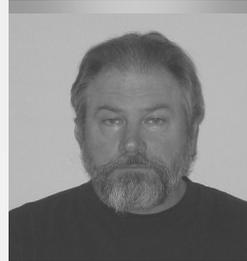




Tampa Letter Carrier

From the Desk of the President

Welcome to the month of May, Military Appreciation Month. I am a proud veteran of the United States Navy and I come from a family of veterans; my grandfather was an Army vet, my dad and my brother were both Navy vets like me, my son is a Marine Corps vet, and my grandson is a Navy Seabee. As you can probably tell, I am proud of this family tradition, and I offer my appreciation and thanks to all of our members who have served this country as veterans prior to continuing to serve as members of the Postal Service. If you see or know a veteran, please let them know you appreciate the sacrifices they made to help protect this country so we can all enjoy the many benefits it has to offer.



Brian Obst
President
Branch 599

By the time you read this article, the national Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive will be over, and I offer my sincere thanks for all the hard work each of you put into the drive to make it as successful as I'm sure it turned out to be. Once all the information on the collection is in, it will be posted for all to see. Remember, all the food collected remains in the local community, helping families in need here in the Tampa area.

Lunches and Rest Breaks

It seems like we are having an issue with these at the present time here in Tampa. When the issue was brought up to management at the recent Labor Management meeting, there was a lively debate on the topic. Management wants to know why the Union is adamant about the morning break being in the office and they were informed that it is because management is aware that carriers taking breaks on the street generally fail to take the breaks and many times they also work through lunch, which is a contractual violation. When management was asked why they were adamant that the carriers take their break after checking their vehicles, five minutes into the day before any work is actually accomplished, the true reasoning came to light. Management stated that they want them to take their break not to break up the workload, as it is designed, but to **get it out of the way**, in the words of Postmaster Villemaire. It seems like they view the morning break as a problem for them to **get out of the way** rather than a break/rest period for the carriers to break up the workload, as it is designed to do.

Recently I was in an office, and I noticed that numerous carriers were remaining at their cases working through the break period. When I asked management if all the carriers were on break, I was told yes. When I asked about the carriers still working, I was told that some of them choose to do so on their own. After I told the carriers they had to stop working and take their break, I reminded management of the language contained in National Arbitrator Britton's ruling:

The Postal Service must ensure that all employees stop working during an office break. Contractual breaks must be observed and cannot be waived by employees (H4N-3D-C

(Continued on page 3)

Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

Branch 599 Meeting

Wednesday
June 14
7:30 PM

*Until further notice, all
meetings will be held
at
American Legion Hall
3204 W Cypress Street
Tampa 33607*

Branch 599 Office

315 W Busch Boulevard, Suite C
Tampa FL 33612

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Tampa Letter Carrier

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

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	Clement Cheung	813.758.5910	
Presidents Emeritus			
	Garland Tickle · Orbe Andux · Donald Thomas Michael Anderson · James Good · Alan Peacock · Tony Diaz		

Shop Stewards

<i>Station</i>	<i>ZIP</i>	<i>Steward</i>	<i>Station No.</i>	<i>Steward's No.</i>
Tampa Stations/Branches Chief Steward, Mike Smith				
Brandon	33510/11	David Rivadeneira	813.661.1636	813.326.0717
Brandon	33510/11	Osceola Williams Sr.	813.661.1636	813.403.9525
Carrollwood	33618	Tina Bausch	813.961.2963	210.445.1369
Commerce	33602	Cynthia Williams	813.247.2416	813.892.2282
Forest Hills	33612	J.R. Sanchez	813.935.2954	813.778.4373
Forest Hills Annex	33613		813.935.2954	773.849.6229
Hilldale	33614		813.879.4309	
Hilldale Annex	33634		813.879.4309	
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Mike Dennis	813.831.2034	813.361.9103
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Marie Brown	813.831.2034	727.331.9907
Palm River Annex	33619	Dianna Todd	813.663.0048	813.505.5647
Plant City	33564	Todd Soulor	813.754.3590	508.615.6517
Produce	33610	Matt Rodkey	813.237.4084	813.562.8744
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Bert Fristad	813.634.1642	813.541.8514
Seminole Heights	33603	Matt Fernandez	813.237.4569	786.247.4185
Sulphur Springs	33604	J.D. Lewers	813.237.4569	813.528.5519
TCA/Hyde Park	33606	Josh Villa	813.873.7189	203.278.6485
TCA/Peninsula	33609	Rigo Molina	813.873.7189	813.455.4186
TCA/West Tampa	33607		813.873.7189	
Temple Terrace	33617		813.988.0152	
Town & Country	33615/35	Vic Figueroa	813.884.0973	845.380.6386
Ybor City	33605	Maurice Rice	813.247.2416	813.334.3189

From the Desk of the President

(Continued from page 1)

9419, Dec. 22, 1988, C-08555).

