



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 7

JULY 2015

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

Food Drive update

Brothers and Sisters, the final collection total from the May 9, 2015 Letter Carriers Food Drive was **1,015,495 pounds**. Regardless if the 2015 total is less than the total in 2014 (1,234,000 pounds), we collected a lot of food and many families will benefit! As I mentioned last month, *thanks to all* who stayed after work and who came in on their scheduled day off. *Thanks to all* carriers for giving a little extra, supporting the 23rd Annual 2015 Letter Carriers Food Drive!

While our totals were down from last year, we must and will do a better job next year, organizing a plan. Beginning the process earlier, involving more carriers, and making the public more aware of the Food Drive and the importance. Through social media, billboards, and commercials it is vital that the public knows our cause. Everyone's efforts will feed hungry families right here in Hillsborough County.

Technology Awareness

On the heels of my article last month regarding under

time, carriers face new technology to track the daily deliveries and the timeliness of those daily deliveries. Carriers need to be conscientious in their delivery duties and have a reason for any deviation(s) if questioned.

There is a board in a *command room* at the District building on Lois Avenue that can track all carriers in the city at one time, can isolate on a particular zone, or focus on an individual route. Area headquarters also has the ability to track any city, zone, or carrier. For example, after the Memorial Day holiday, there was a station in Tampa that had carriers out past 8 PM and it raised a flag at Area. That evening beginning about 6:30 to 7 PM, Tampa had a torrential rain with severe lightning that obviously delayed the carriers with their deliveries. Several carriers were called into the manager's office the next day to discuss their deliveries and answer questions about abnormalities with time variables between certain points. The carriers answered very professionally and had a recall of the prior day's activities. One

had a trip causing his scans to be inconsistent; one received auxiliary assistance causing his scans to be inconsistent; one sat in place, suspending his deliveries until the lightning subsided in fear of being struck, causing a delay. So this tracking can be used as a positive also, if you do your job and be where you are supposed to be. When management asks, *where have you been?* Answer, *look at your tracking system, it will tell you.*

So let me share with you the following information I received to better explain the who, what, when, and whys of a new tracking system installed in July 2014 in anticipation of the new scanners that have been now been deployed:

DMS - Delivery Management System (Introduction)

The Postal Service has developed the Delivery Management System (DMS)



Tony Diaz
President
Branch 599

Branch 599 Meetings

Thursday
July 9
7:30 PM

(Continued on page 3)

Branch 599 Office

3003 W Cypress Street
Tampa FL 33609-1617

813.875.0599

Fax 813.870.0599

www.nalc599.com

Tony Diaz
President

tony_diaz599@yahoo.com

Office Hours

Monday-Friday

8 AM – 4:30 PM

Rodna Kimelman Kirk

Office Secretary

nalc599@verizon.net

Tampa Letter Carrier

Tony Diaz
Publisher

Phyllis R. Thomas
Editor
editor@nalc599.com

Branch 599 Office
813.875.0599

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 5th of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

