



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2016

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

Retirees Dinner

I want to thank all the retirees and their guests, the Branch officers, stewards and current letter carriers for attending the 2016 Retirees Dinner on Saturday night, January 16. In all there were about 100 who attended to dine, visit, and reminisce with fellow retirees. It was a time to see recent retirees as well as those who have enjoyed over 25 years of retirement. There were five former Branch 599 presidents (Presidents Emeritus) who attended: Orbie Andux served from 1980-81; Don Thomas served in 1988; Mike Anderson served from 1989-90; Jim Good served from 2002-10; and current Vice President Alan Peacock served from 2011-13. Special guests included National officer, Director of Retired Members, Ron Watson; our National Business Agent, Region 9, Mr. Kenny Gibbs; Florida State Association of Letter Carriers, President, Al Friedman; and Branch President, West Palm Beach Branch 1690, Rick Abarno. Also in attendance was a retiree who we believe is our oldest Branch 599 member. Sy Adel will be 93 years old

this year and in three months he will be a 70-year member of the NALC. We had a special presentation for regular carrier, John Ambrose. John is the first member in the history of Branch 599 eligible to receive his 50-year pin while still an active carrier. John began carrying mail in January of 1966; he is currently number 1 on the seniority list. It was a good time had by all!

Dignity, Respect and Fairness

Brothers and Sisters, we have hit the ground running in 2016. After filing a Branch 599 record of 667 grievances in 2015, there has been no slowdown early in 2016. This month I wanted to focus on what behavior is expected on our workroom floor. Every employee **should** be treated at all times with dignity, respect, and fairness. This statement is taken directly from the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace, signed in 1992. We must insure that all carriers are and will be treated all times with dignity, respect, and fairness. This is not an

option, there is no maybe, there is no might...

you must be treated in accordance with the Joint Statement. The following three paragraphs of the Joint Statement (M-01242) are very powerful, and it is made very clear how we should all be treated on the workroom floor:

We also affirm that every employee at every level of the Postal Service should be treated at all times with dignity, respect, and fairness. The need for the USPS to serve the public efficiently and productively, and the need for all employees to be committed to giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, does not justify actions that are abusive or intolerant. *"Making the numbers" is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone.* Those who *do* not treat others with dignity and respect will not be rewarded or promoted.

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Tony Diaz
President
Branch 599

Branch 599 Meetings

Thursday
February 4
7:30 PM

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Please submit any and all articles to be published in the *Tampa Letter Carrier* to the Editor via email at editor@nalc599.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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Presidents Emeritus	Garland Tickle • Orbe Andux Donald Thomas • Michael Anderson James Good • Alan Peacock		

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		813.661.1636	
Carrollwood	33618	Freddie Nimphius	813.961.2962	813.263.7895
Commerce	33602	Pedro Jiminez	813.242.4507	813.727.9280
Forest Hills	33612	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
Forest Hills	33613	Ed Humphries	813.935.2954	813.787.3914
Hilldale/Annex	33614/34	Varick Reeder	813.879.4309	315.491.6234
Hyde Park	33606		813.873.7189	
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Jackie Allen	813.831.2034	813.508.1440
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	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		813.873.7189	
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)

Those whose unacceptable behavior continues will be removed from their positions.

We obviously cannot ensure that however seriously intentioned our words may be, they will not be treated with winks and nods, or skepticism, by some of our over 700,000 employees. But let there be no mistake that we mean what we say and we will enforce our commitment to a workplace where dignity, respect, and fairness are basic human rights, and where those *who* do not respect those rights are not tolerated.

Our intention is to make the workroom floor a safer, more harmonious, as well as a more productive workplace. We pledge our efforts to these objectives.

If you would like to read the entire Joint Statements, go to the NALC.org website. Once on the website go to *Departments*, then *Contract Administration*, look to the left hand column where you will find *Joint Statement* links. There are two Joint Statements (M-01242 and M-01243). In addition, you will find a *National Arbitration* (C-15697), in this case National Arbitrator Carlton Snow, in 1996 declared that the Joint Statement was a binding contractual obligation and the NALC could file grievances to enforce it. It states, *The grievance procedure of the National Agreement may be used to enforce the parties' bargain, and arbitrators have available to them the flexibility found in arbitral jurisprudence when it comes to formulating remedies, including removing a supervisor from his or her administrative duties.*

With all that said, are you being treated with dignity and respect? Do you notice a coworker being treated abusively or disrespectfully? Do you have a supervisor or manager who loses it on the workroom floor?

