



# Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume 2 - Issue 12

A.R. "Tony" Huerta - NALC Branch 599

December 2003

## President's Report

by Jim Good

President - Branch 599

Well, it's that time of the year again. The holiday season is fast approaching and with it comes the end of another year. I know that it has been a tough (yet profitable) year for letter carriers, what with route inspections and adjustments, carriers being excessed from their jobs in Tampa, and staffing in the city so inadequate that forced overtime is the rule of the day rather than the exception. But I believe that we have hit the bottom and will start to see an improvement in working conditions in the city.

That is not to say that management has opened their eyes and realized the error of their ways. They still swear that the only staffing problems in Tampa are caused by carriers not showing up for work. They say too many employees are out on sick leave or from on-the-job injuries. While we know that people do indeed get sick and hurt on the job as a result of the kind of work that we do, management fails to recognize this fact.

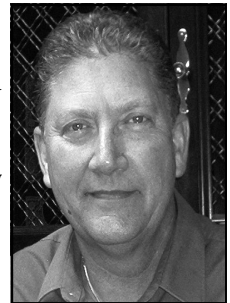
A few things have happened that have caused me to think that things are looking up. Through attrition, and the simple fact that there are more positions in the city than there are carriers to bid on them, we have seen ten excessed carriers returned to the carrier craft in Tampa. That leaves

twelve still awaiting their turn to exercise their retreat rights and come home.

Secondly, we recently won an arbitration that will dissolve the collection routes at the GMF and put the collections back on combination delivery/collection routes at the stations where they were prior to January 10, 2002. This ruling should result in at least five or six new routes being formed and posted for bid, hopefully by February, 2004. That will give all the carriers who lost their combination collection/delivery routes in January of 2002 the opportunity to bid on the newly formed combination routes, as well as cause an equal number of excessed carriers to be returned to Tampa. It will also free up a number of part-time flexible carriers, who were doing the collections, to help out at the stations. And finally, because of a grievance settlement at Temple Terrace Annex, two new reserve carrier positions will be posted within the next month. This should cause another two excessed carriers to be returned to Tampa.

These things are not happening because management is trying to deal in good faith with the union! They are not hap-

*(continued on page 4)*



**BRANCH  
MEETING  
THURSDAY  
DECEMBER 4  
7:30 PM  
AT  
THE  
UNION HALL**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

ATTS LINE .....	5
EAT GOES ON.....	8
IRDSEYE VIEW .....	10
ERSPECTIVE .....	11

**Branch Officers**

PRESIDENT	Jim Good	813-960-3759 Cell 417-8877
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT	John Watts	813-971-5525 Cell 240-5995
VICE PRESIDENT	Michael Brousseau	727-726-7355
RECORDING SECRETARY	Clark Alday	813-238-9685
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	John Gebo	813-985-5474
TREASURER	Michael Anderson	813-681-5688
TRUSTEE (Chairman)	Henry Dupree	813-621-6471
TRUSTEE	Butch Smith	813-933-4676
TRUSTEE	Brian Obst	727-507-0135
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS	Lance Jones	813-968-9369
MBA/NSBA	Albert Guice	813-621-7931
HEALTH BENEFITS	Detlev Aeppel	813-907-9685
DIRECTOR OF RETIREES	Jack Newman	813-805-2942

The National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 599, 3003 W. Cypress Street, Tampa, FL 33609-1617, 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. It is the policy of this publication that all articles submitted for publication must be signed by the writer. All articles are subject to editing and revision at the discretion of the publisher & editor. **Please submit articles to the branch office no later than the tenth of the month.**

Jim Good - Publisher

Kit Kelley - Editor

Office: 813-875-0599

Email: [nalc599@verizon.net](mailto:nalc599@verizon.net)



