



# Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume 3 - Issue 1

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

January 2004

## President's Report

by Jim Good

President - Branch 599

Let me start out by wishing everyone a Happy New Year! The year 2003 has come and gone and it has left behind some major hurdles that we as a union must overcome.

There are still nine of our brothers delivering mail in cities where they don't belong. Management has been using every strategy they can think of to postpone and drag out the arbitration hearings that will ultimately bring them back, but this can't last forever. I submitted a settlement offer to Labor Relations on November 12<sup>th</sup> which would have brought back all the excessed carriers and compensated them for monetary damages that they incurred for this blatant contractual violation. Labor scoffed at my offer and have yet to make a counter-offer. That being said, I expect all the excessed carriers to be back in Tampa by spring of the New Year because of our successful arbitration win regarding the collections being returned to the stations, two new reserve positions being created at Temple Terrace Annex and a number of recent retirements.

Secondly there is the issue of the President's Postal Commission Report. A section of the report calls for the formation of a new regulatory board that would have the power to place a cap on wages and benefits. Members of our union will have to band together to fight against this action if it is introduced into Congress. There is also the importance of maintaining universal service. The USPS is man-

dated and capable of delivering to 140 million delivery stops compared to only 6-7 million by Fed Ex and UPS, and each year 1.8 million new delivery points are added. Add to that the fact that the USPS has lost an average of 2 billion pieces of mail per year since 2000 and it is easy to see that Postal Reform is needed. Issues such as these are the reason it is so important for all carriers to be enrolled as E-Activists. It's a very simple thing to do. Just go to [www.nalc.org](http://www.nalc.org) and fill out a short form. You will then receive a confirmation e-mail from National President Bill Young thanking you for signing up and for making yourself available to fight for your future and that of the Postal Service. Many carriers have become complacent and think that it can never happen to them, but the writing is on the wall and now is the time to act!

We also need to be more generous in our donations to COLCPE (Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education). Postal Reform will happen through the legislative process, so it is important that we elect congressional representatives that are friends of the NALC. Unfortunately this can only be done through political contributions. As most of you are aware, it is now possible to donate to COLCPE through payroll deductions. This is done using PostalEase and is fully explained on the back inside cover of

*(continued on page 4)*



**BRANCH  
MEETING  
THURSDAY  
JANUARY 8  
7:30 PM  
AT  
THE  
UNION HALL**

**ANNUAL RETIREES  
DINNER/SHOP  
STEWARD  
INSTALLATION  
SATURDAY  
JANUARY 17, 2004  
DINNER 6:30-8:00 PM  
SEE YOUR STEWARD  
OR CALL  
875-0599**

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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.**

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**NALC BRANCH 599 WEB SITE:**

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

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Brandon	33510	Miroslaw Oldziej	813-661-1106
Carrollwood	33618	Freddie Nimphius	813-968-7491
Commerce	33602	Dook Ramotar Sr.	813-780-6254
Forest Hills	33612	John Watts	813-971-5525
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Eddie Alvarez	813-264-6532
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	Brian Obst	727-507-0135
Interbay	33629	Joe Plant	813-872-0709
MacDill	33608	Dee Brockman	813-831-2034
Palm River	33619	J.C. Howard	813-621-1976
Plant City	33565	Misty Bauer	813-719-6793
Port Tampa	33616	Brian Obst	727-507-0135
Produce	33610	Eric Fleming	813-310-8274
Ruskin/Sun City	33570	Jack Hencoski	813-633-5422
Seminole Heights	33603	Tony Diaz	813-598-9635
Sulphur Springs	33604	Matt Kokich	813-469-9753
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