Officers

| Position | Officer | Phone | Email |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| President | Tony Diaz | 813.598.9635 office 813.875.0599 | tony_diaz599@yahoo.com |
| Vice President | Alan Peacock | 813.892.9378 | apeacock.nalc@verizon.net |
| Recording Secretary | Michael Brink | 813.661.1636 | recording.sec@nalc599.com |
| Financial Secretary | Gilbert Cabanas | 813.405.8424 | financial.sec@nalc599.com |
| Treasurer | John Gebo | 813.503.1256 | jjg7d7@aol.com |
| Sergeant-at-Arms | J.C. Howard | 813.310.0689 | |
| MBA/NSBA | Al Guice | 813.465.9754 | |
| Health Benefit Rep. | Lance Jones | 813.264.9801 | |
| Director of Retirees | Don Thomas | 813.963.0653 | retirees@nalc599.com |
| Trustees | Lori McMillion, Ch. | 813.263.7101 | |
| | Maggie Lancaster | 813.317.7522 | joelunaticplayer@aol.com |
| | José Oliva | 813.299.8442 | |
| Labor Management | Nick Cullaro | 813.541.8159 | |
| | Warren Sumlin | 813.486.7612 | |
| Presidents Emeritus | 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 | Grant Daniels | 813.661.1636 | 850.210.4906 |
| Carrollwood | 33618 | Freddie Nemphus | 813.961.2962 | 813.263.7895 |
| Commerce | 33602 | Detlev Aepfel | 813.242.4507 | 813.505.7914 |
| Forest Hills/Annex | 33612/13 | Nick Cullaro | 813.935.2954 | 813.541.8159 |
| Hilldale/Annex | 33614/34 | Varick Reeder | 813.879.4309 | 315.491.6234 |
| Hyde Park | 33606 | Joe Bitz | 813.873.7189 | 813.465.0004 |
| Interbay/Port Tampa | 33611/16 | Clement Cheung | 813.831.2034 | 813.758.5910 |
| Interbay/Peninsula | 33629 | Clement Cheung | 813.831.2034 | 813.758.5910 |
| Palm River Annex | 33619 | Pam Benton | 813.663.0048 | 813.475.0753 |
| Plant City | 33564 | Christopher Woodside | 813.719.6793 | 813.924.6869 |
| Produce | 33610 | Elvin Rodriguez | 813.239.4084 | 646.346.3288 |
| Ruskin/Sun City Ctr | 33570 | Aric Person | 813.634.1403 | 813.545.7779 |
| Seminole Heights | 33603 | Walt Rhoades | 813.237.4569 | 813.389.1708 |
| Sulphur Springs | 33604 | Steve Hall | 813.237.4569 | 813.494.4669 |
| TCA/Peninsula | 33609 | Troy Figueroa | 813.873.7189 | 347.403.1644 |
| TCA/West Tampa | 33607 | John Lacko | 813.873.7189 | 347.453.4562 |
| Temple Terrace | 33617 | Warren Sumlin | 813.988.0152 | 813.486.7612 |
| Town 'N Country | 33615/35 | Brian Obst | 813.884.0973 | 727.458.0679 |
| Ybor City | 33605 | Detlev Aepfel | 813.242.4507 | 813.505.7914 |

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

intended to improve carrier efficiency for street delivery. This system will include geo-fence technology to assist supervisors in monitoring delivery operations. Geo-fence technology is a system based on the concept of virtual geographic zones. If a carrier deviates from their designated geographic zone during street delivery, an alert is sent to the supervisor in an email or text message. The DMS will enable supervisors to see *at a glance* the location of each mail carrier and determine whether the carrier is ahead or behind their scheduled delivery time. To accomplish this, DMS will combine Global Positioning System (GPS) data gathered via handheld scanning devices with the data from various existing systems. The DMS will display an icon to indicate the location and timeliness of each carrier. A red circle indicates the carrier is more than 15 minutes behind schedule, a yellow square indicates the carrier is fewer than 15 minutes behind schedule, and a green diamond indicates the carrier is either on time or ahead of their scheduled delivery time. The accuracy of this information is paramount to enabling delivery supervisors to quickly determine which routes require assistance. The use of geo-fence technology is a proactive approach to increasing carrier visibility to aid street management. However, the addition of route deviations may cause inaccuracies, which in turn may cause supervisors to react to delays that do not exist. This is the tracking system that the USPS has been planning, for years, to track a carrier's every move.

Facts, if you deviate have a reason, if you are behind on your route, management may come out to visit you to determine why you are running late. If you are ahead of schedule, and gave an estimate you would need overtime, management may pay you a visit to

observe your situation. Bottom line, be consistent every day, same pace, and no deviations unless necessary, and above all, be safe.

Uniform Allowances

The Class Action Citywide grievance we filed and settled regarding uniform allowances and the process is coming to a conclusion; Tim Hyers has completed gathering the data to comply with the grievance settlement. The uniform allowance for all converted carriers was processed May 14; cards should be arriving or should have arrived in the mail. Tim Hyers and I met on May 15, to discuss the entire process. We continue to work on contacting those who were converted to try to find out if they received their final CCA uniform allowance...it has been about 50/50 in our findings. For those who did not receive their final CCA uniform allowance, they will be issued that allowance in addition to the one already processed. The process for the CCAs will be to find out if they have received any uniform allowances to date; many emails have been sent to the managers to finalize this process. The spreadsheet that Tim created will make the uniform allowance process much easier and accurate to monitor in the future.

Quick Hits:

Information you should know

*) Postal revenues bump up in 2015 (*The Hill*)

The piece in *The Hill* also had a great headline, followed by a good, lengthy story citing successes before obstacles. Rolando, Brennan and USPS Chief Financial Officer Joseph Corbett were quoted, Rolando more than either. Fredric Rolando, the president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, echoed postal officials in praising the agency's most recent performance, while showing none of the same long-term concerns. *The*

quarter's \$313 million operating profit puts black ink for the first half of the year above \$1.4 billion—surpassing all of last year's operating profit, Rolando said. This three-year trend in operating profitability makes clear the need to strengthen—not degrade—the now-profitable networks, he added.