Remember, *making the numbers* is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone. A *bad estimate* is not an excuse. Being *down routes* is not an excuse. **If you feel you are being disrespected or notice abusive behavior, alert your shop steward or the union office. We cannot allege...we have the burden of proof; documentation is key and a witness or witnesses supports the claim. Document any abusive behavior, include what was said, who said it, a time, a date, where it was said, how the situation began, what you believe the cause was, and mention anyone who may have witnessed the scene. Document immediately or as soon as you possibly can. This will provide the documentation to support a Joint Statement case.**

Quick Hits:

Information you should know

*) Survey:

USPS is most favorable agency

A national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center has again shown that the US Postal Service is the most favored among all federal agencies. *This honor recognizes the hard work and dedication of letter carriers and everyone who works for this venerable agency, NALC President Fredric Rolando said. I'm confident that as the public face of the Postal Service, letter carriers will continue to do what we can to ensure that our employer maintains and even strengthens that trust.* —NALC Bulletin

*) **History** – James H. Rademacher, National President of the NALC from 1968-77, died on December 15, 2015, of natural causes in Roanoke VA. He was 94 years old. *Jim spent his working life in the service of letter carriers, even through his retirement years, NALC President Fredric Rolando said. We will long remember his efforts and we offer our condolences to his family and friends.*

The son of a letter carrier, Rademacher joined the Post Office in 1941 when he became a temporary substitute carrier in Detroit. He became a station representative in 1946 after two years in the Navy. He was elected secretary of Detroit Branch 1 in 1948 and president in 1950, a position he held until he became national assistant secretary-treasurer in 1960. In 1962, he was elected NALC's vice president and also became editor of *The Postal Record*; he served as vice president until he was elected president by acclamation at the 1968 convention in Boston. Within a year, he would face one of his first major tests as president.

The Great Postal Strike: By the late 1960s, many letter carriers were forced to work a second job just to make ends meet. NALC lobbied again and again for a pay increase that would finally raise the rank-and-file above the poverty level—lobbying efforts that often fell on deaf ears or, worse, resulted in broken promises. As letter carrier tempers flared, Rademacher urged members to keep calm, and in late 1969, he met privately with President Richard Nixon in an effort to forge a compromise on postal pay and postal reform. But after Nixon in February of 1970 again deferred another scheduled wage increase, letter carrier frustration reached a new height—and on the evening of March 17, NALC members in New York City voted to go out on strike. Soon, letter carriers from other NALC branches across the country—not to mention employees from other crafts—would join in the walkout.

Rademacher called an emergency meeting of the presidents of the union's 300 largest branches on March 20 in Washington, while in a televised address three days later, Nixon declared a national emergency, ordering 25,000 soldiers into New York City to break

(Continued on page 4)

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to **James Gleason** [retiree] at the passing of his wife, Susan, July 23, 2015; and to **Seymour Eldridge** [retiree] at the passing of his mother.

Get well wishes to **Ray Wallace** [retiree] who was in the hospital and will have heart surgery later in January.

Historical 50-year Pin Presentation

John Ambrose, long time carrier from Ybor/Commerce Station received an historic presentation from Branch 599 President Tony Diaz. John is the first member to receive a 50-year pin and gold plated membership card in the history of Branch 599 as an active carrier. He also received a congratulatory letter from NALC President, Fredric V. Rolando. *Congratulations John!*



Lupe Bautista Retired!

Congratulations to Lupe Bautista [Ybor/Commerce], who received her retirement pin and gratuity from President Tony Diaz during our January Branch meeting. She requested that a photo not be published.

Branch 599 Members Are Encouraged to *Join* Our Facebook Group

After logging into Facebook, you will find us here:
facebook.com/groups/nalc599

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 3)

the strike and move the mail. Unsurprisingly, the troops were ineffective since they had none of the skills that postal workers possessed.