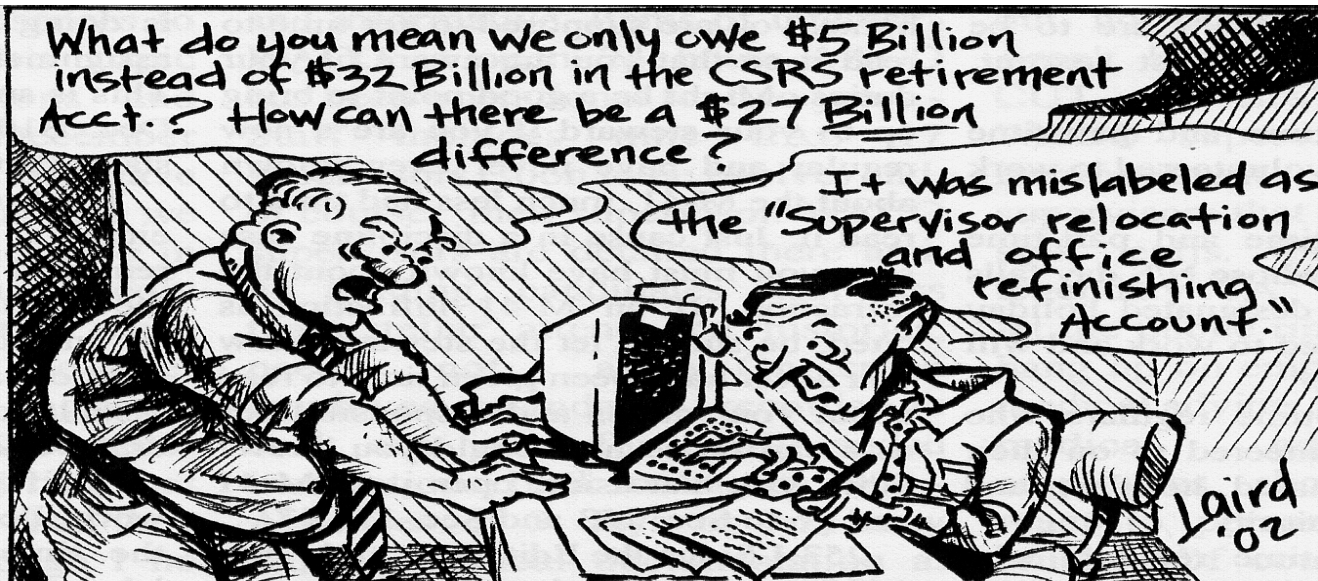
MAPS Coordinator

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)*

the December issue of the Postal Record. A donation of only two or three dollars per pay period is all that is requested (although more would be appreciated), and when you look at all the contract and cost of living raises that the union has been successful in negotiating for letter carriers that is a very small amount which would never be missed by you.

The Toys for Tots drive on December 6<sup>th</sup> was a complete success, with over 65,000 toys picked up by letter carriers represented by Branch 599. This far surpassed last years' collection and Wayne Tucker, the director of the Marine Corps Reserves in charge of the drive, has asked me to thank each and every letter carrier for their efforts in making this a Merry Christmas for all the children who will benefit from your hard work! Thanks also to Susan Sinigaglia, who co-coordinated the drive, for all her effort and hard work!

I want to take this opportunity to invite everyone to the Retirees'/Installation Dinner on January 17,

2004. It is a free catered dinner/dance held at the Union Hall. Just see your shop steward and give him/her \$10.00 (refundable at the door). Then come and show your support for your newly elected shop stewards and enjoy a delicious meal with your fellow carriers and retirees.

Finally, it is with great regret that I announce the resignation of Branch 599 Vice-President Michael Brousseau. Mike has been a dedicated officer of our branch for the past eleven years and will be greatly missed by all. He took me under his wing in 1995 when I first became involved in the inner workings of the union and has been my mentor and a great inspiration to me since then. The officers and shop stewards of the branch have benefited from Mike's knowledge of the contract and technical advice for over a decade. Mike has decided that it is time for him to step aside to allow someone younger to step up and help guide our branch into the future.

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# **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*

It's hard to believe 2003 is at an end. The beginning of the year saw letter carriers being excessed from the city of Tampa and at the end of the year we saw letter carriers returning to the craft. The union felt they were unnecessarily sent to other crafts and other cities.