Letter carriers should never skip their negotiated rest breaks whether they are taken in the office or on the street.

Lunch periods are periods for lunch or rest that carriers get daily. This period is thirty (30) minutes in length and is unpaid, off-the-clock

time. All letter carriers, including CCAs, daily receive an unpaid half hour lunch break. The

Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM), section 432.33 refers to this break as mealtime and states: *432.33 Mealtime Except in emergency situations or where service conditions preclude compliance, no employee may be required to work more than 6 continuous hours without a meal or rest period of at least 1/2 hour.*

Additionally, the National Agreement also states:

41.3.K. Supervisors shall not require, nor permit, employees to work off the clock.

Carriers also, are not permitted to unilaterally decide to take their AM break on the street if the office has previously voted to have the morning break in the office and it is management's responsibility to ensure that all carriers take the mandated morning break in the office.

Breaks are negotiated and have a bearing on your route during inspections; if you are skipping your breaks and/or lunches it shows in the inspection data. Do

Do you want to work for free...?

you want to work for free for a period of up to fifty (50) minutes per day and then have your route adjusted to add another fifty (50) minutes to your route because it looks like you are fifty (50) minutes under? I think not. You may not be allowed, or compelled to work through your lunch/break times and if you are, please see your steward, as it is a violation.

Our New Computer Lab

The new computer lab is up and operational. We have installed two new computers and a printer for the

computer lab that is available for all the stewards to use for processing grievances, research, and preparation, as well as ongoing training for the stewards. There is a dedicated server containing all the previous grievances for our Branch over the past 20-25 years. This will help the new steward looking to see how others have addressed grievance issues before as well as helping the experienced stewards improving their grievance files or addressing management on issues arising on the workroom floor prior to them becoming grievance issues. Overall, it is a win for Branch representation as long as the stewards utilize this new resource that has been made available to them.

National Agreement expiring

The National Agreement is set to expire on the 20th of May and the national parties have been hard at negotiations trying to hammer out a new deal in Washington. That said, it is time to look at our LOMU (Local Memorandum of Understanding) or the Local Contract. This consists of 22 items from the National Agreement that the agreement allows the local parties to determine how they will be addressed locally. The time is now to reread the agreement and if there are issues you would like to see addressed, write down your thoughts on any issue under the LMOU and pass them on to your steward. The LMOU is only available to be opened locally for a period of thirty (30) days after ratification of a new national agreement. Better to prepare ahead, as no one knows when a new agreement might be ratified.

These are just a few of the thoughts kicking around in my head this month.

Until next month, I leave you as always.....**Knowledge is the Key!**

Brian Obst
President



Branch 599 members, FSALC President Al Friedman, and Metropolitan Ministries volunteers on April 30, sorting food bags and postcards in preparation of our Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Calendar

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

**Until further notice,
Branch Meetings
will be held at
American Legion Hall
3204 W Cypress Street
Tampa 33607**

Note

Meeting Changes:

Shop Stewards

Wednesday

May 31 7:00 PM
315 W Busch Blvd, Suite C

Executive Board

Thursday

June 1 6:30 PM
315 W Busch Blvd, Suite C

Branch 599

Wednesday

June 14 7:30 PM
American Legion Hall
3204 W Cypress Street
Tampa 33607

Retirees' Breakfasts

Tampa

Monday
June 5 9:00 AM
Mama's Kitchen
9312 N Florida Avenue 33612

Temple Terrace

Tuesday
June 13 10:00 AM
Bob Evans Restaurant
off Fletcher near I-75
12272 Morris Bridge Road

Membership

As I transition into my new position as financial secretary, it is my job to make all deposits and monitor our membership dues. Each pay period I receive a copy of all members in Branch 599, I then verify everyone who has paid their membership. I also monitor new members that have transferred into our Branch and make sure that the dues they are paying are correct. If these dues are incorrect, a letter is sent to National to have dues corrected.