**NALC BRANCH 599 WEB SITE:**

**<http://www.nalc599.com>**

Shop Stewards

Brandon	33510	Jim Brophy	813-875-1680
Brandon	33510	Miroslaw Oldziej	813-661-1106
Carrollwood	33618	Susan Sinigaglia	813-962-3128
Commerce	33602	Dook Ramotar Sr.	813-780-6254
Forest Hills	33612	John Watts	813-971-5525
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Ella Winner	352-583-0626
Hilldale	33614	Gilbert Cabanas	813-855-0516
Hilldale Annex	33634	Lance Jones	813-968-9369
Hyde Park	33606	George McEndree	813-935-0244
Interbay	33611	Dee Brockman	813-831-2034
Interbay	33629	Brian Obst	727-507-0135
MacDill	33608	Dee Brockman	813-831-2034
Northdale	33624	Freddie Nimphius	813-968-7491
Palm River	33619	J.C. Howard	813-621-1976
Plant City	33565	Misty Bauer	813-719-6793
Port Tampa	33616	Dee Brockman	813-831-2034
Produce	33610	Harold Frantz	813-231-2621
Ruskin/Sun City	33570	Jack Hencoski	813-633-5422
Seminole Heights	33603	Mike Stewart	813-238-7401
Sulphur Springs	33604	Albert Guice	813-621-7931
TCA	33609	Alan Peacock	813-962-0646
TCA	33607	Anthony Moran	813-872-0709
Temple Terrace	33617	Mike Anderson	813-681-5688
Town & Country	33615	Brian Obst	727-507-0135
Ybor	33605	Detlev Aeppel	813-907-9685

Labor Management Members

Tony Diaz	813-872-1542
Matt Kokich	813-469-9753

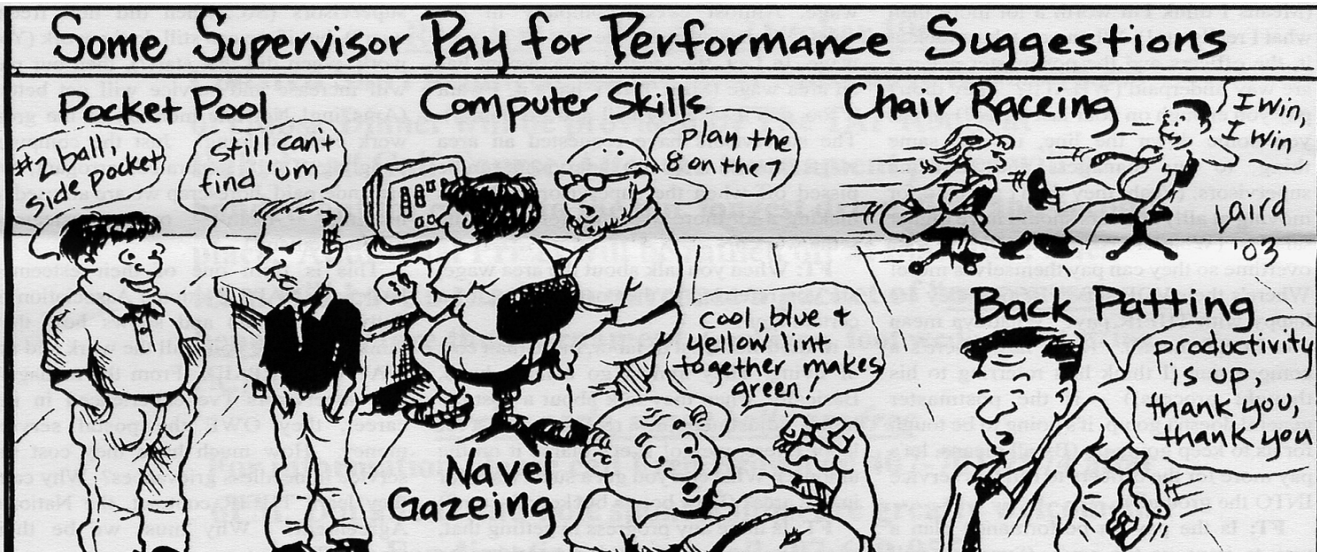
MAPS Coordinator

Christian Albrecht 727-791-7162

Presidents Emeritus

Milton McConnell	James Butler
Garland Tickle	Orbe Andux
Don Thomas	Michael Anderson
Lenin V. Perez	

**RETIREES BREAKFAST**  
**First Monday of every month**  
**9:00 AM**  
**at**  
**The Coffee Cup**  
**4407 N. Hubert**  
**in Drew Park**  
**( NE corner of MLK & Hubert )**



