

Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 3

MARCH 2020

required

to name

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

25 CCAs will be converted to Fulltime Regular on March 14

Brothers and Sisters, the NALC and USPS have settled a national-level grievance regarding non-compliance with the contractual caps on the employment of City Carrier Assistants (CCAs). The settlement was not written as clearly as it should have been, but nevertheless, as a result, the settlement signed January 22, 2020, Memorandum of Understanding (M-01906), provides that all city carrier assistants in any size office with 30 months of relative standing on February 15, 2020 will be converted to career status. The new regular carriers served as CCAs in Tampa from between 30 to 37 months. We have attempted to stay between 24 and 30 months except for some recent conversions when we went to 32 and 33 months. This settlement has excited many of the remaining CCAs who I have spoken to, who

saw a 25 spot jump on the

relative standing list. There is light at the end of the tunnel, one CCA said, there is hope.

The NALC projects this settlement, nationwide will result between 4.800 and 5.000 CCA conversions to career status, including approximately 3,000 conversions to part-time flexible in smaller offices.

Congratulations to the CCAs that will be converted, and welcome to the regular workforce!

Contract negotiations are proceeding, Nolan selected as neutral arbitrator

Arbitrator Dennis R. Nolan has accepted appointment as the neutral chair of the three -person arbitration board that will be responsible for resolving the current bargaining impasse between NALC and the Postal Service. Under the law, both NALC and postal management are each



Tony Diaz President Branch 599

one arbitrator and select a third neutral arbitrator to serve as the chair of the interest arbitration board. NALC's general counsel, Bruce Simon, will serve as NALC's party arbitrator. Attorney Robert Dufek will represent the Postal Service on the arbitration board. Nolan has previously served as a national arbitrator under the NALC-USPS National Agreement. Hearings in the interest arbitration are expected to begin in the spring. Two key topics in question are paying letter carriers for the hard work you do day in and day out and a total career workforce, eliminating the CCA (noncareer) class and converting the CCA class to Part Time Flexibles (PTF status). Stay tuned, any updates will be forwarded to our members.

Branch 599 serving **Brandon Plant City Sun City** Tampa

Branch 599 Meeting

> **Thursday** March 5 7:30 PM

Branch 599 Office

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www.nalc599.com

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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.

Officers

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Shop Stewards

| Station | ZIP | Steward | Station No. | Steward's No. |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Tampa Stations/Branc | hes Chief Ste | ward, Varick Reeder | | 315.491.6234 |
| Brandon | 33510/11 | David Rivadeneira | 813.661.1636 | 813.403.9525 |
| Brandon | 33510/11 | Luis Cruz | 813.661.1636 | 813.431.3223 |
| Carrollwood | 33618 | Eddie Berroth | 813.961.2962 | 813.493.5224 |
| 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 | Varick Reeder | 813.719.6793 | 315.491.6234 |
| Produce | 33610 | Frank Webb | 813.239.4084 | 813.340.0300 |
| 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)

Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015: Updated

In 2019 the Wounded Warriors
Federal Leave Act of 2015 received
a facelift that is absolutely a benefit
Disabled Veterans deserve. Many and
I mean many of you took advantage of
the benefit. I wrote an article and at
my office visits spoke to all of you
about the benefit. No more one year
and done! A new MOU was signed;
Memorandum of Understanding
M-01901 outlines the policy guidelines.

Are you a veteran with a 30 percent or higher service-connected disability rating? If so, you are eligible for the updated Wounded Warriors Leave Act. Take advantage of the benefit...

Eligible Employees Definition: All employees who have a single or combined service-connected disability rating of 30 percent or more are eligible for Wounded Warriors Leave. Even if you qualified and used the benefit once in the previous years it has been offered, while it was a one year and done benefit. Before the new changes, The Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015 did not even require the USPS to provide this benefit to all veterans with a service-connected disability rating of 30 percent. The Postal Service recognizes the value that veterans add to the workforce. Consequently, it has determined that is both appropriate and desirable for the Postal Service to grant additional amounts of leave for the purpose of medical treatment. Now for those who qualify, a new balance of 104 hours Wounded Warrior Leave will be credited at the beginning of each year.

History – In September 2016, the United States Postal Service implemented, as required by law, the Wounded

Warriors Leave Act. Certain veterans who were employees of the US Postal Service became eligible to have credited and use up to 104 hours of a newly-created and distinct category of leave called Wounded Warriors Leave. The creation of Wounded Warriors Leave came about in response to the passage of the Wounded Warriors Federal Leave Act of 2015, which allows qualified employees to use this new category of leave to undergo medical treatment for a service-connected disability rated at 30 percent of more.

Disabled veterans generally are required to attend regular medical appointments to maintain their health and to continue their eligibility to receive their veterans' benefits. Frequently, it is unavoidable that such appointments must be scheduled during normal work hours and letter carriers in the past were therefore often required to use LWOP to attend those appointments. Wounded Warriors Leave should provide some relief to those who are eligible and must receive necessary treatment. This new benefit is available to any career or non-career employee who meets the eligibility requirements.