Eight days after the strike began—and after receiving assurances from NALC leaders in Washington and from the Nixon administration—most letter carriers returned to their routes. Rademacher and other postal union leaders then began round-the-clock negotiations with the Post Office Department.

Postal reorganization and collective bargaining: By April 2, 1970, an

agreement was reached that included a succession of pay raises, support for the establishment of an independent postal authority, and provisions for collective bargaining and binding arbitration. On August 12, the Postal Reorganization Act became law.

And the collective-bargaining agreement that Rademacher signed on behalf of NALC on July 20, 1971, provided, for the first time, wage increases and a cost-of-living adjustment, as well as a clause prohibiting the new US Postal Service from laying off carriers. News of his death was announced as the January 2016 edition of *The Postal*

Record was going to press, so more information about Rademacher and his legacy will be published in the February issue.

Be sure to visit nalc.org to watch *Seven Decades of Activism: A Conversation with NALC President Emeritus James H. Rademacher*, a video created for and shown at the 2014 NALC Convention in Philadelphia. —NALC Bulletin

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

The Birdseye View

I trust you all survived the Christmas and New Year holidays and were blessed with peace and happiness. Moving into February there are a great deal of concerns we are beginning to plan for this year; the greatest for all active carriers is the ending of our current contract and high hope for the negotiation of a new and improved contract. If the current course the APWU is going through with its contract negotiations which has already been through mediation and awaiting arbitration...the indication is that the USPS is looking for givebacks again from the American Postal Workers Union. Current APWU President Diamondstein is apparently not as willing as ousted former president Guffey was. Thus, the arbitration without hope for a mutually agreed contract that leaves their fate in the hands of a totally disinterested party. History has always shown that when we resolve our differences and make our own mutual agreement then we live with it a lot better than what both parties really didn't want.

There continues to be a pattern of this kind of division and contentious behavior throughout all sectors of our society. We are lost in a period of time where we are all searching for some guidance that can restore a belief that maintains a common and balanced direction for the majority of this nation. I have no doubt that there are some great leaders that are not focused only on their drive for power or privilege that exists in our country. They are very few and far from the crowd of those who are seeking to elevate themselves while serving their purpose or one that is purchased for them to the extent of diminishing all others as if they do not matter in the grand scheme of humanity.

Turning the focus to what is another factor with the things that are agitating our world and it all falls under the

powerful little word of apathy. When we just pay someone to take care of our problems and could care less about what happens unless it affects you personally, then you are in a state of apathy. Some of you are probably scratching your head and wondering what I'm writing about...well if you don't get it, you're in a state of apathy. My point is that we need involvement from active members that are interested in being future leaders of our great organization or you can all make excuses and watch what happens when there is no one left to defend the underdog! We don't expect anyone to do something for nothing and we can't expect to pay someone that does nothing. We will train you if you are willing to serve. The members decide every aspect of our organization. The members own our union hall and have a voice in making all the decisions. I can remember it being said that the members don't care what we do or how we do it or how we spend their money. Well apparently it is true because we can't even get you to attend one meeting a month to voice your concerns or vote on how things are done. I don't write these things because there are any concerns financially because there aren't, but if there ever are, will you know about it or when you do will it be too late to fix it?

The concerns I want to focus on are lack of stewards that are willing to step-up and represent their coworkers and the strain it can place on a branch administratively as well as financially. When we don't have stewards that are elected or appointed, then the burden is greater on the branch and less on the postal service. When we have to send other stewards to other installations or different finance locations, the burden is higher on the branch and less on the postal service. We are fortunate that we have several qualified

and experienced stewards who are scrambling to many different offices, but as I have stated, that doesn't come without a burden to the branch in certain ways. The only burden you may recognize is that a steward is spending less time in his/her office and not carrying mail because we don't have stewards in all offices. We also need members to step-up and be on different committees such as Food Drive, MDA, Labor Day Picnic, Toys for Tots...we are more successful in our community efforts when we have better support.

My New Year's resolution is that I will always do what I can, but I am heading towards the sunset and fading fast and hopefully some of you will make a resolution to give a little time to your union and get involved some way to keep it going for the future.