It is also my responsibility to make sure that all dues are paid. According to Branch 599 Bylaws, Article VII, Section 2: if a member is on OWCP, their dues are not being deducted at the National level. Therefore, the member is required to pay their union dues directly to our Branch's Financial Secretary. Some letters have been sent out to remind carriers that are in this position. Please remember, if you receive a letter from Branch 599 about unpaid union dues, this is not

Mail Call

Brothers and Sisters, information and the knowledge of where to obtain it is key to your success during your careers and retirement. For April's issue, I referenced some of the material members would need to help them succeed during their careers. It is equally important to discuss some of the things you will need for your retirement.

But Sarge, retirement is a long way away for me. I'll have plenty of time before I'll need to research it.

Wrong. Retirement assessment and preparation is something you should not put off. Wait too long and you will miss your opportunity to build your TSP/401k as high as possible, for example. It is also important to have a life plan for your retirement, as in, how will you occupy your time? etc....

Ok Sarge, I'll check it out, quit pestering me. But where should I start?

Quarterly, all postal employees should receive a letter at their offices. The letter contains either an invitation to a retire-

any form of intimidation, just a reminder of the language in our bylaws. Also included in Article VII bylaws, if a member is placed in a LWOP status for more than 30 days, they shall not be required to pay union dues until the member is returned to a pay status.

Remember...salary, holiday, and other benefits are all negotiated by our Union. Your representation is a benefit provided to you by the National Association of Letter Carriers. If you have not joined our Union, please consider joining today. If you have any questions about joining, speak to your shop steward or call the Branch office.

Until next Time,
Alan Robinson, Financial Secretary



Alan Robinson
Financial Secretary
Building Manager
Branch 599

ment seminar or to get individual information about insurance and retirement benefits.

Our Branch has two wonderful people, Director of Retirees John Gebo, and Health Benefits Rep Detlev Aepfel, who await you to contact them. I'm sure they would be happy to answer your questions or lead you to someone who can.

Finally, try group think; getting together with your brothers and sisters to exchange information is another great way to start.

If you are already retired, it does not mean you should stop asking questions. Laws and policies change and a benefit you enjoyed may have changed or may no longer be there. In addition, there may be a new benefit or policy you may not be aware of. Just remember, Knowledge is Power, never stop learning all you can.



Luis Cruz
Sergeant-at-Arms
Branch 599

From the Vice President's Desk – Zero Tolerance

Cause and effect are two words that interchange. There must be a cause to have an effect. The same is true with the actions of managers, supervisors, and carriers. To the extreme, when a person is violated by physical or verbal actions, the aftermath can be harmful.

As letter carriers, we are all aware of the phrase, *going postal*. During the 80's this term was associated with the Postal Service. Customers were wary of carriers due to previous events that had taken place. History taught a compelling lesson which affected the minds of management teams and carriers who lived during that era. The beginning of the next decade brought about a change that was both needed and welcomed.

November 14, 1991, will be cemented in the history of the Postal Service. A terminated carrier opened fire at the Royal Oak Post Office in Royal Oak, Michigan, killing 4 employees and injuring 4 others. The shooting was a combination of the treatment from the management team and an arbitration award. Shortly after the shooting, the Joint Statement on Violence and

Behavior in the Workplace was signed by the Postal Service and all postal union affiliations.

The Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace referenced the incident at Royal Oak and further delivered a strong message regarding the treatment of all employees. Separation between management and carrier is not negotiable. Violence in the workplace is a two-way street. A manager/supervisor does not have the right to treat carriers in any way other than with respect and carriers do not have the right to treat managers/supervisors in any way other than with respect.

Stewards must be diligent in their everyday duties. Observe what is going on around the workroom floor. Don't be blind to someone yelling or lashing out at another carrier. In the same regard, don't turn a blind ear to management yelling or lashing out at a carrier. There may be times when a raised voice could seem to be nothing, but it may be the beginning of much more. Understand and learn your carriers. When a quiet carrier starts to yell on

the floor or the usual yell is quiet, these reverse actions may and should raise concern.

Now is the time to be proactive rather than doing nothing. Hidden signs can develop into open opportunities.

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy released a policy letter on July 1, 2021, (Postal Service's Policy on Workplace Harassment) which defines the Postal Service's stance on harassment in the workplace. *Harassment is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct, which is so severe or pervasive that it interferes with or changes the conditions of one's employment by creating a hostile, intimidating, or abusive working environment.* It is the responsibility of management upon notification of such an act to respond immediately.

