperson, Alan Robinson, at 813.843.9762 or President Tony Diaz in our Branch Office, 813.875.0599.

Sponsoring a hole is one of the ways we raise funds for MDA at the tourna-

ment. We will also need door prizes for the raffle. Please contact businesses you know as well as your station, for support! Here are a couple of signs from last year's tournament...



Hole Sponsor  
\$100  
*includes a sign at tee box*

Putting or Chipping  
\$150  
*includes sign at contest*

You don't have to play golf to help us  
Deliver the Cure with MDA!

# Supreme court attacks workers' rights

In a narrow 5-4 decision Wednesday, the Supreme Court once again sided with corporate special interests and against America's working families. In a case called *Janus vs. AFSCME*, the Court ruled that public sector unions may no longer assess so-called agency fees, the payment required of non-union members to cover the cost of collective-bargaining services. These *fair share* fees are vital because such services provide benefits to members and non-members alike. In so doing, the Court overturned longstanding precedent and adopted a radical reading of the First Amendment pushed by anti-union forces.

NALC President Fredric Rolando issued the following statement after the decision:

*This is an appalling decision that shows once again that elections have consequences, Rolando said. With the deciding vote of Neal Gorsuch, the justice nomi-*

*nated by President Trump in 2017, the Court has betrayed America's workers once again – by doing the bidding of corporate interests who are dedicated to weakening America's unions. Our labor movement will not take this attack lying down. Just as NALC has learned to organize without agency fees, the unions representing public employees at the state and local level are gearing up to overcome this grossly unjustified ruling. We stand in solidarity with them.*

The ruling is especially galling because the Gorsuch seat on the Supreme Court was effectively stolen by the Senate GOP majority in 2016 when, for the first time in history, it refused to consider a president's nomination of a justice for the nation's highest court. In fact, it refused to even hold a hearing for Judge Merrick Garland, President Obama's nominee. After the 2016 election, the same GOP majority then

further trampled on tradition by eliminating the filibuster for Supreme Court nominations, making it possible for anti-worker judges like Gorsuch to be elevated to the Supreme Court. With the *Janus* decision, the cost of these unprincipled attacks on our democratic norms just went up.

Adding insult to injury, Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy announced his retirement today – opening yet another opportunity for President Trump to nominate another extremist, anti-union justice to the Court.

The AFL-CIO and its unions are mobilizing to overcome the *Janus* decision. To learn more, visit <https://www.afge.org/publication/following-janus-ruling-workers-must-unite-to-preserve-rights/>.

–nalc.org June 27, 2018

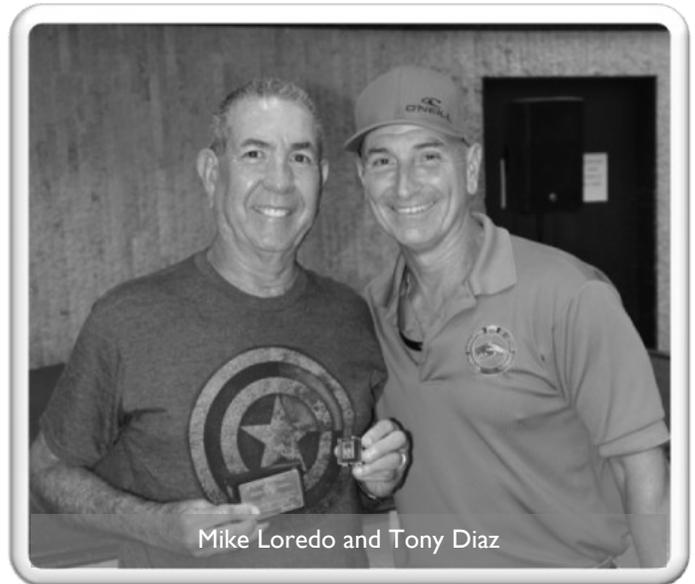
## Friedman at Branch 599 50-years for Loredo!



FSALC President Al Friedman

NALC State President Al Friedman addresses the membership at the July 12 Branch Meeting.

Al spoke on a wide range of topics from the Letter Carrier Food Drive to legislative issues.



Mike Loredo and Tony Diaz

Retiree Michael Loredo is presented a 50-year NALC Gold Card and 50-year pin by President Diaz.

Mike is now considered an NALC Life Member.

*Congratulations to Mike!*

# Government Affairs

The Letter Carrier Political Fund is a non-partisan political action committee (PAC) established for the purpose of electing qualified candidates who support letter carriers and who are committed to maintaining a strong and innovative U.S. Postal Service.

Each year, NALC fights to fend off attacks in Congress that threaten letter carriers' collective-bargaining rights, retirement benefits and livelihood. We've been successful so far, and we want to continue helping to elect House and Senate candidates who will protect us, promote our issues and deliver our message to Washington.

Since **union dues cannot be used to support candidates for political office**, NALC relies 100 percent on

member contributions to the LCPF, which in turn helps us support those on Capitol Hill who defend the issues that matter most to us. Our PAC brings together in Washington strong letter carrier advocates—from all political parties—who are dedicated to helping to defend a strong USPS that provides universal, innovative and affordable service.

- PACs are formed by corporations, associations, labor unions and individuals with common interests.
- PACs solicit *voluntary* contributions from individuals with common



interests to advance a political process.

- PACs are non-partisan entities whose primary concern is to elect qualified candidates regardless of party affiliation.

—nalc.org

## Signup for the Political Fund at our Branch Meeting on August 2

FSALC District 2 Chairperson Joanne Cannon  
will be attending the meeting.

She will have her computer, so all you need is your Postalease password.

As little as \$5 a pay period to protect your future!

# 5th Annual NALC Branch 599 MDA Golf Tournament



Deliver  
the Cure  
with **MDA**

Heritage Harbor Golf & Country Club  
19502 Heritage Harbor Parkway, Lutz FL 33558

**November 4, 2018**  
8 AM Shotgun Start

*\$60 per person due by October 18 • \$65 per person after October 18*

**Includes Round of Golf • Driving Range • Lunch • Long Drive Contest • Closest to Pin**

\$5 donation putting & chipping contest with \$100 prize  
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For more information, contact: Branch Office 813.875.0599 • Tony 813.598.9635 • Alan 813.843.9762



Job Related Injuries  
Government Workers' Comp Provider

4150 N Armenia Avenue, Suite 102, Tampa FL 33607  
Phone: 813.877.6900

### **Shop Stewards will Meet**

Tuesday 7 PM  
July 31  
Wednesday, September 5

### **Branch 599 Meeting**

Thursday 7:30 PM  
August 2  
September 6

### **Executive Board Meets**

Thursday 6:30 PM  
August 2  
September 6

### **Sunday Work Party**

at our Hall 9-11 AM  
August 5  
September 9

### **Retirees Breakfasts**

Monday September 10 9 AM  
Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce  
2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday September 11 8:30 AM  
Bob Evans Restaurant off Fletcher  
12272 Morris Bridge Road, Temple Terrace 33637

# **ARSLAN UNIFORMS**

*Bill & Shirley Moran*

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

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FAX 727.585.9367  
bilmor11@gmail.com



A.R. Tony Huerta Branch 599  
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Tampa Letter Carrier  
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\*This program does not apply to existing loans financed with Tampa Postal FCU. First payment is due 60 days from loan closing and no interest for 30 days. Valid for vehicles financed with the credit union between May 1, 2018 - July 31, 2018. Some restrictions apply. Contact the credit union for complete details.