Eligibility

Eligible employees will be credited with 104 hours of Wounded Warriors Leave on the first day of each Leave Year, and the leave is available for use until the last day of the Leave Year.

General

It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Postal Service of his or her eligibility before requesting Wounded Warriors Leave. Employees must provide documentation to the HR Shared Service Center from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs certifying that the employee has the requisite

level of service-connected disability.

PS Form 5980 Treatment Verification for Wounded Warriors Leave is the application form to apply. You can download the form by visiting the NALC website at nalc.org. or by going to Google and typing in USPS PS Form 5980 or you can also ask your steward or call the Branch Office for the form.

Employees with

Pending Disability Determinations

Eligible employees with pending disability determinations who at any time during any leave year receive a 30 percent or more disability rating will be eligible for leave retroactively to the first day of that current leave year. Any leave without pay (LWOP) or leave used while the determination is pending will be reimbursed and replaced with Wounded Warriors Leave, as appropriate, up to the maximum number of hours allowed. Wounded Warriors Leave may be retroactively applied for only the most current leave year and for no more than 104 hours.

Carryover

Wounded Warriors Leave must be used during the leave year in which it is credited and will not be carried over. No employee may accrue more than 104 hours of Wounded Warriors Leave during any leave year.

Foreseeable Leave

All employees requesting Wounded Warriors Leave must do the following:

- A. Submit your request on PS Form 3971, Request for or Notification of Absence, in advance to the appropriate supervisor; and
- B. Designate the reason for the absence as *other* and write *Wounded Warriors Leave* in the appropriate space provided.

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Around the Horn from the President's Desk

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Unforeseeable Leave

The Postal Service makes an exception to the advance approval requirement for unexpected treatment that qualifies for Wounded Warriors Leave. When the need to use Wounded Warrior Leave is not foreseeable, the employee must notify the appropriate supervisor of the following items:

- A. The employee's treatment,
- B. The expected duration of the absence, and
- C. The applicability of Wounded Warriors Leave as soon as possible.

To simplify,

this Wounded Warriors Leave should be processed automatically if your Form 50 shows the disability of 30 percent or more. The 104 hours would go into a separate category to be used only for the treatment of your service-related disability of 30 percent or more. This is not intended for regular doctor's appointments, for regular sick days, or for other ailments, and it is not added to your earned sick leave. A carrier may exercise his/her right to the benefit of the Wounded Warriors Leave by providing documentation from the Department of Veterans Affairs or on any Office of Personnel Management (OPM) certification form, if it is not included on your Form 50.

WWL will still be a *use it or lose it* situation, so any remaining balance at the end of the year will not be carried over to the next year or cashed in.

However, a new balance of 104 hours of WWL will be credited to those letter carriers who qualify at the beginning of each year. This new policy is scheduled to go into effect in January 2019.

-Postal Record, December 2018 & MOU-01901

Social Media: URGENT REMINDER

Again, as a reminder, posting to social media such as, Facebook, texting, Twitter, Messenger, SnapChat, Google+, Instagram, YouTube, MySpace, and others...is a good way to get yourself in trouble. Posting pictures while working in uniform, posting pictures after work in uniform...stop it. Calling out sick and showing up on social media at a restaurant, or hair salon, or at the beach, or shopping mall is not intelligent and very careless...stay off social media. All USPS employees are responsible for complying with this policy.

Common sense must be exercised at all times when on any social media site. There are rules and regulations that must be followed and I felt it was time to again emphasize the importance of refraining from social media while in uniform.

In addition, when using social media in a personal capacity, employees may not speak for or act on behalf of the Postal Service. All uses of social media related to official USPS business require management's consent. This reminder was republished as we had an incident where a CCA took to social media

with a few comments about his coworkers. In this case, not sure what the CCA was thinking or what it would accomplish, except making his coworkers angry. **Stop it.**

Quick Hits:

Information you should know USPS Fairness Act passes House

The House of Representatives passed the USPS Fairness Act (H.R. 2382) in a 309 to 106 vote. As letter carriers know, this bipartisan bill seeks to end the mandate for the Postal Service to prefund retiree health care decades in advance.

Passage of H.R. 2382 is a tremendous achievement for letter carriers and the broader postal community. This is the first major piece of legislation tackling postal issues that has passed the House of Representatives since the 2006 passage of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, which forced the disastrous prefunding mandate onto our employer.

Letter carriers should be proud of their hard work to educate members of Congress and gain their support on this very important issue, said NALC President Fred Rolando. House passage is a major victory in the battle to end this disastrous mandate, but our work is not done. We must now turn our attention to the Senate.

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

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

A speedy recovery to Toni Llauger [Town 'N Country] after her recent surgery.