As stewards, it is also our responsibility to act immediately upon notification by a carrier. The failure to act by either management or steward is detrimental to the welfare of all carriers. A working environment that is free of violence or harassment should always be the goal of each management team, steward, or carrier.

The obligation to suppress violence or harassment in the workplace doesn't only fall upon the shoulders of management or stewards. Every employee that walks through the station doors has vested authority to raise the flag. It is ok to say something is wrong and needs to be addressed. Don't rely on management or the steward. **Be the voice and speak loudly.**

To get there, we must work together!

Mike Smith
Vice President



Mike Smith
Vice President
Branch 599



Branch 599 President Brian Obst (left) reading Food Drive Proclamation and FSALC President Al Friedman (right) addressing guests at the Kick-Off Event.

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to **Toni Llauger** [Town & Country] at the passing of her mother, Bettye Cox, April 16 [the editor apologizes for erroneously stating in last month's issue that Toni's sister passed].

Well wishes

and prayers are extended to **Danilsa Ortiz-Ramos** [Hilldale] as she recovers from injuries sustained in an on-the-job vehicle accident; and to **Lori McMillion's** [retiree, Trustee] partner, Larry Carpenter as he recovers from surgery.

Employee Assistance Program

info is at nalc.org

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

It's confidential for you and your loved ones.

Just for the Health of It

The Postal Service Reform Act was signed into law in April of 2022. This law abolished the Postal Retiree Prefunding Mandate which was the onerous financial burden placed on the Postal Service in 2006 which was costing us about \$5 billion per year. This law also provides for the creation of a new Postal Service Health Benefits Program (PSHB). PSHB will be a new and separate health benefits program within the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, also known as FEHB. PSHB will be administered by OPM. The PSHB Program will become effective on January 1, 2025. These changes will affect ACTIVE letter carriers in several ways.

1. You will be REQUIRED to select a health insurance plan in the PSHB

Program during the 2024 Open Season.

2. Information about plan options and premium rates will be available in October of 2024.
3. OPM will launch a new enrollment platform for health insurance. Information on using this new platform will be available prior to the 2024 open season.

This information applies to ACTIVE letter carriers. Annuitants and those making retirement plans will have other requirements which will be discussed later.



Detlev Aeppel
Health Benefit Rep.
Branch 599

Retired...but not Tired

Last month I mentioned the passing of two longtime retirees, Al Guice and Joe Oliva, in March. It made me wonder if I had all my information and paperwork updated in case something was to happen to me. It is difficult enough when a spouse passes, and then to deal with all the paperwork that needs to be completed. In addition, the agencies that need to be notified. There is a booklet you should request (before you pass) from the Branch office that has all the information to guide you through the process that can become overwhelming. It will make things a little easier for your spouse and family. It is titled: *When a Retired Letter Carrier Dies*. Inside there are 10 important steps to follow, and while all 10 steps may not apply to your situation, the ones that do will help you. Also included in the booklet, on the last page is a form for all the information needed to help start the process. Filling this form out completely will eliminate your family searching for the important information. The most important thing is CSA number; this number should be shared with your spouse and/or children. When OPM is contacted and

forms are filled out, this number is needed. Our Branch Treasurer, Tony Diaz, has met with the family of recently passed retiree Joe Oliva to help assist them with the paperwork and review the booklet. Should you be in this situation, and have questions, please contact the Branch office. I know this is an unpleasant topic, but I feel it is something important to write about.

Now, on a happier note, I want to invite all our retirees to a luncheon. This get-together is scheduled for...

June 9 at 11:30 AM
GASPAR'S Bar and Grill

8448 N 56th Street, Temple Terrace.
I hope to see you there, and please bring your spouse, they are invited as well. Hopefully, this will be the start of a monthly gathering.

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



John Gebo
Director of Retirees
Branch 599

Matt Speaks –The Coming Kingdom or, An Eschatology for Workers

In the rush that goes with everyday life, we sometimes forget that every person we meet has their own story. Their own reasons as to why they break a sweat or shed a tear. An employer may often give the impression that workers are expendable, but in the final analysis we are not machines. We are flesh and blood. Our hearts beat. We feel empathy. Something a machine cannot do. Machines stand idle. But mankind does not.

