



# Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume 2 - Issue 10

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

October 2003

## President's Report

by Jim Good

President - Branch 599

### Forced Overtime

The number one complaint I am getting from carriers in Tampa is the fact that they are being forced to work overtime when they are not on the Overtime Desired List.

Many carriers want to work overtime and have made their choice known by signing either the ten or twelve hour ODL. In this case management must, in most cases, work these carriers overtime prior to working someone overtime that has not signed the ODL.

Some carriers want to work overtime only on their own assignments, and only on their regular scheduled days. That is the purpose of the Work Assignment list. When it is necessary for management to work carriers who have signed the WA list off of their assignment, or on their non-scheduled day, they are treated exactly the same as carriers who have not signed any overtime list.

Now to the issue of forced overtime. In 1984 the NALC and the USPS negotiated a memorandum known as the "letter carrier paragraph". This states, in part, that when management determines that overtime or auxiliary assistance is needed on an employee's own route on his/her regularly scheduled day and he/she is not on the ODL, management will seek to use auxiliary assistance rather than requiring the carrier to work overtime. This means that they must use casuals, part-time flexibles on straight time or overtime, reserve or unassigned

regulars at the straight time rate, or full-time carriers on the ODL at the regular overtime rate before they can force these non-ODL carriers to work overtime. They do not have to use full-time regulars at the penalty overtime rate.



Another way that management can force carriers not on the ODL to work overtime is found in Article 8.5.D of the National Agreement. If the ODL "does not provide sufficient qualified people, qualified employees not on the list may be required to work overtime on a rotating basis with the first opportunity assigned to the junior employee". This provision lets management go off of the ODL and force non-ODL carriers to work overtime on a rotating basis, starting with the junior carrier at the beginning of the calendar quarter. If you have any questions or concerns regarding these issues ask to see your shop steward. You will find a much more detailed explanation of all the regulations regarding forced overtime on page 31 of the September issue of the Postal Record.

Now for what is happening in Tampa regarding forced overtime. As you all know, management has eliminated roughly 45 positions as a result of route adjustments. This has reduced the number of carriers to a level that makes it impossible to deliver the mail

(continued on page 4)

**BRANCH  
MEETING  
THURSDAY  
OCTOBER 2  
7:30 PM  
AT  
THE  
UNION HALL**

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

WATTS LINE .....	5
OUTSIDE THE LINES ...	6
TLC, INC. ....	9
PERSPECTIVE .....	10
BIRDSEYE VIEW ...	11

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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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Interbay	33611	Dee Brockman	813-831-2034
Interbay	33629	Brian Obst	727-507-0135
MacDill	33608	Dee Brockman	813-831-2034
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Port Tampa	33616	Sammy Graham	813-837-6257
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
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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)*

using only the carriers who have chosen to work voluntary overtime. Because of this reduced workforce, management (at the station level) often has no choice but to force all carriers to work overtime. They claim that they have this right under the above cited article yet upper management has created this situation by excessing too many carriers outside of Tampa. We will be filing grievances addressing this issue of insufficient staffing and although the union has not been successful in winning this type of grievance in the past, we will continue to try.

Postal management throughout the nation is following in the footsteps of Tampa regarding this issue. Numerous union representatives that I spoke with at the National Rap Session said the same thing was happening within their regions. With the financial situation as it is within the USPS, management is trying everything they can think of to

save money. It is my opinion that they believe it is more prudent financially to work carriers overtime than to employ additional carriers and pay their benefits. What they are not taking into consideration are the morale and best interests of the letter carriers, as well as the service to the public. No carrier wants to deliver mail to an office at 5:00 PM in the afternoon as is sometimes the case now.

Carriers cannot work 50 to 65 hours per week continuously and be expected to remain dedicated and productive employees. Hopefully management will wake up and realize their error, but I doubt it!

### Health and Welfare

Fred Albanese, father of Tresa Hall and Lynda Ulmer, passed away.

Nancy Johnson, sister of Hilldale Annex Shop Steward Lance Jones passed away

# ***ARSLAN UNIFORMS***

*Bill Moran*

*Retired Letter Carrier Branch 1477 St. Petersburg*

*Honorary Member Branch 599 Tampa*

***NEED UNIFORMS IN A HURRY?***

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## The Watts Line

by John A. Watts

*Executive Vice-President - Branch 599*

In the 20 years since I have been a member of Branch 599, I have never seen our branch in such disarray. There seems to be a new function of members that thrive on keeping the membership confused and misinformed instead of as it states in Article 1 of our local bylaws, *"the objects of this branch are to unite the members into one harmonious body for their mutual benefit and to assist this branch in the efforts to improve the condition of the entire membership."*

Lately there have been articles written in the newsletter that have misinformed and confused the members of this branch. The only reason I see for this being done is to influence the members to vote their way either on a by-law change or a motion that is put before the membership at a branch meeting. Where, by the way, is the only place the entire membership has the opportunity to have a say in how our branch is run and how we spend the membership money. Sometime I think we as branch officers forget that the members are our employer and not the other way around.