-----from The Orlando Carrier

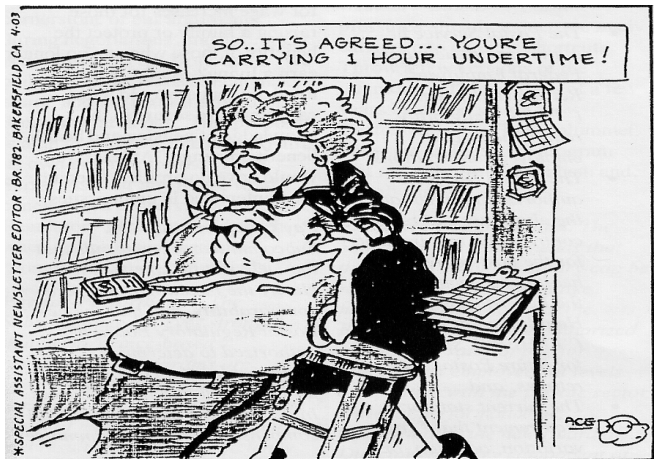
## The President's Report *(from page 1)*

pening as a result of management's appreciation for your hard work! These things are being done because your shop stewards and officers are fighting for your rights and policing the National Agreement. I know that many carriers are not staunch union activists, but you all need to appreciate the hard work that your union shop stewards do on a daily basis to protect your rights. Being a shop steward is a tough job that sometimes places the steward in the crosshairs of the manager. Take a minute to say "thanks".

As I've said in past articles, now is the time we need to stick together to protect our future with the Postal Service. I ask all of you, who have not done so, to go to our National website at [www.NALC.org](http://www.NALC.org) and fill out the form to be an E-activist. It takes just a minute and will put

you on a list so that you can be contacted, when needed, to write, phone and e-mail your congressional representatives and educate them regarding your concerns on upcoming legislation.

In closing I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a joyous Holiday Season.



# **ARSLAN UNIFORMS**

*Bill Moran*

*Retired Letter Carrier Branch 1477 St. Petersburg*

*Honorary Member Branch 599 Tampa*

**NEED UNIFORMS IN A HURRY?  
SHOP BY PHONE FROM HOME**

320 PATLIN CIRCLE EAST

PHONE: 727-584-4307

LARGO, FL 33770-3063 CELL: 727-543-0705 FAX: 727-585-9367

[wfm505@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:wfm505@tampabay.rr.com)

## The Watts Line

by **John A. Watts**

*Executive Vice-President - Branch 599*

For some reason the management side of the "B" team has been impassing most of the grievances that the shop stewards in the city of Tampa have been filing. When the "B" team impasses a grievance whether discipline or contractual, it is sent to the Business Agent's office so that it can be scheduled for arbitration. In discipline cases it can take six to nine months before it is heard by an arbitrator. In contractual cases the time can be anywhere from a year to two years.

Well the branch just got a decision back on the grievance that was filed for taking the collections off of routes and moving them to the airport where casuals were doing the collection runs. The arbitrator ruled that management violated the National Agreement and *must* put the collections back to the routes they were taken from and have the carriers that lost these positions be given a chance to bid back on those assignments.

The city of Tampa has more cases *impassed* by the management side of the "B" team than all other cities in the Suncoast District combined. By the way, the management side of the "B" team is from Tampa and the Postmaster is still his boss.

We have a lot more arbitrations coming up in the near future. If the collection arbitration case win is any indication, in all those contractual cases that have been *impassed* by the "B" team locally, the union should prevail.



On November 18<sup>th</sup> there was a class given on a new program indorsed by both the Postal Service and the NALC. It is called *Customer Connect*. This program is designed to get some of the package and overnight business back that has been taken by UPS and FED-EX. It will initially start at four stations in Tampa: Forest Hills, Forest Hills Annex, Carrollwood and Tampa Carrier Annex.