We workers have a heroic and powerful legacy. But we must remember to remind ourselves of the spirit in our work lives. We must strive for the hope that is the lot of each man and woman.

Just what is this hope? It is the hope that at some point, struggle will end. In each generation we lay the groundwork for the success of other generations to carry on.

BUT! it does not end there. Our task is not merely to leave steppingstones.

Each generation has the same potential to be the one to lead the rest into the promised land. That place where JRR Tolkien writes at the end of *The Lord of the Rings*:
The grey-rain curtain turned all to silver glass and was rolled back, and he beheld white shores and beyond them a far green country under a swift sunrise.

It is an undisputable fact that throughout history the overseer eventually stops the whipping. After all, he too is flesh and blood which means he also gets tired. And he gets tired because we workers are resilient and a stubborn lot for all the right reasons. Each of us has something for which to fight. For some it is family. For others, their comrades or to prove to themselves that they are not useless. That their lives mean something. But underlying all of these things is love.

The word eschatology is Greek. It means the study of the last things, the end of days. From the liberation of the Hebrews in the Biblical book of Exodus, to the Servile wars of Ancient Rome, to the fight for abolition in the United States even to the present day the great mass of humanity has been aiming for a Spiritual city or *The City of God* as St Augustine calls it.

In the earthly city, that in which we live and toil He writes:
Though good and bad men suffer alike, we must not suppose that there is no difference between the men themselves, because there is no difference in what they both suffer. For even in the likeness of the sufferings, there remains an unlikeness in the sufferers; and though exposed to the same anguish, virtue and vice are not the same thing. For as the same fire causes gold to glow brightly, and chaff to smoke; and under the same flail the straw is beaten small, while the grain is cleansed; and as the lees are not mixed with the oil, though squeezed out of the vat by the same pressure, so the same violence of affliction proves, purges, clarifies the good, but damns, ruins, exterminates the wicked.

In the end what will be left are those who are not cast off and that which is not destroyed. The City of God. The Spiritual city. The Millennial Kingdom, the new heavens and the new earth. That place, where our toils are vindicated. Where we no longer break a sweat or shed blood and all the tears are wiped from our eyes. Our eschatology then, brothers and sisters, is not one of defeat. It is one of victory. We need only to live it. And draw strength from that.

Near the end of the Book of Isaiah in Chapter 65:21-23 we read this:
And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant



Matt Fernandez
Recording Secretary
Branch 599

vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.

Brothers and sisters. This is what we toil for. The hope that resides in each and every one of us. Let us remember the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 6:33:
But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

***Please keep our
Branch Office
updated
with your
contact information.***

Our *Stamp Out Hunger* Food Drive was a Huge Success on May 13!





Birdseye View

This article is dedicated to the values of Union Membership, both as active carriers and the benefits of remaining a member in retirement. First and foremost, for active members, the value of job protection and representation is a benefit that many members take for granted but could be taken away at any time by aggressive legislation designed to diminish middle class jobs and their hard-fought for benefits. In retirement, those who choose to continue membership still receive representation that fights to maintain the benefits that you have paid and invested in to support you in your life outside of the workplace and at a very minimal dues rate, currently about \$2.10 per month or \$25.20 per year.

Let us look at some benefits that you only receive as a union member whether active or retired:

NALC Health Benefit Plan, The Mutual Benefit Association (Life Insurance for members and family), and the NALC Members App for your cell phone. These are just some of the member benefits that are there for your protection and the protection of your families. NALC also allows all members to participate in the scholarship program for their children who are planning to go to college.

NALC provides an Accident Death benefit for all NALC members. The NALC Group Insurance Coverage has been provided since 1985. All active, retired, and city carrier assistants of the NALC in good standing are eligible for the benefit. It also includes other non-supervisory postal career service employees. The basic benefit coverage is \$5,000 and there is no cost to members.

There is some benefit for everyone who needs protection for themselves and their family.

On the legislative side, NALC has a Congressional District Liaison in every Congressional District of the Federal Government nationwide to continue discussion with our representatives on U. S. Postal issues as well as working conditions and benefits for active and retired members that include Postal Reform Legislation.

As a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers, both active and retired, know that at work or retirement, you will always have an old dog in the fight to protect you and your family and keep you **worry free!**

During the past years, we have taken a very lenient effort to protect deferred missing dues beyond our usual policy during COVID-19. The time has come where this policy has made great progress to protect our members, especially those who have our health benefits to protect you and your families.