The report came out that the U.S. Postal Service was in the black by \$3.5 billion. This means that eliminating routes and carrier positions through out the country and cutting back on window clerks and the clerk craft in general, contributed the greatest savings for the postal service. Can you imagine just how much money the postal service would have made if management would have contributed their part by eliminating management positions and cutting out some of the travel and per diem these managers receive?

Hopefully the year 2004 will see an increase in mail volume so the routes that have been out of adjustment for sometime will be properly adjusted to eight hours. Letter carriers can only work so long six days a week 10 hours a day before exhaustion and injury take their toll. Do you ever see a station manager at work before 8:00AM and do you ever see them at all after 5:00PM? Letter carries have to put in 10 hours a

day six days a week to make the same amount of money these managers make. Most of their day is either in training, meetings, reading *cc mail* or on the phone with upper management letting them know how they can improve their numbers so management may achieve their goals for their bonuses.



I would like to congratulate all the old time stewards that were elected for the year 2004. If you are interested in learning how to become a shop steward, attend union meetings and start reading the National Contract, the JCAM, M-41, and M-39. These are the books that the steward must become familiar with to police and enforce the contract.

This is hoping everyone had happy holidays and hoping all letter carriers and their families have a joyous and happy new year.

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# 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

## Outside The Lines

by Leslie Ray Garcia

Sorry I missed the November and December Union meetings. I was still recovering from surgery and had the flu in November and my wife and I celebrated our twenty fifth wedding anniversary on the December meeting night.

Congratulations to President Good in having all charges dropped by the investigation committee. This was truly a waste of union money and was strictly a witch hunt. I was also happy to see that the arbitrators ruled in the union's favor with regards to the restoration of the combination routes within the letter carrier craft. It is a disgrace that this type of grievance has to be sent to arbitration when common sense should have prevailed and the grievance should have been resolved at the lowest level. The amount of revenue and man hours lost is appalling. Once again a domino effect will occur in reverse because those letter carriers exceeded, almost one year ago, will again have to make a career decision.

It has been stated that Tampa has the highest number of grievances that are imposed by the "B" team, more so than any city in the Suncoast District. This action seems to be spreading like a virus as I have read on the Internet that other Branches throughout the nation are having identical problems. It seems to have almost become standard operating procedure throughout the other forty-nine states.

Here's a news flash for you craft employees: The USPS is trying to win back our most recent business giveaways to UPS and Fed Ex! The letter carriers involved in this experiment are to ask four pertinent questions to a customer on the specific test routes. I have a minor question to ask: Will the letter carriers on those experimental routes receive additional delivery time? Has this factor been calculated by the DOIS program? Perhaps the letter carriers will have to absorb this additional time just like any dead head time incorporated into the routes by the last route inspections/deceptions. Maybe it will be calculated

in much the same way as the territorial changes on each route. You know - the *thirty minutes* added to your assignment that were in reality sixty minutes!

It has been indicated to a letter carrier that the Postmaster reads our newsletter. From some of the articles I have read, he should be getting an ear full. I do believe that none of our letter carriers at Hilldale are letting him read the newsletter. Are you having your morning fire side chat with your floor supervisor about auxiliary assistance? December 1, Monday, was my first day back to full duty and on Wednesday I received a letter of warning for having a 'bad attitude'. Thirty-three years of working at the USPS and it keeps on keeping on! This LOW was a result my discussion with the floor supervisor about a PS Form 3996 some three months ago.