There is a bylaw coming to the floor at the October meeting that is very important. If this by-law passes, it will in effect put the control of a portion of the branch funds into the hands of a select few and they (as they are now) are not accountable to anyone but themselves. Our society is built on checks and balances. Everyone in this organization should be accountable to the members for every penny that is taken in or every penny that is spent.

To keep your say in how this branch is run by its officers, I strongly urge the members to come out and vote this bylaw down. It's time to make everyone in our branch accountable to the membership.




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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

At the September 4, 2003 Branch 599 Union meeting there was a motion made by a brother as follows: "...That the branch supports Lenny Perez in whatever it takes for his legal defense to prove his innocence." Another brother proposed a subsidiary motion "...To postpone the pending motion to the next regularly scheduled meeting of Branch 599 on Thursday, October 2, 2003." This motion included the request for the Branch Recording Secretary to "...mail written notice at least two weeks before October 2, 2003 to each member in good standing of Branch 599 that the pending motion will be considered and voted upon at the Branch's next regularly scheduled meeting Thursday, October 2, 2003." Included in this motion was "...that the written notice include a copy of the branch attorney's Opinion Letter dated August 21, 2003." Many individuals spoke for the motion and many spoke against the motion. No one threatened or verbally abused any officer or member of this union and "Robert's Rules of Order" was followed in accordance with Branch 599 bylaws. I feel that the Chairman went above and beyond the rules in order to make sure both sides of the motions were heard.

Every union member should have received the VHS tape from the president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, Bill Young. It is titled "YOUR JOB, YOUR FUTURE, YOUR FIGHT" and was sent bulk rate. From my understanding, this tape was made prior to the issuance of the final report from President Bush's postal committee. I have also heard that many retirees are not receiving this tape. From what I watched of the tape with my wife, it was filled with facts and figures that all indicated that the USPS is in dire financial stress and it's eventual demise will occur in the not-too-distant future.

The way the facts and figures were presented to me, I thought I was at a "stand up talk" concerning mis-management's goals. The bottom-line in any presentation is not to confuse your audience but it is to inform them. One such method that seemed to be basically neglected in this presentation was the "K-I-S-S" principle (Keep It Simple Stupid). It seems absurd that in essence what all letter carriers have been taught by management (all the ill thought out and wasted time study programs) would eventually cause financial losses that would bite them in the backside. Once again the letter carrier craft is being sought out to rescue the USPS Mis-Management team for

the many years of financial blunders! Many of us have often stated "if it ain't broke don't fix it". This fell on deaf ears because the crew of mis-management (in their infinite wisdom) continue to put that square peg in that round hole. One such example of this is the totally irrational route exams in the Tampa zip codes. Did this round of route eliminations achieve that enormous amount of monetary savings estimated by the great and magnificent OZ? I don't think it did, nor will it ever, achieve the savings anticipated or estimated! The only thing that it has justified is the Bush commission's report that the postal service is an atrocity and that it needs to be over-hauled.

I heard a senator questioning one of these Bush commission appointees. The committee appointee acknowledged that there were too many grievances filed for the size of our workforce but he never did say that it was because of the continued violations by management. This CEO stated that the grievance procedure needs to be revamped. If I could have gotten my hands on his neck, I would have explained why there are so many grievances filed! They couldn't see that there is a cause and effect issue here. The cause is mis-management and the effect is that nothing is done to mis-management for continual violations of the National Agreement.

Did you know that Tampa Letter Carriers, Incorporated, pays for the operation of the union hall and the union office with funds received from bingo? It is my understanding that some individuals believe that bingo is not being operated properly. One of these individuals has implied that money is being mis-appropriated and proposes that a committee needs to be set up to audit this situation.

It seems rather peculiar to this writer that it is now of the "utmost" importance to set up a committee when these same individuals did not think it was necessary while they were working bingo in the past. Doesn't it seem rather unnecessary to investigate the bingo process when the federal government took all the records from our branch storage and found no improprieties with TLC, Inc. or bingo?

They apparently did find one rather large impropriety. Was this just a coincidence or was it an oversight on their part?

*(continued on page 8)*



**LABOR DAY PICNIC**

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

Will this committee have more qualified individuals to audit the books, etc.? Where and with whom did the federal government find specific improprieties? Who has supported and who is associated with the proponents of the proposed committee?

"There are an enormous number of managers who have retired on the job." Peter F. Drucker

THINK ABOUT IT!

**Labor Day Picnic**

I'm very pleased to announce that Branch 599 raised a total of \$1,316.30 in donations from the Labor Day Picnic, which was sent to the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Thanks to all who attended and contributed.