The letter carriers will be asked to ask customers 4 four questions about their parcel and overnight business and then will ask the customer if they would like a customer representative from the postal service to come and talk to them about

*(continued on page 11)*

# TAMPA LETTER CARRIERS PRESENT BINGO

COME JOIN THE FUN

EVERY WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30

GAMES START AT 6:30

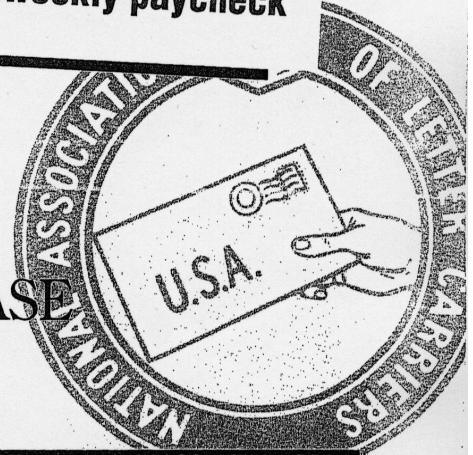
AT THE TAMPA LETTER CARRIERS HALL

3003 W. CYPRESS St.

Tampa, Fl. 33609

**NEW! Contribute to COLCPE regularly from your biweekly paycheck**

# How to contribute to **COLCPE** using PostalEASE



Letter carriers can contribute directly to COLCPE (NALC's Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education) from their paychecks every pay period using the Postal Service's PostalEASE. Through PostalEASE you can designate COLCPE as one of your two\* payroll "allotments."

**YOUR 17-DIGIT ACCOUNT NUMBER:**

- 1** Be sure you know your 4-digit USPS Personal Identification Number (PIN). If you cannot remember your PIN number, call PostalEASE at 1-877-4PS-EASE, select "1", enter your Social Security Number, select "1" to hear information about your PIN, and select "2" to have your PIN mailed to you.
- 2** Create your own *Account Number* by inserting in the spaces at right the first *seven* digits of the ID number that appears above your name on the back cover of your *Postal Record*.

0 0 3 4 9 5 2 5 3 5  
(First 7 digits of ID number on Postal Record label)

\*\*\*\*\*AUTO\*\* 5-DIGIT 54321  
 (XXXXXX)89 LC 9876 W13 08  
 JOHN CARRIER  
 1234 MAIN STREET  
 ANYWHERE, US 54321-9999

## **3** Now you are ready to call PostalEASE toll-free at 1-877-4PS-EASE (1-877-477-3273)

- When prompted, select "1" for PostalEASE and then enter your Social Security Number and your USPS PIN
- Select "2" for payroll options
- Select "1" for allotments
- *Disregard* instruction to complete Allotment Worksheet and select "2" to continue
- Select "3" to ADD a new allotment
- Enter the 9-digit Financial Institution Routing Number:  
**0 6 4 0 0 0 1 7**
- Select "1" to continue processing allotment
- Select "1" to "enter the allotment now"
- Enter your 17-digit Account Number from above
- Enter "1" for Checking
- Enter amount of allotment: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00 *per pay period*.  
If amount is correct, select "1"

**\*** If you already have two allotments, you must cancel one to contribute to COLCPE through PostalEASE. To do so, follow the instructions at left but instead of selecting "3" to add a new allotment, select "2" to cancel an allotment.

**After completing your entry, do not end the call until you hear the following:**

Confirmation Number:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your allotment will become effective on:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your allotment will be reflected in paycheck dated:  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Keep this information for your records and future reference.*

By making a COLCPE allotment through PostalEASE, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or employment by the Postal Service nor a part of union dues and that COLCPE will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office as permitted by law. You are also making this allotment with the understanding that COLCPE contributions are not tax deductible and that your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled through the PostalEASE system.



Coordinator Susan Sinigaglia, Mayor Pam Iorio and Sgt. Tom Woo kick off the 2003 Toys for Tots campaign



U.S. Marine Corps 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion members help kick off the Toys for Tots campaign



Lt. Col. Keith Moore, Susan Sinigaglia, Mayor Pam Iorio and Sgt. Tom Woo

## 2003 Toys for Tots Toy Drive

## And The Beat Goes On

by Ray Wallace

I don't have much to write about this month but seeing as it is the last month of 2003, I do want to write some thing.

First, all the charges brought against our president, Jim Good, have been dropped. The worst part of all this was a few people had a vendetta against President Good and how can they destroy him but to bring false charges and ask some carriers to sign the complaint? Would you believe that over half of those who signed this complaint never read the charges? One had never even been to the union hall and most don't even know Jim. I hope these carriers learn a valuable lesson here. You don't sign anything without reading what you're signing. This was *very serious*. All of this cost our union some big bucks. Don Thomas was asked to be in charge of this investigation with the help of Jim Brophy and Chris Albrecht. They did an excellent job and were thanked in the November meeting.