The year 2004 will be very critical to our livelihood at the USPS, as well as our union brethren throughout the nation and the middle class. Of course, this is about the Presidential Election of 2004 and many of the forthcoming Senate and Congressional elections. The current administration of George W. Bush is reducing, crippling, eliminating and attacking all of the programs of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The list is too long to place in this article but here are a few of those programs: overtime, social security, health care, 40 hour work weeks, child labor laws, VA benefits, etc. This administration is gnawing at Medicare by providing a long sought after prescription drug provision. This prescription drug bill looks good but there are hidden pit falls for seniors and people with disabilities that severely restricts access to prescription drugs, denies beneficiaries genuine choices, allows premium variation based on where you live and erodes assistance over time. It fails to rein in prescription drug costs; it adopts a drug industry-preferred (and possibly industry-owned) delivery system; it prevents Medicare from knowing the prices it pays for drugs; and it omits reforms to lower

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**Outside The Lines** *(from page 6)*

prescription drug costs beyond Medicare. There is a bias toward private plans even before premium support kicks in. This plan promotes private plans at greater taxpayer - and beneficiary - expense and it steers beneficiaries to HMOs and PPOs through drug benefit design. It does shift costs rather than containing them and increases Medicare program spending - beyond the drug benefit.

It has been stated that this legislation was *bi-partisan*. There are 435 members in the House of Representatives and 100 members in the Senate. In the House there are 205 Democrats and only 16 crossed party lines to vote in favor of this bill. In the Senate, around 49 are Democrats and only 11 voted for this legislation.. Roughly 23% of the House Democrats and 8% of the Senate Democrats voted for this bill. This is not exactly what I would call a *bi-partisan* vote on this legislation.

Please research the issues from both the Republicans and the Democrats. You will be just as shocked and you might even be appalled by the evidence, facts, etc. readily available. From what I have written, you can guess how I'm planning to vote.

"If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything."

Mark Twain

THINK ABOUT IT!

**A Happy  
New  
Year!**

**NOTICE TO BRANCH 599****RETIREES**

Union dues for Retired Members not on dues withholding must be paid by January 31, 2003.

ARTICLE VII, SECTION 1-C of the Branch Bylaws States: Retired members are required to pay \$20.00 annually to the Financial Secretary.

Checks should be made payable to Branch 599 and mailed to:

John Gebo, Financial Secretary

6122 E. 111th Avenue

Temple Terrace, Fl. 33617-3130

**Health and Welfare**

Wife of John Alves (Town and Country) passed away.

Wife of Milton Moyer (retired) and mother of Jim Moyer (Interbay) passed away.

Son of Doug Gilmaster (Carrollwood Station) passed away.

Annie Mitchell, Mother of Joe Mitchell (Palm River Annex) passed away.

Thuy Berroth, wife of David Berroth (Sulphur Springs) passed away.

Father-in-law of Lee Lerfald (Ybor) passed away.

Please remember these brothers and sisters, and their families, in prayer.

# SAFETY – IT’S EVERYONES RESPONSIBILITY

by Brian Obst

There is a new push on in the city of Tampa related to safety issues. Evidently there have been several noted safety violations and it has been a cause for concern with upper management. Now I know that all of us have been through various safety training lectures and films but it seems that some of us just aren't getting the message. This is not a case of management trying to "bust our chops." It is simply an important issue for the health and well being of all postal employees. The use of safety belts when operating your vehicle is not just to give management something to discipline you over. It is something to protect and possibly save your life should you be involved in an accident while operating your vehicle. The same thing goes for driving with your door open. Remember if your door is closed and you are involved in an accident you are more likely to remain in your vehicle rather than being ejected on to the road where any number of bad things could happen to you. Always do your vehicle check daily and report any conditions that you deem abnormal so they can be looked at and repaired.

I would also like to take a moment to discuss the tag-out procedures for defective equipment. If you observe a piece of equipment that is not in proper working order, please obtain a "red-tag" from your supervisor and fill it out. Faulty equipment is the cause of many workplace accidents and most of these could be prevented if the proper procedures are followed. I know that I am not the only one who has seen parcel gurneys repaired with plastic straps or tie wraps. When you see these improper repairs do not wait for someone else to file a "red-tag." Get one and do it yourself. To maintain a safe workplace environment, all sides must participate and follow the guidelines laid out for our protection. If you feel that management is interfering in providing a safe workplace, please contact your station safety captain or your shop steward. They can direct you in what steps to take to get the problem corrected. Remember-when anyone has an accident in the workplace – we all lose.