Jim Good



**Tony Rojas**



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## Tampa Letter Carriers, Incorporated

by Brian Obst

Thank you to all the members who were able to attend the September branch meeting. By now you all should have received your notice of the upcoming October 2 branch meeting and I hope we will get an even better turnout as it is important that all members are heard on the issue at hand. Following the branch meeting there will be a second special meeting of Tampa Letter Carriers, Incorporated. I know that the last meeting ran very late but it is VERY IMPORTANT that we have as many members in attendance as possible.

This is the meeting where the bylaws which will govern the Tampa Letter Carriers, Inc. Executive Board and their operation of the company are to be voted on as well as any proposed changes to those bylaws. This is your company and it is your chance to be heard as to how you feel it should be run.

By now all members should have received the video presentation from National and I hope you all have had the time to review its contents. If for some reason you

have not received your copy, please contact your shop steward and they will arrange for a copy to be given to you for your viewing as this is about the future of all of our jobs.

Finally, I want to make you all aware of the new store venture we have at the branch hall on meeting nights. At the main entrance of the hall, from 6:30 PM until 7:30 PM, we have a small store that will be selling NALC logo apparel and other items. The stock is limited at present but it will build as time goes on.

The future will see the introduction of Branch 599 gear as well. Let's show everybody that we are proud union members and display that fact by wearing NALC logowear. I look forward to seeing you all at the Oct 2nd meeting.

In Brotherhood,  
Brian Obst Shop  
Steward/Trustee



**Branch 599 Vice-President Michael Brousseau at the Labor Day Picnic**

## Perspective

by David Brubaker

I'm hoping that last month's web sites were informative. Another one you may not be aware of is [postalwatch.org](http://postalwatch.org). It has a number of interesting articles as well as numerous links. Stay informed and get involved.

Just a few short weeks ago in the editorial section of the Tampa Tribune, an article about the possible closing of post offices in rural areas of America prompted me to respond. Actually it was a positive piece of journalism recommending that they not be eliminated in the more sparsely populated regions.

I concurred and sent in a response that the Tribune, shortly thereafter, printed. (*"Don't Privatize USPS" – Tampa Tribune, Monday, Aug 11, 2003.*) Hopefully, the "Powers That Be" will listen to our ideas and suggestions.

A couple of points I'd like to make: Currently, I'm the safety captain at Seminole Heights P.O. Several weeks ago I attended a safety meeting involving both management and craft employ-

ees. One young management buck stated that, at his station, he was writing up carriers for leaving rubber bands in the usual places carriers leave rubber bands. It's this Neanderthal way of thinking that keeps a division between us.

Perhaps it's just me, but the following is, in my opinion, how bureaucratic monsters are created. Delivery Confirmation. Forget hidden, crumpled, torn, etc. I thought the idea was to have some kind of way of tracking and/or insuring the carrier makes the delivery of the item. In other words, the necessity of scanning becomes more important than the actual delivery. If I miss the scan on a parcel, for whatever reason, but can remember the delivery, it would seem that my word should be good enough.

Stay informed.

Until next time....



**Branch 599 President Jim Good at the Labor Day Picnic**

## Bird's Eye View

by Alan Peacock

Our founding fathers, and all others who have sacrificed to defend our Constitution and Bill of Rights, would never stand for denial of these sacred freedoms. The U.S. Constitution, Amendment 1, reads as follows:

*"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or the press; or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."*

If there is any place where this should be observed without waiver it should be in our very own union. Democratic principles, when properly exercised, will always provide the vehicle for the will of the people to be heard. No individual should ever fear persecution for desiring to express their personal opinion or what they feel is their personal observation. It is also understood that no one should always expect that everyone else shares their opinion, except perhaps in autocratic dictatorships. Those kinds of factions that want sole control and servitude and desire to remove basic rights from our members are a total disgrace to our most cherished values. I write this as a protest to the fact that our president, Jim Good, refused to print my original article. If anyone would like to know what I wrote about or would like a copy, feel free to ask

and I will be glad to provide one.

My appeal to our membership is to become aware of all aspects of our organization, observe who is behind attempts to create a bylaw that eliminates the membership from having a right to elect representatives or be involved in our bingo operation. This has come about because of a lengthy debate amongst the Tampa Letter Carriers, Incorporated Executive Board to have the bylaws of Tampa Letter Carriers Inc. complied with. To give a select few sole control of any portion of our organization is something less than true democracy.

There are appropriate bylaws in place and any proposals that further the participation of the membership are highly promoted. If you begin to relinquish your rights, what will be the next election eliminated? President Jim Good, and four of the branch officers that he appointed to their respective positions, endorsed this bylaw. Maybe we should do away with all elections and just let everyone be appointed. Is that what you want for your Union?

Fraternally yours...



HE'S PART BULL TERRIER AND PART SHIH-TZU. WE CALL HIM A BULL-SHIHTZ.





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