



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 10

OCTOBER 2020

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

Top 4 CCAs converted to regular carrier, September 26. Great news, as these CCAs have waited 36 months! *Congratulations!*



Tony Diaz
President
Branch 599

The lasting love for the Postal Service and Letter Carriers

Brothers and Sisters, as you probably have noticed, the United States Postal Service has been front and center in the news, locally and nationally for several months now. From the Congress, to the Senate, to the Presidential candidates, the Postal Service news has been more prevalent in newscasts than COVID-19. Public outcry and support have been nothing more than unbelievable. From the organized rallies nationwide, to the calls to local, state, and national politicians and representatives, to calling talk shows, the much-needed support is everywhere. This support is no accident; this support is the result of the relationship letter carriers have built over the years with customers throughout this country.

As I wrote in an article last

year, for more than 200 years, the Postal Service (letter carriers) has delivered on the promise of serving its customers. Letter carriers are in every neighborhood 6 days a week, and with Sunday parcel delivery 7 days a week. Letter carriers are entrusted to the security of the mail, passports, tax refunds, and stimulus checks. Letter carriers are part of communities and families throughout this country. Letter carriers are an American Institution, a part of the US Constitution, helping make up the fabric and DNA of America. Letter carriers are hardworking blue-collar middle-class patriots. Letter carriers deliver almost half the planet's mail. Letter carriers are as prevalent as baseball, hotdogs, apple pie, and Chevrolet. Customer service, while not the priority today as with the thousands and thousands of retirees who have carried in the past, still connects us strongly with the

American public.

Letter carriers also are assisting in patrolling the streets throughout all neighborhoods. **Carrier Alert** is a cooperative community service program to monitor the wellbeing of elderly and disabled mail patrons. Letter carriers are one of the few, and some days the only point of human contact for the homebound. Letter carriers are aware of the signs that could mean an accident or illness with a customer. Carrier Alert, begun in 1982, is a system aimed at being attentive to those situations. Here locally, Branch 599 has letter carrier heroes that saved lives. In fact, within the past couple of years, two letter carriers have helped save customers lives, one from a burning home, and the other from a burning car. Both saw danger and a

(Continued on page 3)

Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

Branch 599
Meeting
Thursday
October 1
7:30 PM

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National Association of Letter Carriers, Branch 599,

3003 W Cypress Street,
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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.

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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, Brian Obst		727.458.0679
Brandon	33510/11	David Rivadeneira	813.661.1636	813.403.9525
Brandon	33510/11	Luis Cruz	813.661.1636	813.431.3223
Carrollwood	33618	Lori Thompson	813.961.2962	813.777.8008
Commerce	33602	Cynthia Williams	813.242.4507	813.778.4373
Forest Hills	33612	JR Sanchez	813.935.2954	773.849.6229
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
Hilldale	33614	Michael Smith	813.879.4309	813.326.0717
Hilldale Annex	33634	Latoya Dupuy	813.879.4309	305.414.3527
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Jonathan Jones	813.831.2034	813.293.2208
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Clement Cheung	813.831.2034	813.758.5910
Palm River Annex	33619	Pam Benton	813.663.0048	813.475.0753
Plant City	33564		813.719.6793	
Produce	33610	Vanessa Andujar	813.239.4084	813.521.9209
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Cherry Berry	813.634.1403	585.230.0266
Seminole Heights	33603	Walt Rhoads	813.237.4569	813.389.1708
Sulphur Springs	33604	Milly Minsal	813.237.4569	813.446.2572
TCA/Hyde Park	33606	Tom King	813.873.7189	727.504.3866
TCA/Peninsula	33609	Michael Williams	813.873.7189	813.541.3092
TCA/West Tampa	33607	Michael Williams	813.873.7189	813.541.3092
Temple Terrace	33617	Michael Cipriano	813.988.0152	401.787.1510
Town 'N Country	33615/35	Brian Obst	813.884.0973	727.458.0679
Ybor City	33605	Maurice Rice	813.242.4507	813.334.3189

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

threat to their own lives, and both threw caution to the wind and acted. In addition, letter carriers have come to the aid of fallen elderly customers and heart attack victims. Letter carriers call 9-1-1 in those situations and wait at the residence or at the scene to lend comfort and give a possible assessment.