Yours in Brotherhood

OUT THERE



U.S.A.N.E







Susan Sinigaglia, Toys for Tots Director Wayne Tucker and Marines at warehouse



President Good & Toys for Tots Coordinator Sinigaglia at the Toys for Tots warehouse



**President Good presents Fifty Year Membership Gold Card to Michael Garvin**

### **President's Report** *(from page 4)*

So it is with great pleasure that I am appointing our current Health Benefit Plan Representative, Detlev Aepel as Branch 599 Vice-President, effective 1/1/04. Detlev is a dedicated, motivated officer, as well as shop steward at Ybor Station, and Mike agrees with me that he will prove to be an excellent Vice-President. I am also appointing Jack Hencoski, shop steward for Sun City Center, as the new Health Benefit Plan Representative. Jack has proven to be a strong union activist and will do well in his new position.

I want to thank Mike for his years of service as an officer to the branch, and say "good luck" to Detlev and Jack in their new positions!



## Perspective

by David Brubaker

In the December issue of the *Tampa Letter Carrier (TLC)*, President Jim Good encouraged carriers to go to our national website at <http://www.nalc.org> to sign up to be an *E-activist*. If you've not done so, I'd like to add that not only is it easy to sign up but its relatively easy to research and find out who your congressional representatives are, too.

I have submitted pertinent websites in previous editions of the *TLC*. Shortly after I supplied the necessary information, I myself contacted my congresswoman and immediately received a reply. Although the contact at that time was not on postal related issues, I appreciated her quick response. I didn't want to jump the gun but, after the quick response from the congresswoman's office, I emailed her to find out what she may or may not know about the proposed *Postal Reform* issues.

I did receive a reply the following day after sending her my inquiry. Unfortunately, her response was of a generic nature. My intent is to follow the procedures suggested by our union officials but I'm wondering how many of our state elected delegates are paying attention to where our representatives stand on the proposed *Postal Reform issues*.

At the very least, emailing the congresswoman directly let's me determine where my representative stands (probably clueless). It will be up to us to properly inform those that represent us of what we learn from such congressional contacts.

Stay informed. Until next time...

## Gratitude

by Bard Shakes

Welcome to work. Let's case mail.

Your service is long and good.

We know that you'll never fail.

You always do as you should.

Hurry! Let's get on the clock.

Get back there and face the case.

You know better than to balk.

You have to start at fast pace.

You're the best worker around.

Of that, there is no doubt.

You do cover the most ground

As you walk the longest route.

You are here on your day off.

It's a real familiar scene

With you, there is nothing soft

Came in just to help the team.

Now comes the supervisor

Grinning, stepping down the aisle

Mouth agape, showing incisors

Jiving, shucking, full of guile.

You've been through it all before.

You never work overtime.

Even when forced to do more,

It doesn't cost them one dime.

They want to pivot a route.

You're the one they focus on.

There's no need for you to pout,

Just hurry up and get gone.

You deserve pats on the back

But that's not what you will get.

Good sense is something they lack--

just lots of stabs, you can bet.

You just wanted to help out;

So you came in this morning

Wanted to carry your route

And got a letter of warning.

For years, you have done your best.

This much we have all discerned;

They don't care about your past.

For you, they are unconcerned.

Just remember, when they ask

for a favor that they need,

Tell them, "Kiss my furry foot."

For they are not friends indeed.

~~4.59%~~ ~~6.49%~~  
**0% APR**  
~~6.90%~~ ~~7.49%~~ ~~5.90%~~

Finance Any New Auto Loan or Refinance Any  
Non-TPFCU Auto Loan & You Could Win  
**0% APR\* for the Life of the Loan!**

No Interest Ever!  
Just Imagine Your Savings!

*January 2004 Only!*



\* Annual Percentage Rate. Contest  
Terms: One winner during January  
2004. Winner announced Feb. 2<sup>nd</sup>.

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