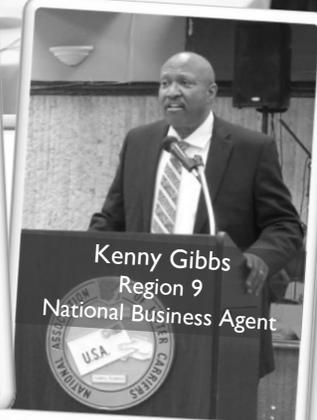
Fraternally Now and for All Our Futures,
 Alan Peacock
 Vice President NALC Branch 599
 NALC Congressional District 14 Liaison



Alan Peacock
 Vice President
 Branch 599



Retirees Banquet was January 16



at Tampa Letter Carriers Hall



Sy Adel



Tony Diaz, John Ambrose, and Ron Watson
National Director of Retired Members



Absentee Ballot or Vote-by-Mail Ballot

Are both phrases one in the same?

What does the phrase *Absentee Ballot* actually mean? If you were to ask many senior citizens, they would say, *You are breaking the law if you vote absentee when you are not out of town.* The fact is, anyone can request an absentee ballot; you do not have to be away. The term *absentee ballot* is misleading in the state of Florida.

To bring clarity to this issue, I believe we must first look at the origins of why we are allowed to cast a ballot without going to the polls. The opening lyrics to the song *Gypsies in the Palace* by Jimmy Buffett goes something like this *In days of old, when knights were bold and journeyed from their castles... - casting a ballot without going to the polls on election day was the province of the military; widespread absentee balloting in America had its origins during the Civil War, as a means for both sides to afford soldiers in the field, a not insignificant portion of the electorate at the time, the opportunity to vote.*

By 1924, all but a handful of states used absentee balloting for military personnel, with many of them extending the franchise right to civilians who could not attend the polls due to illness or other physical disability. In 1986, the federal government codified the right of absent military and civilian overseas voters to cast an absentee ballot in federal races in the Uniformed Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act. Through the 1990s and especially

the 2000s, numerous states (including Florida) amended their absentee laws to allow for even greater absentee ballot participation by voters, thus removing the reasons that voters traditionally had to give in order to vote by absentee ballot.

For the past few years the Florida State Association of Letter Carriers (FSALC) has been working with the Supervisors of Elections offices and our Florida Legislators to change the phrase *absentee ballot* to *vote-by-mail ballot*. Why bother pursuing this issue? Well, a few reasons come to mind. First, it would make it easier for people to vote by providing another method of voting. Second, it would be especially helpful for seniors and disabled registered voters who have a hard time getting to the polls. Additionally, it would be helpful for single parents who normally would have to bring their children with them to the polls. Furthermore, *vote-by-mail* could also be used to help on special election referendums.

Ultimately, the more people who *vote-by-mail* will save the individual counties money by using less polling places which require staffing and so on. Most recently, the Supervisors of Elections voted 51-0 in support of a bill to change the phrase from *absentee ballot* to *vote-by-mail ballot*. Finally, voting by mail brings much needed revenue to the postal service as well as welcomed work for letter carriers and other

postal employees. In other words, we as letter carriers can help ensure the USPS and NALC are around for many years to come.

In 2015, Florida State Senator Geraldine Thompson introduced Senate Bill (SB) 894 to change the phrase *absentee ballot* to *vote-by-mail ballot*. The bill passed the first two committees unanimously with bipartisan support. However, it never went to the third committee because the house committees never discussed it, effectively, killing it.

In 2016, Senator Thompson will introduce (SB) 0112 before the Florida Senate, hopefully with enough bipartisan support to get the bill passed this time around. We cannot afford a repeat of last year. Accordingly, the FSALC is asking every member to contact their state representatives and ask them to support (SB) 0112.

In years past, letter carriers successfully led the charge for an eight hour day. Today, we can affect change by leading the charge for passage of *vote-by-mail* legislation.

Please visit www.myfloridahouse.gov and www.flsenate.gov to find out who your representatives are. Visit www.FSALC.com for more information concerning the *vote-by-mail* legislation SB 0112.

Fraternally,
FSALC District Chairpersons

Thought of the Month

Fate is what life gives me. Destiny is how I choose to respond to it.