Letter carriers take part in community functions, neighborhood cleanup, and are invited to customer picnics and parties. Nationally we are well known for our Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, the largest single-day collection of food in the world, its success speaks for itself. This past May would have been the 28th year of the Food Drive that has collected 1.5 billion pounds of food over the years. The Food Drive is listed in Wikipedia, stating: The **Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive** is a charitable initiative conducted by the National Association of Letter Carriers in the United States to make significant donations of food to organizations serving needy persons. In addition, the donations that have been presented over the years to the NALC's #1 charitable organization, Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) is amazing. The NALC embraced the Muscular Dystrophy Association as its *official charity* in 1952, becoming the first official national sponsor of the group founded in 1950. The NALC's steady contributions over the last half century have been instrumental in opening a new era in muscular dystrophy research, delivering hope to people with neuromuscular diseases. These positive community events help give us a 91% approval rating. This is why we have a relationship of trust with America, letter carriers doing what letter carriers do, serving America.

Never underestimate the loyalty of our customers, they love their letter carriers and they have proven that.

ESAS is discontinued Expedited to Street Afternoon Sortation, (ESAS), another brilliant United States Postal Service unilateral initiative has been discontinued. The hyped initiative was doomed from the start, by failing to reach out to the National Association of Letter Carriers for any input and advice. The USPS's choice to test ESAS unilaterally, without NALC participation, resulted with the initiative not lasting the 30-day test period. The test period was for 30 days and could have been extended to 60 days before it was to be implemented nationwide. There were six test sites in the Sun-coast District: Tampa with two (TCA and Hilldale), three in St Pete, one in Orlando, and there were 384 test sites nationwide. A National-Level Grievance was filed by the NALC immediately, and as a result, the settlement terminated the ESAS initiative. Officially, for the record, the starting date was July 25, termination date was August 19 and produced an MOU-01927, dated August 31, 2020. The Postal Service stated the purpose of this test or initiative was to assist letter carriers to get on the street earlier, with the alleged reduced morning office volumes and office times. When the initiative began on July 25 and the days to follow, I traveled back and forth from TCA to Hilldale, observing the process at different times throughout the day. I tracked the mail being curtailed, and the mail that arrived for the carriers to PM case upon return from their deliveries. There were variations from our two test site offices just in Tampa. Within a few days from the start, the initiative had changed. Some morning casing was allowed, and then instruction for more AM casing.

We will never know how the original ESAS initiative would have fared, when the original plan prohibited AM casing. Carriers ended up leaving at the same time as they usually did. The only difference with ESAS and the normal delivery method ended up being the starting times for the test sites. Test site offices were pushed back to 9 AM when ESAS began. The start times have now been restored to their original schedules.

Quick Hits:

**Information you should know
NALC files national-level grievance
regarding Post Office Sortation
Equipment Reconciliation**

*Pursuant to Article 15, Section 3.F of the National Agreement, NALC initiated a national-level grievance regarding the Postal Service's unilateral implementation of the delivery initiative called Post Office Sortation Equipment Reconciliation (SER).

On July 31, 2020, USPS notified NALC of the SER initiative and characterized it as a *review* which would solicit *feedback* from employees. However, subsequent documentation shows that the Postal Service has instructed local management to **reduce the number of city letter carrier cases and to change their configurations**. We have received reports from the field confirming that significant changes are being implemented.

The SER initiative substantially alters letter carrier cases and work methods codified in the Handbooks M-39 and M-41. These changes directly impact terms and conditions of employment of city letter carriers in violation of Article 19 of the National Agreement.

—*nalc.org*

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

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to the family and friends of **Samuel Sam Barnhart** [retiree] whose passing was August 22; to the family and friends of **Wilbur Dinning** [retiree] whose passing was August 23; and to **Rodna Kimelman Kirk** [Branch Secretary] at the passing of her mother, Nili, August 18.

Borderieux and Giovinco Retired!



President Tony Diaz presented **Tom Borderieux** [Town 'N Country] and **Mike Giovinco** [Carrollwood] with their retirement pins and gratuity while social distancing at our September Branch meeting.



Mike Giovinco and Tony Diaz

Unionism — Grievances and You

A grievance is defined in the JCAM as *A dispute, difference, disagreement, or complaint between the parties related to wages, hours, and conditions of employment.* To put it simply, if you have cause to believe that you have been wronged in any area related to wages, hours, or conditions of employment, you have been aggrieved. Wages and hours are fairly simple to understand, but conditions of employment can be another matter altogether. We shall discuss in brief those items as well as several types of grievances used to protect your rights under the contract.

Conditions of employment are the guidelines for your job in the Postal Service and these conditions can be found in the National Agreement as well as the many publications on the rules and guidelines for the Postal Service. An example of some of these would be the Employee Labor Manual (ELM), the Postal Operations Manual (POM), the Suncoast District and Cluster Safe Driving Rules for Postal Drivers to name a few. These manuals and handbooks set the ground rules for the proper discharge of the duties of the Letter Carrier and are considered to be some of the conditions of employment for our jobs.