*) APWU contract talks end without an agreement

Contract negotiations between the American Postal Workers Union and the US Postal Service ended without an agreement on May 27. *The USPS scuttled any prospect of reaching a deal by insisting on severe cuts in pay and benefits, despite the fact that progress had been made on many non-economic issues, President Mark Dimondstein reported. Management's economic demands and proposed changes to the workforce structure were completely unacceptable, he said.*

The Postal Service proposals include:

- Eliminate cost-of-living adjustments as we know them;
- Increase employees' contributions to healthcare coverage;
- Create a new, permanent lower pay scale for future career employees with reduced benefits;
- Increase the percentage of non-career employees,
- Weaken protection against layoffs.

The NALC is closely monitoring the contract talks between the USPS and the APWU with the upcoming contract talks of our own.

*) Next work party – July 12, 2015

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

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy

and prayerful support is extended to **Debbie Basen** [Hilldale] and family at the passing of her husband, Terry, May 15.

Leberth, Boczarski, Burke, and Rezanka Retired!



Donna Leberth and Tony Diaz



James Boz Boczarski and Tony Diaz



Gregory Burke and Tony Diaz



Matt Rezanka and Tony Diaz

President Diaz recognized **Donna Leberth** [Sun City Center], **James Boz Boczarski** [Sulphur Springs], **Gregory Burke** [Commerce], and **Matt Rezanka** [Hyde Park] during our June Branch meeting and presented them with a check from the Branch for their retirement.

Keep Us Updated!

Please remember to notify our Branch Office when you change your name, address, email address, or phone number(s).

The Birdseye View

Discipline

As Vice President of our branch I have the opportunity to do many Formal A steps for grievances of the Dispute Resolution Process in several different offices. What I would like to address is the increase of discipline that is being issued and the importance for any employee to notify the union immediately when any discipline of any kind is issued to you by your supervisor or manager. There are instances where you may not have a steward available due to being on leave or maybe it is an office with no steward assigned. Everyone should become as knowledgeable of the discipline article of the contract as they are aware of the overtime article that puts money in your pocket. Article 8 of the National Agreement puts money in your pocket and Article 16 of the National Agreement is the discipline article that at some point could take money out of your pocket or even progress to taking away your employment. We have a contractual obligation called Weingarten Rights that insure you will have representation during any investigative process. If you receive any discipline letter that accuses you of any charges that stem from your investigative process, it is extremely important to ask for your steward or contact our branch office and request representation. There are time limits for filing to challenge whether the discipline has merits or whether it was issued for just cause. In the climate we are currently in there is a lot that does not meet the tenets of just cause or fails to be corrective in nature, but is issued to just see what sticks when it is thrown at you.

The M-39 Handbook for administration of delivery services require management to make every effort to find out all the facts and do a thorough investigation before they issue any discipline to an employee. It also states that if the employee's stand has merit,

admit it and correct the situation. Too often in management's haste to issue an employee discipline, they do a half-hearted investigation that is nothing more than accusational questions that support their predetermined discipline regardless of the facts. There are also procedural errors that could be used to invalidate the necessity for discipline.

The Employee Labor Relations Manual, better known as the ELM, is a manual that management will refer to when accusing an employee of some kind of misconduct. Often it is in regards to how you know the sections in the ELM and many of you will answer yes to something that you have no knowledge of during an investigative interview. When you are asked something you don't know an answer to, just tell them no and ask to see the manual they are referring to and let you read it. Then you can make an educated answer to their trick question. Your union representatives have the right to challenge those types of questions when they are accusing you of something rather than trying to find out the facts of the incident they are investigating. We also use the ELM in defense of just cause like attendance issues where they determine you have irregular attendance, but fail to review your attendance with you every quarter in order to warn you how you need to improve before they discipline you for this kind of issue. One of our favorite defenses is in the area of unsatisfactory performance where they accuse you of something and discipline you for something that happened just once. Then when they fail to follow their own manual that requires that efforts are made and documented in order to correct performance issues and train you and discuss your consistent performance issues you have before they discipline you for them.