The November meeting was the first normal meeting we have had this year. No yelling, no charges, no large amount of carriers there, it was almost to the point of being dull. But I know Jim Good had to have loved it.

The health benefits representative talked about his trip to Las Vegas for the NALC Health Benefit Seminar. He and President Good went. Neither of them mentioned how much they won or lost while there. They say of all the plans, the NALC plan is the lowest in costs.

Years ago at a union meeting Tony Huerta mentioned that when a lot of carriers retired, they chose not to get Medicare B as it cost extra to do so. Then down the road if you decided you wanted to get it, you were penalized and it cost more every month. Well, like everything else in my life of one mistake after another, I didn't listen to Tony and didn't get Medicare B. Now, five years after retirement and a lot of doctor visits for my wife and myself, I have to pay 20% of what the health plan does not pay. This would have been picked up by Medicare B, if I had it.

Now, to some of you 20% may not seem like a lot of

money. Have you been to a doctor lately? I had the bad luck of going to talk to a surgeon and a gastroenterologist. They did nothing but talk for no more than 10-15 minutes and the bill was \$325.00 each. What would it cost if they did something?

The report from the Postal Commission to President Bush about the P.O is not good at all. It will really hurt us all, active and retirees as well. As a civil service retiree who has been penalized from social security with the *windfall provision*, who did not take Medicare B, who works part time painting in order to survive, I can not afford to lose anything from the P.O after 32 years of dedicated service.

What I will never understand in regard to Federal Health Plans is why the Postal Service, with thousands of employees, does not have one central health plan. I have children who have worked for private companies and their health coverage cost them practically nothing and they get everything that I don't get.

Between the post office and me we pay together close to \$500-600 a month. This to me is bullsh\*t! I don't know much about all this but to me this just doesn't add up to being the right way to do this. Then again, thinking over what I just wrote, what has the Postal Service ever done that was correct?

Do you know that retired Postal Management and retired Postal Inspectors can work part time for the post office but they will not hire retired craft employees to do the same thing? Talk about discrimination!

Where did 2003 go? I remember when I first started in the post office I was working in a small office in Westchester County, New York, walking down the road with a heavy mail bag on my shoulder. The year was 1966 and I was thinking to myself, "They said I can retire in 30 years. Wow! That's 100 years from now." Brother and Sister, enjoy every day. The time goes all too fast.

Merry Christmas to you and I wish a healthy and Happy New Year to you all.

P.S. I'm glad I wasn't in the mood to write a long



### Harry Stevenson & Jose Oliva's Retirement Party



## Birdseye View

by Alan Peacock

Heading into the holiday season, it is the appropriate time to reflect on the past year and look forward to the beginning of a new year. There is way too much energy wasted counting our problems and not enough time counting our blessings. In spite of all the turmoil at work or in other aspects of our lives, we need to be grateful for the good fortune we have. You don't have to look far to see that things could be worse. We all are aware of the hurdles we are faced with on a daily basis but we can take consolation in knowing that things could be worse. It never takes a long time to destroy or disrupt something but it can take some time to correct or right a mistake or wrongdoing. During the past year jobs were lost, lives disrupted and much of what has happened was totally unnecessary. If better judgment had been used, and had there been better dialogue between the leaders, many of these problems might never have occurred.

We have had our internal conflicts as well. There has been ill will and disharmony, as well as a sense of lost purpose as to what our organization is all about. Like many of you, I work many long hard hours, have spent much less time with my family, sacrificed things I enjoy the most, and still devoted many grueling hours working to bring restored peace and harmony to this organization. Many of you are too tired or disgusted to participate in what is necessary to make our organization better. With our routes so long and with so little time to enjoy the fruits of our labor, many of us could really care less about what is happening in our organization.