A Blunderful Blizzard of Boz

In Epcot's Rose and Crown restaurant hangs the Latin motto, *Otium cum Dignitate*. This very well could be the dictum of retired letter carriers, since it means *Leisure with Dignity*. A considerable measure of what governs the thoughts and deeds of retired postal workers emanates from the lofty values instilled in them by the Postal Service. In fact, one could speculate that everything one needs to know in life was learned in the post office.

When my daughter Patty handed me my Christmas present to unwrap, I couldn't help but inquire, *Is there anything inside the package that is liquid, fragile, perishable or potentially hazardous, such as a lithium battery or perfume?*

Let's put this theory to a test. **See if your postal habits carry over into your personal life.**

Do you check to see if you have your ID badge when you leave home in the morning? On Sunday?

Do you look left, then right, then left again?

Do you think that every combination of uppercase letters is an acronym for something?

Do you engage your parking brake whenever you exit your car?

Do you think nothing of opening your neighbor's mailbox?

Do you sound your horn whenever you put your car in reverse?

When you run an errand for your spouse, do you promise to be back in eight?

Do you always back into parking spaces?

When your kids are being nasty, do you immediately shout: *Shop Steward!!!*?

Do you never, ever leave your car running when you leave it?

Do you know the abbreviations for each state?

Do you disengage your iPhone whenever you deviate from your planned itinerary?

Do you assume that all your socks match?

Do you prepare excuses in your mind whenever you're going to be late?

Do you use your right hand to do stuff even if you're a lefty?

Do you try to remember if the bar code on the parcel at your door was scanned?

Do you search for rubber bands and blank forms in your car when stopped in traffic?

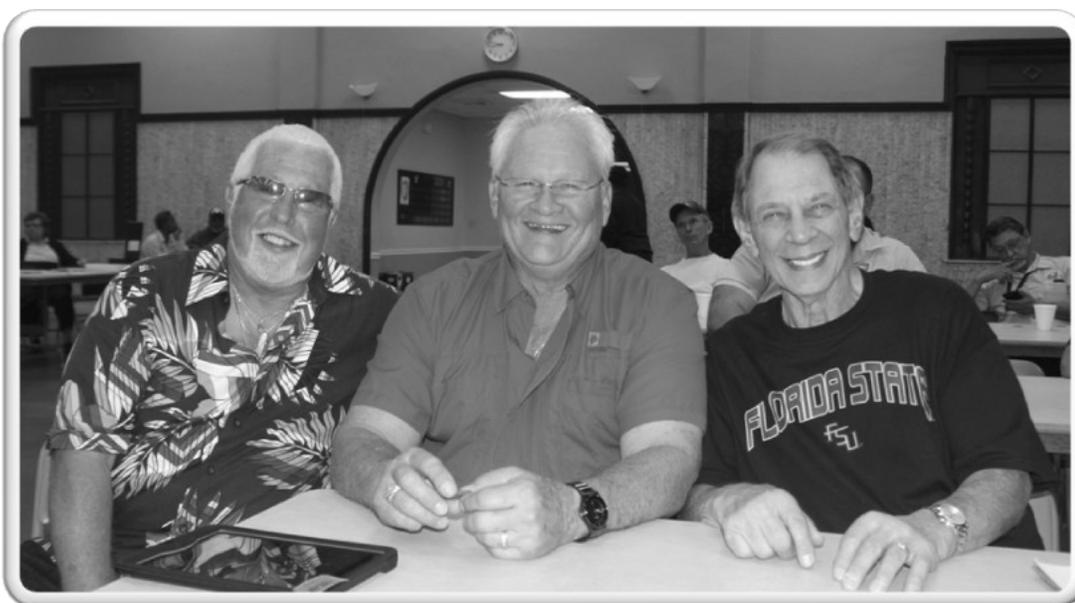
Do you approach your personal car from the wrong side?

If you do any of these things, the indoctrination was successful and you might as well—
Carry On! —Boz



Jim Boczarski
Sulphur Springs
Member
Branch 599

134 Years of Service!



Pictured are the 3 senior Branch 599 carriers. Combined, they have almost 134 years of service to the United States Postal Service. Freddie Nimphius, Carrollwood; Gary Stone, Forest Hills, and John Ambrose, Ybor/Commerce. Only one of them has retirement plans...