During the day-to-day grind of our jobs there will be times where management will, by error or design, violate the items listed above, bringing cause for a grievance to be filed. The

filing of this grievance can be in one of two ways, an individual grievance or a class action grievance. The following scenario will show a simple case for each type of grievance:

On June 5, Carrier B. Smith was worked 12.75 hours. At week end it was discovered that 7 carriers in the station had worked beyond 60 hours in the week.

In the first part of the example we see that Carrier Smith has reason to file a grievance for being forced to work past 12 hours in a workday in violation of the terms of Article 8 of the National Agreement. This would be an **Individual Grievance** dealing with Carrier Smith only. The second part of the example shows that 7 carriers have cause to file a grievance under Article 8 for being forced to work beyond 60 hours in a work week. These 7 carriers can file individual grievances or they can be consolidated into one grievance called a **Class Action Grievance**. The class action grievance addresses the problem for all the aggrieved carriers at one time since the issue is the same for all the carriers involved, but the resolution may be different for each carrier as the hours of violation may differ for each carrier.

One common misconception when dealing with grievances is that the carrier must ask to file the grievances. Carriers may ask to file a grievance when they feel aggrieved, but many times carriers may not realize that they

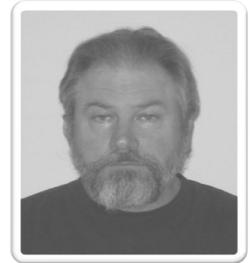
have a grievance issue that they should be filing on, this is where the Steward comes in to help.

The Shop Steward is tasked with the responsibility of contract enforcement and if the Steward becomes aware of a contract violation it is their responsibility to take steps to correct the violation and if that means filing a grievance on behalf of the violated individuals this is what is done. Remember this when your Steward comes to you with a settlement that you had not filed a grievance to get.

Your Shop Steward has a very difficult job; s/he has to represent all carriers in the shop equally, and to the best of his/her ability. Talk to your Steward and if you feel aggrieved do not hesitate to request to see your Steward to file a grievance. When the Steward asks you for information or statements on issues happening in the shop, don't be afraid to provide information. Your steward cannot help you if you are unwilling to help him/her do so. Remember that we all together make up the Union, everyone pulling together towards the same goal.

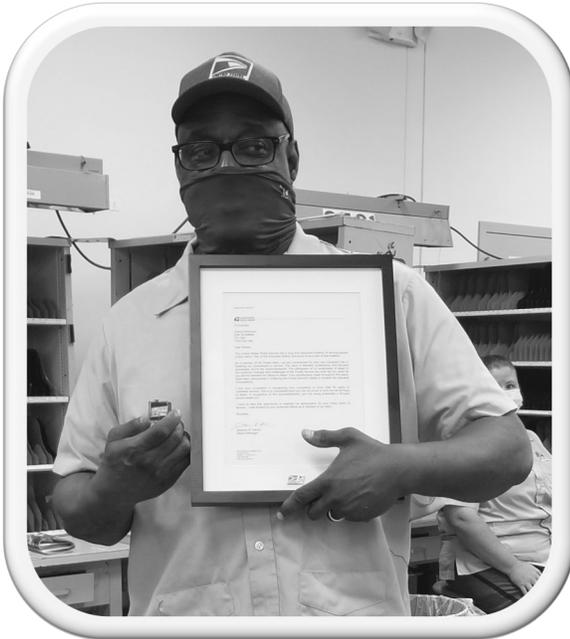
Until next month,
keep remembering –
Knowledge is the Key

Brian Obst
Vice President



Brian Obst
Vice President
Branch 599

40-year Service Award for Robinson



Ybor City Station Carrier **Richey Robinson** is pictured with his 40-year service award that was presented by Acting Postmaster Keith Pierle on September 2. Richey will be retiring from the USPS in November.

Congratulations Richey, on the award and on your upcoming retirement!

Hand Strains

Hand strains are extremely common in the letter carrier craft. Letter carrier daily duties are consistent with the main reasons/causes for hand related strains/injuries.

Steps to avoid hand strains

- Avoid repetitive, forceful pressing with the fingertips.
- Avoid repeated pounding with the base of the palm.
- Avoid tools that create pressure on the base of the palm which can obstruct blood flow and nerve function.
- Reduce the weight and size of objects that must be handled repeatedly.