In addition to all the manuals that they use and we will use to defend what we

label as abusive or frivolous discipline, there are hundreds of past decisions from arbitrations to B-team decisions as well as National Memorandums that will support our grievance of improper or abusive discipline.

The number one factor that actually causes us to lose discipline grievances is when we fail to meet the 14-day time limits or other time limits for appealing the grievance forward. The largest reason for that is when carriers are issued discipline, they either assume the union knows about it or they don't even inquire or ask to see their steward or request a union representative. When we fail to grieve discipline in a timely manner it ends up in our official file for two years and can be used against us for future discipline and possibly progress to the level of removal from the Postal Service.

Anyone that receives discipline should never accept anything without filing a grievance and asking for your steward or contacting your union officers to represent you. Even if you feel you warrant the discipline, it should always be investigated to see that it meets the merits of just cause as well as being issued timely and is corrective in nature. Discipline should always be issued fairly and consistently for the corrective issue. In other words, no one should be punished harsher than someone else for the same type of violation.

All employees should educate themselves on all the National and Local contracts and be fully knowledgeable of all the duties and requirements of your job. Discipline is on the rise especially for scanning issues. Even though we have a National Level Memorandum which states that missed scans are not

(Continued on page 6)



Alan Peacock
Vice President
Branch 599

Branch 599 Bylaw Policy

When a proposed bylaw change is submitted at a Branch Union Meeting:

I want to explain the Branch 599 bylaw policy. The reasoning for the explanation of the Branch 599 bylaw policy is to clarify some confusion that came about when a proposed bylaw change was submitted at the April Branch meeting for publication in the May newsletter. This was the first bylaw proposal in my presidency. As President and Publisher of Branch 599 I believe these rules are necessary to insure consistency with our operation.

The maker of a proposed bylaw change or any member cannot formulate an argument in a submitted article to our Branch newsletter. Regardless if the article is for or against a proposed bylaw change, your opinions in the article cannot influence or sway a member(s) before the proposed bylaw change is debated at the next Branch meeting. Mention of a proposed bylaw change and the fact it will be debated at the next Branch meeting is well within the Branch bylaw rules. This would act as a reminder to come out and debate how your money is being spent, should it be a proposed expenditure. Any articles submitted to the newsletter the month when a proposed bylaw was submitted at the Branch meeting must be submitted by the 5th of that month. The newsletter must arrive at all members' mailboxes 10 days prior to the Branch meeting. From here forth, when any proposed bylaw changes are submitted at a Branch meeting, I will review the bylaw rules to the membership at that meeting.

I permitted an article to be printed and placed in the May newsletter formulating an argument for the proposed bylaw change by the maker of the bylaw. For the reasons of not explaining the Branch bylaw policy, I allowed the article to stand. However, in the future, I will return the article back to the sender with proper submission instructions.

This would have eliminated a rebuttal article in the June newsletter that was in response to the article I permitted to be published on the proposed bylaw. I believe in freedom of speech, and do not want to get into the business of censorship. I simply ask our membership to follow the Branch bylaw policy. This one falls on me, lesson learned.

Tony Diaz
President/Publisher

The Birdseye View

(Continued from page 5)

the sole determinant for discipline, it still doesn't mean that management won't issue discipline for missed scans. It just means that it is a possible defense for being issued discipline when a missed scan is the sole determinant for receiving the discipline. There is a huge difference in proving that someone failed to do something and disciplining them for presuming that you have proof that they actually failed to scan something.

Another huge issue is unprofessional estimates along with working unauthorized overtime. We have offered training to assist our members with dealing with these issues, but the majority of you never attended the class.

You need to know what your base times are and know what your standards are to protect yourself, as well as when you are leaving the office later than you estimated or your street time was longer than average due to something that caused delay on delivering your route, then these are reasons for amending your help slip 3996 and have your supervisor sign it that you have notified them of any changes in your estimated workload for the day. Always put the responsibility back on management and never assume that they will believe you without documenting everything you do during the day.

Another form of setting an employee up for discipline is through having ser-

vice talks and documenting that they actually had training. Unless you actually have training on something where you are directly trained or educated on a particular function or standard operating procedure (SOP) then don't sign a blanket training record that will be used against you in discipline.

Hopefully, this information will help many of you to educate yourselves better and know your responsibilities as well as the responsibilities of management. Remember to keep your steward and union branch officers informed of any threats of or discipline actually issued...it is your job to protect along with each other.