How you can support Vote-by-Mail...

Our last FSALC report gave you an overview on our efforts to replace the term *absentee ballot* with *vote by mail ballot* in the State of Florida, and why it is so important. This article will bring you up-to-date with the latest developments in that effort.

First of all, does everyone know how to look up a bill on the Florida House website? If not, get in front of your computer or equivalent mobile device, and follow along with me. You want to start at FLHOUSE.GOV. Along the top of that page, you will see a link to *Bills*. Click that and a page will pop up with a bunch of fillable search boxes. We will look this bill up by its number, so go to the box that says *Bill Number* and type in *361*. Click search and you will get one result: *HB 361 - Vote-by-mail Voting*.

Now that we have found our bill, just click on the bill name and another page will pop up. This page will tell you everything that is going on with the bill. You can see there is a related bill in the FL Senate called *SB 112: Absentee Voting*. You can click on that to see the latest information on that bill. Also interesting is the link to the *Original Filed Version* of the bill text, so give that a click and see what changes to the Florida Statutes are proposed by the bill.

The last thing I want you to take a

look at is the *Staff Analysis*. At the time of this article, the most recent analysis was published on 12/02/2015. This analysis is extremely helpful; in fact, much of the information in the remainder of this article was obtained from this analysis.

Most of us know we may request an absentee ballot in Florida for any reason, or no reason at all. This was not always the case. Prior to 2001, a voter was required to show cause in order to vote using an absentee ballot. Many people believe this to still be true, and the moniker *absentee ballot* does nothing to dispel this myth. Imagine if everyone were aware they could simply request their ballot be mailed to their house, they can complete it in the privacy of their own home at their own leisure, and drop it in the mail.

If the usage of vote by mail was increased, more people would exercise their right to vote, but lines at polling locations would probably get shorter. Families who are too busy working to get to the polls, or do not have transportation, can vote at their convenience through the mail. Many do not know they have that right and think they are committing some type of fraud by requesting an *absentee ballot* when they are not truly absent. A side benefit to all of us would be increased postage revenues for the USPS.

Currently 27 states have some form of *no-excuse absentee voting*, but there is a lack of uniformity in the terminology, even within the State of Florida. Several Florida supervisors of elections' websites use the terms *vote by mail* and *absentee* interchangeably, increasing the confusion. This bill will make the term *vote by mail ballot* universal and eliminate usage of the misleading term *absentee ballot*.

What can you do? It's easy, I promise. It will take two to five minutes of your time, tops. Remember that website I gave you at the beginning of this article? Just to the right of the *Bills* link there is a link to *Representatives*. Click on that and then look for a big magnifying glass with the words *Find Your Representative*. Once you click on the magnifying glass, you will be asked to enter your address. Your representatives will then be displayed as well as all of their contact information. Give your Florida House representative a call and ask him/her to support HB 361 (*Vote-by-mail Voting*). Next, call your Florida Senate representative and ask him/her to support SB 112 (*Absentee Voting*). They need to hear from their constituents how important this is to us.

Fraternally,
FSALC District Chairpersons

February is Heart Month...Make Blood Pressure Control *Your* Goal

This **American Heart Month**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Million Hearts®—a national effort to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes in the United States by 2017—are encouraging Americans to know their blood pressure, and if it's high, to **make control their goal**.

According to CDC's website: Uncontrolled high blood pressure is a leading cause of heart disease and stroke. In fact, more than 67 million Americans have high blood pressure. People with high blood pressure are 4 times more likely to die from a stroke and 3 times more likely to die from heart disease, compared to those with normal blood pressure.

High blood pressure often shows no signs or symptoms, which is why having your blood pressure checked regularly is important. It's easy to get your blood pressure checked. You can get screened at your doctor's office and drugstores or even check it yourself at home, using a home blood pressure monitor.

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM

February 2

March 1

Sunday Work Party at our Hall

9-11 AM

February 7

March 6

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM

February 4

March 3

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday February 1 9 AM

Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce
2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday February 9 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

***NEED UNIFORMS IN A HURRY?
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FAX 727.585.9367
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