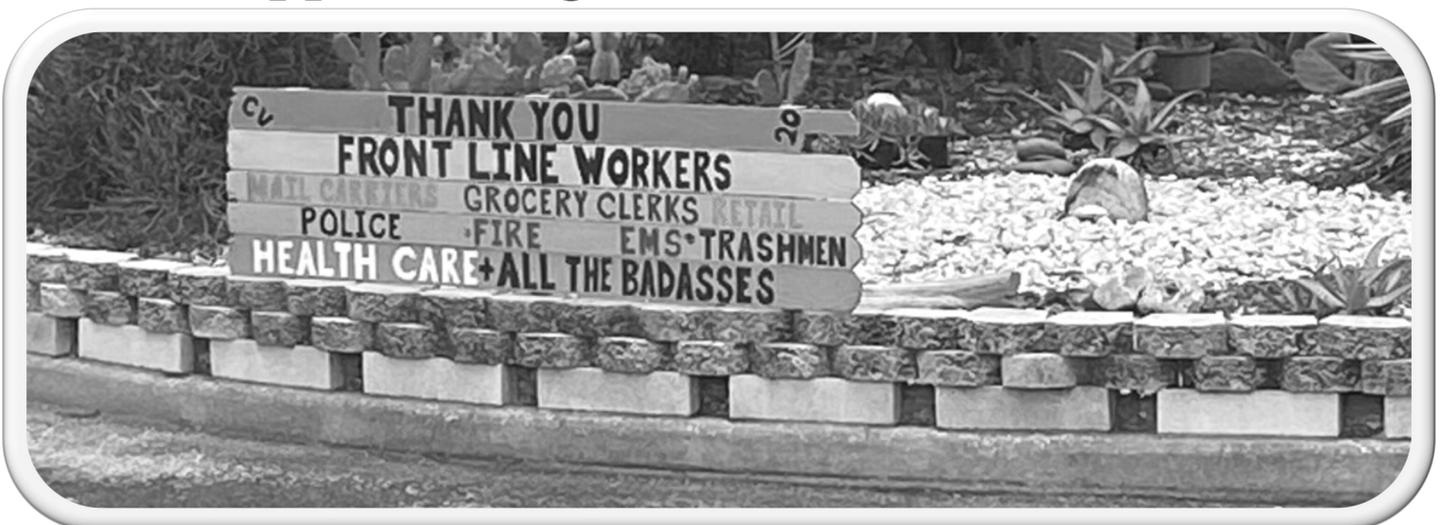
Be Safe

Wear a Mask • Social Distance
Wash/Sanitize Hands Often

Your Contact Info

Please keep the Branch Office updated with your current phone numbers, address, and email address.

Patrons appreciating us



Proposed Bylaw Changes

ARTICLE V, Elections Section 15

Currently reads as follows:

Any member elected as a delegate to either the National or State Convention, or any National Conference, **must attend at least eight meetings per year preceding the convention** he/she attends to qualify as a paid delegate. **These mandatory sixteen meetings** shall begin on January 1st two years prior to the convention year and end on December 31st of the year before the convention.

Proposed to read as follows:

Any member elected as a delegate to either the National or State Convention, or any National Conference, **must attend two thirds (2/3) of the meetings held per year preceding the convention** that he/she attends, to qualify as a paid delegate. **These mandatory two thirds (2/3) of the meetings held** shall begin on January 1st, two years prior to the convention year and end on December 31st of the year before the convention. **In the event of a two year period with an odd number of meetings held, the two thirds (2/3) attended shall be rounded to the nearest whole number.**

Bylaw proposal signed by: Sebastian Parker, Lori Thompson, Luis M. Cruz, Lori McMillion

For Leave Year 2021, Maximum Annual Leave Carryover Increased from 440 to 520 Hours

NALC and the Postal Service have agreed to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that increases the maximum allowable annual leave carryover amounts outlined in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM). For leave year 2021, regular work force career employees covered by the USPS-NALC National Agreement may carry over 520 hours of accumulated annual leave from leave year 2020 to leave year 2021. Normally, as defined in ELM 512.321(a.), bargaining unit employees have a maximum leave carryover of 440 hours.

This agreement does not modify any other provisions outlined in the ELM, including provisions for payment of accumulated leave. The MOU (M-01928) can be found in NALC's Materials Reference System on the NALC website. *—nalc.org 9-3-2020*



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Contact Info: Alan Robinson 813.843.9762 • Tony Diaz 813.598.9635 or 813.875.0599
NALC599@verizon.net

----- Cut Here (please Print) -----

Golfer 1 _____

Golfer 3 _____

Golfer 2 _____

Golfer 4 _____

All money due by November 5, 2020

Make checks payable to: NALC Branch 599. And mark them for: MDA.
Mail to: NALC Branch 599, 3003 W. Cypress 33609, Tampa FL 33609

Robert's Corner

Another, *Oldie but Goodie!* This article will focus on *How to end debate altogether*.