Fraternally in Unionism,
Alan Peacock, Vice President

NALC BRANCH 599

Labor Day Picnic



Sunday • September 6
12-4 PM

Save this date on your calendar!

Details are being firmed up and
will follow at a later date.

Proposed Bylaw Changes

ARTICLE VI Duties of Officers

Duties of the President

Section 1 (B) Currently reads:

(B) He/She shall, together with the Treasurer, sign and file with the Secretary of Labor on behalf of the Branch, an annual Finance Report if required by public law. The filing of such reports will be required unless the Branch has received express notification from the National Association that it is exempt from such requirements. He/She shall by virtue of his/her office be the Chief Steward of the Branch and he/she may delegate such authority to others members. The President shall have the authority to call the Vice-President into the Branch office no more than twenty-four (24) hours a week to assist in office duties. Vice-President will be paid his/her hourly rate by the Branch. These hours can be scheduled at the convenience of the Vice-President with concurrence by the President.

Proposed to Read:

He/she shall, together with the treasurer, sign and file with the Secretary of Labor on behalf of the Branch, an annual Finance Report if required by public law. The filing of such reports will be required unless the Branch has received express notification from the National Association that it is exempt from such requirement. He/she shall by virtue of his/her office be the Chief Steward of the Branch and he/she may delegate such authority to other members. The President shall have the authority to call the Vice-President into the Branch office no more than twenty-four (24) hours a week to assist in office duties. Vice-President when he/she is called in will be compensated at the hourly rate of top letter carrier pay of CC Grade 2 – Step O and all wage increases and cost of living increases with the same percentage given Letter Carriers. These hours can be scheduled at the convenience of the Vice-President with concurrence by the President.

Signed by: Brian Obst, Jim Good, and Mike Brink

Newsletter
Policy Change

Authors, please note that from this date forward, you are to submit any and all articles for publication in this newsletter to both our editor and our branch office at the following addresses: editor@nalc599.com and nalc599@verizon.net

Proposed Bylaw Changes

Duties of Vice-President

Article VI

Currently reads:

Section 3:

The Duties of the Vice-President shall be as follows:

- (A) The Vice-President shall be in charge of all EEO cases for the members of Branch 599.
- (B) The Vice-President shall be expected to remain current in the on-going operations of the Branch. For the faithful fulfilling of these duties, the Vice-President shall receive \$200.00 per month for allowed expenses.
- (D) When the Vice-President serves in the absence of the President, as directed by the Branch, the provisions of Article VI, Section 1, D; shall apply.

Proposed To Read:

- (A) The Vice-President shall assume the duties of the President whenever the President is out of the office two (2) or more workdays.
- (B) The Vice-President shall be in charge of all EEO cases for the members of Branch 599.
- (C) The Vice-President shall be expected to remain current in the on-going operations of the Branch. For the faithful fulfilling of these duties, the Vice-President shall receive \$200.00 per month for allowed expenses.
- (D) When the Vice-President serves in the absence of the President, as directed by the Branch, the provisions of Article VI, Section 1, D; shall apply.

Signed by: Jim Good, Michael Anderson, Brian Obst, Mike Brink, and Detlev C. Aeppel



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



Boz Boczarski dressed old school for his final day on the route in Sulphur Springs!



Hyde Park carrier **George McEndree** is featured on the back cover of the June 2015 *Postal Record* for the Stamp Out Hunger food drive. The picture is a classic and exemplifies the true spirit of the letter carrier and is a great representation of Branch 599!

THOSE WHO EXPECT TO REAP THE BLESSINGS OF FREEDOM, MUST, LIKE MEN, UNDERGO THE FATIGUE OF SUPPORTING IT.
BY THOMAS PAINE

Happy 4th of July!

*Enjoy the holiday
and be safe!*

Note that Branch Meeting will be on the 9th.

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM

June 30
August 4

Sunday Work Party at our Hall

9-11 AM

July 12
August 9

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM

July 9
August 6

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday July 6 9 AM
Coffee Cup Restaurant
4407 N Hubert Avenue, Tampa

Tuesday July 14 8 AM
Bob Evans Restaurant
SR-60 & Falkenburg Road, Brandon

ARSLAN UNIFORMS

Bill & Shirley Moran

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

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FAX 727.585.9367
bilmor@tampabay.rr.com



A.R. Tony Huerta Branch 599
National Association of Letter Carriers
3003 W Cypress Street
Tampa FL 33609-1617

813.875.0599 • Fax 813.870.0599
www.nalc599.com

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