Being a member of this union for over 30 years, I've witnessed changes that I always knew would require a remedy in short order. We need to be more member-friendly and we need to be more aware of what is going on at the station level. Just as the employees feel that management is not listening to the voice of the employee, we also can at times appear to ignore the voice of the members. This is not a regime controlled by a few. It is a membership organization and the wishes of the members are supreme. It takes all of us becoming a coalition for each other to be effective in achieving common goals that benefit all of us collectively. If someone is in this only for self-gratification or for personal gain, then the purpose is greatly dimin-

ished. We need our motto to be better than the musketeers "All for one and one for all." Ours should be "We are family." Like a family, we should always be for each other and we should never take advantage of any one member of our family. It is my greatest wish for all of you and your families that you have a blessed and spirit filled holiday season.

Postmaster Rome has indicated to me that he reads our newsletter, so I have a holiday wish for him and his staff as well. Let's settle our differences more diplomatically so that we can resolve our problems together. Let's get those carriers back from excessing and promote our carriers who have waited way too long to become regular. Let's create properly adjusted routes and work together to give our customers the best service at every delivery point, every day. Remember: it's not just our holiday wishes that we fulfill; it's our customers wishes as well. Happy holidays and best wishes for a healthy and prosperous New Year.

### OUT THERE



## Perspective

by David Brubaker

One of the advantages of being a letter carrier is there are informative articles you can come across once in a while. Specifically, I had my first look at "*Notes and Quotes*", an APWU publication service for the St Pete, Dunedin, and Tarpon Springs area last week. The article by President Mike Fanning was educational. I don't know him personally but he did an excellent job of stating the facts. Whew! I had no idea how bad the clerks were having it in those areas.

Keeping in mind the job classification, apparently the USPS is planning on moving employees hundreds of miles to reduce staffing in some areas and increase staffing in some areas of mail volume growth. Two things will affect these decisions: plant closings and consolidations.

The list of facilities targeted for closing already exists. It has been given to the Postal Commission but not to the union. The commission has reported that the list is "not significant."

"Our national union has not requested the list and has

said they do not want it. The reason is that once we have the list, management will have the ability to begin withholding jobs for excessing of over 50 miles," Mike said.

Again remember, this is an APWU publication. I've heard often that letter carriers' jobs are secure. I tend to believe this. Some one still has to physically deliver mail but I wonder what schemes are being hatched around the coffee table.

Like most of you, I stay pretty busy. A couple of weeks ago while on the internet, I voiced my opinion to my congresswoman, and to my surprise she responded the next morning (or an aide did). It wasn't postal related but concerned treatment of veterans. However, it was encouraging that I was able to establish contact and get a response. I hope to draft a letter expressing my concern about the Post Office and our future.

Let's stay informed and be involved. Until next time...

## Watts Line *(from page 4)*

letting the USPS pick up their packages and Express Mail. In most cases the letter carrier on the route will be servicing the customer. The letter carriers on business routes are going to be asked to get two leads a month and each carrier will be given an account number to be placed on the lead card so that it can be tracked and credited to the carrier. As we go online, there will be more information on the program forthcoming. I fully endorse this program because it gives carriers a chance to prove to postal management that we are the ones the American public see providing mail service and we are, in their eyes, the United States Postal Service.

Just remember, only 13% of the American blue collar

worker is represented by a union. Letter carriers in Tampa who are on the ODL will make anywhere from \$60,000 to \$75,000 this year. Management did not give you this money. The union negotiated these wages for you. Back your union and support your shop steward for without their hard work and policing of the contract, we would all be making a lot less money and have a lot less benefits.

Hope you all have safe and happy holidays. See you at the next union meeting.



*Don't Lose Your **Balance** This Holiday Season!*

---

## Win a 6ft Holiday Stocking Filled With Toys!

*Use ABBY To Check Your Account Balance This  
December & You Are Entered To Win!\**

**ABBY Phone Service**  
**(813) 968-9998**  
**(800) 223-ABBY**



**ABBY Online Banking**  
**[www.tpcu.org](http://www.tpcu.org)**



\* Contest Valid December 1, 2003 – December 22, 2003. Prizes will be awarded December 23, 2003.  
\*\* You are entered to win one (1) of four (4) holiday stockings

A.R. "Tony" Huerta NALC Branch 599  
3003 West Cypress Street  
Tampa FL 33609-1617  
(813) 875-0599 fax (813) 870-0599  
email: [nalc599@verizon.net](mailto:nalc599@verizon.net)  
<http://www.nalc599.com>

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TAMPA FL  
PERMIT NO. 1285