It is your responsibility to do your part, pay your dues, keep updating your address if changed, phone number that is current, and always inform our Branch if you are injured, on the job or off the job disability. The other thing you are responsible to do is notify our Branch if you are deployed for military duty with a copy of your orders.

The alternative when you fail to do your part is cancellation of membership, which keeps you protected for you and your family. Cancellation is not what your union wants for any of our members or their families.

Fraternally and Faithfully,
Alan Peacock, Trustee



Alan Peacock
Trustee
President Emeritus
Branch 599



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF LETTER CARRIERS
**Stamp
Out
Hunger**
FOOD DRIVE

Thanks to
our patrons
and
sponsors,
we collected
a whole lot
of food!



From the Treasurer's Desk – 5th Edition

Brothers and Sisters,
I am honored to inform the members of Branch 599 that I was appointed to the position of NALCREST Trustee. At the monthly meeting that I attended at NALCREST in May, through a conference call with the NALC Executive Council and the two other Trustees, Mattie Rose and Fred Rolando, it was made official. I replace the legion, long time NALCREST trustee, Don Southern, who retired. The Trustees meet once a month in person at NALCREST, and having the opportunity to meet with Mattie Rose and Fred Rolando and make tough decisions with them is truly special. I am proud to represent Branch 599 in this nationally recognized position.

Back to business

How many of you know the cost to mail a letter? It is difficult to keep up with the increases if you are using Forever stamps. Less than three months ago the cost of a stamp increased to 63 cents from 60 cents. One year ago, the cost of a stamp was 58 cents. Well get ready, the U.S. Postal Service recently announced a proposal that it plans to raise the price of the stamp to 66 cents on July 9, 2023. These increases are part of Postmaster General Louis DeJoy's Delivering for America 10-year plan. The plan is to continue the increases until the Postal Service operates self-efficiently. In addition, the increase in First-Class Mail postage, this next one a 5.4% increase is needed to offset the rise in inflation. Operating expenses have increased due to inflation and those increases are necessitating price adjustments. The goal is to increase revenue to attain financial stability. Remember, the first Forever stamp, featuring an image of the Liberty Bell, went on sale in April 2007, at a cost of 41 cents. Should the proposed increase be approved by the Postal Regulatory Commission, the increase from the first Forever stamp would be 25

cents. Even with the increases, PMG DeJoy seems to believe the increases will be accepted and stresses the U.S. Postal Service remains among the most affordable in the world. I have been skeptical of PMG DeJoy's 10-year plan. As the USPS continues to lose mailing customers, the frequent increases will help continue this trend.

—*Yahoo News and this writer's opinion*

Quick Hits:

Information you should know

This month, in staying with the importance of knowing our National officers...the bio of our NALC Vice President. James D. Henry of Garden Grove CA Branch 1100 was elected to the office of vice president by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

A Los Angeles native, Henry began his postal career as a letter carrier in Pomona CA in 1988. His path to becoming a NALC activist began the same year he was unjustly disciplined and his branch came to his aid, resolving the case in his favor.

Thereafter, I knew I couldn't stand by and see letter carriers treated unfairly, Henry said. I became a shop steward, and my calling of representing letter carriers began. His appointment as a steward came only six months after he joined the Postal Service.

In 1991, he was appointed as an area steward, and after completing advocate training in 1995, he became an arbitration advocate for Region 1. In 1998, Henry was appointed to serve as one of NALC's first Step B representatives for the Step B pilot program and again when the program was made permanent. He was elected vice president of Branch 1100 in 1999 and senior vice president in 2008.

President Rolando appointed Henry as a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 1 in 2011. As a RAA, he oversaw six dispute resolution

teams, conducted dozens of interventions, represented carriers during multiple unemployment hearings, negotiated thousands of pre-arbitration settlements, and presented more than 150 cases in arbitration. He also negotiated hundreds of local contracts. In 2015, then-Vice President Lew Drass selected him as a facilitator/instructor for the Advanced Formal A and Beyond and arbitration advocate trainings.

Henry is a Marine Corps veteran after serving for 22 years. He and his wife, Janice, have three children.

My guiding philosophy is 'the best ability is dependability, Henry said. Sometimes we must have the courage to do the right thing, even if it is unpopular or difficult. I strive to live up to that in my work for letter carriers.