Often, one will want not to limit debate, but to end it altogether. There is a specialized motion for this purpose. The adoption of this motion immediately closes debate and also prevents the making of a number of secondary motions. I will cover these secondary motions in a subsequent article. However, if any secondary motions have already been stated, but not voted on...before adoption of the motion of the previous question, they must be voted on by the membership.

To accomplish putting an end to debate, as covered in a previous article, the member must first seek to be recognized by the Chair AFTER the current speaker is finished speaking. This is accomplished by rising and being recognized by the Chair. Once recognized, the member is said to have the floor. The member must then state: *I move the previous question*.

Simple, huh? Actually, it is more involved than that and can often confuse those who are unfamiliar with Robert's Rules and/or parliamentary procedures.

A motion to close debate immediately requires a second to the motion and also requires a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting to succeed. The motion to move the previous question is undebatable. Because it closes debate and brings the assembly to an immediate vote, something that is frequently desired or necessary, the motion for the previous question is quite commonly used in meetings.

Frequently, however, the motion is made in a non-standard form, by a

member saying, *I call the question*, or *Call for the question*. If, in the opinion of the Chair, he/she wishes to allow these to be considered acceptable substitutes as opposed to the proper motion of the move of the previous question, then the Chair should treat these as motions for the Previous Question.

Sometimes a member will call out, *Question!* or *Vote!* without first seeking recognition and obtaining the floor. This does not qualify as the making of a motion and is out of order if another member is speaking or seeking recognition.

Cutting off debate infringes on the right of other members to speak. Therefore, no one member or group of members can force an immediate end to debate if even one member with the right to do so wants to speak, except through the proper adoption of the Previous Question. Again, this requires seeking and getting recognition and then moving the previous question, after which it must be seconded and adopted by a two-thirds vote. It is often reasonable and understandable that the Chair would find it appropriate at this juncture to utilize a standing vote to better assess the vote as it is difficult to properly gauge the numbers of a vote with which to determine a two-thirds majority vote by voice; as one group may announce their vote more loudly than the other group.

It is important to note that when a member properly introduces the motion for the previous question, the Chair should make it **abundantly clear** that the vote to follow is a vote **ONLY** for closure of debate of the current motion before the members and requires a two-thirds vote to succeed.



Michael Brink
Recording Secretary
Branch 599

It is also strongly recommended that the Chair make it clear that the motion to end debate **is in no way a vote on the motion that the debate is about**.

Often members, after hearing debate of a motion exceed what they perceive to be too much debate, they inappropriately engage in conversation with another member during the debate and when they then, in turn, hear a call for a vote from the Chair, they think that the vote is being called for the motion that was previously being debated and do not realize that while they were disengaged from the business of the meeting, a motion for the previous question was made and seconded. Therefore, when voting, these members incorrectly announce their vote on the wrong motion before the assembly. So pay attention to the business at hand and respect the other members' desire to do the same. If you wish to catch up on the latest goings on at your station or just want to converse with someone near you, either wait until the meeting is adjourned and we are allowed to remain behind and gather together or step outside to speak. At the very least, quietly engage in your conversation so as not to interfere with other members who are interested and giving their attention to the business at hand. There is important information given during our monthly meetings and important motions and ultimately decisions that have to be considered.

Let us all endeavor to give the Chair and especially the guests invited to speak to the members, the respect

(Continued on page 10)

Lightning strikes utility pole knocking out power to our Branch Hall on Labor Day



While the Labor Day holiday was being observed, lightning struck 2 transformers on the utility pole that powers the hall, the afternoon of Monday, August 7 (Labor Day). When arriving on Tuesday morning, August 8, the hall was without power.

TECO was called, and three big bucket trucks arrived. All three transformers on the pole were replaced the same day.

Robert's Corner

(Continued from page 9)

due by either being attentive or being quiet during the Chair's conduct of the Order of Business during our meetings.

Excerpts from the above may have been taken from www.robertsrules.org and Roberts *Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief* written by Henry M.

Robert, III, William J. Evans, Daniel H. Honemann and Thomas J. Balch with the assistance of Daniel E. Seabold and Shmuel Gerber.

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM
September 29
November 3

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM
October 1
November 5

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM
October 1
November 5

Sunday Work Party

at our Hall 9-11 AM
Date to be Announced

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday *Date to be Announced* 9 AM
Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce
2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday *Date to be Announced* 8 AM
Bob Evans Restaurant off Fletcher
12272 Morris Bridge Road, Temple Terrace 33637



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