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



Tony Diaz
Treasurer
President Emeritus
Branch 599



Driving Safety is a Top Priority for Everyone

Driving safety is a critical aspect of road safety that every carrier must take seriously. It involves a combination of knowledge, skill, and attitude that helps drivers avoid accidents and stay safe on the road. We will discuss some of the most important aspects of driving safety.

Firstly, it is essential to understand that driving safety starts with **YOU**. As a driver, you must be aware of your surroundings and be able to anticipate potential hazards on the road. This means keeping your eyes on the road at all times and avoiding distractions such as texting or using your phone while driving.

Secondly, it is crucial to follow traffic rules and regulations. This includes obeying speed limits, traffic signals, and road signs. It also means **wearing your seatbelt at all times**. You should always be aware of traffic in front, behind and beside you. Managing the space and being seen gives you time and space to avoid a collision. Leave a cushion of space ahead, behind and on both sides...because the greatest risk of a collision is in front of you and beside you. Keep your eyes constantly moving, scanning the road ahead and to the side and checking your LLV mirrors every time before your vehicle is moving. Communicate with other road users to make sure they see you and know what you are doing. Make eye contact with pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers at intersections and signal whenever you want to slow down, stop, turn, or change lanes. If you need to get another person's attention, use your horn.

Thirdly, it is essential to maintain your vehicle properly. Regular maintenance checks can help identify potential problems before they become serious issues that could cause an accident.

This includes checking your brakes, tires, lights, and other critical components of your vehicle. It is important to do our **Morning Vehicle Safety Check**. If the vehicle needs to be repaired, please fill out the vehicle repair tag and give it to your supervisor immediately. *Expanded Vehicle Safety Checklist* was listed in last month's article.

Finally, it is crucial to avoid driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and some medications may make you drowsy. Driving while impaired can significantly worsen your judgment and reaction time, making it much more likely that you will be involved in an accident.

In conclusion, driving safety is a critical aspect of road safety that every driver must take seriously. By following traffic rules and regulations, maintaining your vehicle properly, and avoiding distractions while driving, you can help ensure that you stay safe on the road.

Safety is our No. 1 priority and life doesn't take a second chance.

Clement Cheung

Labor Management Representative



Clement Cheung
Labor Management Rep.
Branch 599

Veterans Buzz



Happy Military
Appreciation Month!

To my fellow veterans, I would like to thank you for your dedicated service to our country. It's been 40 years since I stood on

those yellow footprints at Parris Island. I'm proud to say my brothers and I served in the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. To all who have gone above and beyond, I thank you very much.

I am starting a monthly column devoted to veterans. My goal is to address any concerns, questions, or problems associated with being a veteran working with the postal service. I may not know everything, but will try to find the answer. Since this is the beginning, I am opening the door for any suggestions for next month's article or if

you have something to post, send it. Please feel free to contact me at mosmith46@gmail.com.

The NALC has a veteran's group on the members only site. Please sign in and provide your information. You will receive a quarterly bulletin dedicated to veterans along with some helpful information. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides a variety of benefits for veterans as well as the state of Florida. Many veterans are not aware of these benefits. The Postal Service has come onboard and additionally provides benefits to letter carriers such as: buying back military time, military leave, and veterans preference, to name a few. The time you served may help in retirement. Let's get with it!

Semper Fi!

Mike Smith, Vice President



Mike Smith
Vice President
Branch 599

Get out of the heat and join your fellow union members
for an afternoon of fun!

Branch 599

Family Bowling Day

July 23 1-3 PM

at

Pin Chasers Midtown

4847 N Armenia Avenue, Tampa 33603



\$10 per Person for 2 hours of bowling and shoes, socks, pizza.

(minimum number of people to hold event is 20)

**Please call our Branch office at 813.875.0599
by July 12 at 3:30 PM to reserve your spot.**



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

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

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

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

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

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



North Florida

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

Central Florida

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

South Florida

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



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



4fedhurt.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

Other tips:

1. Your online account at ecomp.dol.gov will be available to download should you need a paper copy of any of your forms.
2. Write a detailed, thorough, complete, and legible statement. Some important information to consider, if applicable: the time, the place, the conditions, the surface(s), any contributing factors, possible witnesses, and any hazards.

On the Job Injury - Forms needed, simple math,

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

CA-16 must be signed by management,

Authorization for Examination and/or treatment.

Any questions...call the Branch office; ask for Brian Obst, 813.875.0599.



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