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to James De Bose [Palm River] and family at the passing of his brother, Robert Trotman, February 14.

Unionism — The Danger of Playing Favorites

Hello again, faithful readers. This month's column will reference the *Dangers of Playing Favorites* and *Ways to Know You are in Trouble as a Steward.* Let us look at the Dangers of Playing Favorites first.

So, you have just been elected as your station's shop steward, what has changed? First is that you will have more input into your job and issues in the workplace. Second, you are now tasked with looking out for the interests of all the carriers at your station. This is a big responsibility and it is easy to get sidetracked if you are not careful.

Let's look at your buddy Bob, who has a grievance issue that you are trying to help with. Bob is your friend, so you really put everything you have into the grievance trying to be successful for your friend. Understand, there is nothing wrong with this...yet. Tomorrow a carrier that you don't really like, Frank, comes up to you with a grievance issue and you say sure you'll look into it for him and then you simply put it on the back burner and forget about it or just go through the motions because you don't really like Frank. This is where it becomes a problem. It's like the time when your other friend Bill wants to work only 2 hours on his SDO so he asks you to look the other way and you do. This is wrong because you represent the contract and this violation affects the other carriers not just your friend.

As a representative of the carriers, it is your responsibility to look out for *all* the carriers, not just the ones you are friends with. Playing favorites will cause your downfall as a steward and hurt the union as a whole. Here are four bad repercussions of favoritism

that will come back to haunt you, should you fall into the trap of playing favorites:

- 1. It is inconsistent with the concept of the union. Unions are about fairness and equal opportunity for everyone. Live by this principle every day; it is simply the right thing to do. If you fail to live up to this standard, the union loses credibility and gets weaker as a result.
- 2. It alienates the membership. It is the job of the union to demonstrate daily that the union is all of us and not some separate bureaucracy. If the membership sees that some are given preferential treatment, they will simply conclude that they are not really a part of the union.
- It plays into the employer's hand.
 Management is always looking for ways to weaken the union and treating preferentially provides a divide in the membership that management will exploit to weaken the union.
- 4. It is an invitation to meet lawyers in court. The law requires stewards to carry out their duties competently, fairly and impartially even if particular members (and even nonmembers) end up unhappy. Making decisions on which grievances to pursue based on your personal feelings towards the potential grievant is an invitation for the unhappy worker to file a duty of fair representation legal action against you and the union.

To help prevent these issues from occurring, always examine potential situations to ensure that you are not acting improperly. If you have concerns

that you might not be able to properly represent an individual, then get assistance from your fellow union



Brian Obst Vice President Branch 599

officers and stewards so as to ensure that it doesn't happen to you.

Now let us look at some of the signs that you may be in trouble as a steward. Part of being a steward is not only representing the membership, but it is also looking ahead and trying to anticipate potential problems and issues and trying to prevent them from becoming problems. As stewards, we are always reassessing ourselves and the job we are doing. The following things should set off a red light to warn you that you have a potential problem that needs to be addressed:

- 1. Members don't come to you with their problems. If the people you represent don't think that you are available and willing to help, they will stop bringing problems to you. Yes, not all problems they bring are legitimate grievances, but your job is to be available to help and sometimes that just means being able to listen and explain things to the individual members. Remember to keep them informed on victories and issues involving them as often as you can.
- Members seek help from other stewards. When you are a new steward this happens more often, but as you develop, the members should be coming to you in your station. If the members stop coming to you it is a sign that they don't feel you are available to them

Unionism The — Danger of Playing Favorites

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or they don't trust you with the issue. If this is happening you need to find out why and address the areas of concern to get better because if your members refuse to come to you, you lose your value as a steward.

- 3. Management refuses to meet with you. You need to develop a working relationship with management and show them that you represent the members with integrity and knowledge. They may not really like you, but they will find you are a force to be reckoned with and they will develop respect for you and your ability.
- 4. Members and Management make private deals without your or the Union's involvement. This is one of many ways that management tries to undermine the union and these deals frequently violate the contract. The members need to understand that you are here to represent and

protect them from management and this will stop these types of deals.

- 5. You never win a grievance. While we all expect to lose some grievances, you should never lose them all. This shows a lack of education on your part as a steward. If you consistently lose, maybe it is your approach or simply a lack of knowledge. If this is the case, GET SOME HELP. Your other stewards and Branch officers are here to help and sometimes an outside eye will show you some angle you could use to help. Remember, the members are watching and if you can't win, they will look elsewhere if they have grievances issues.
- 6. You miss Branch meetings. As an activist for the union it is important that you set the example. How can you stay up to speed with issues affecting the membership if you won't go to the meetings? How can you ask your members to attend if you won't? Be a leader, set the example.

These are some of the more obvious issues that you should be on the lookout for as a steward to ensure that you are doing your job properly. I have said it before and I can't overemphasize it — If you are having problems *GET* SOME HELP. We all want you to succeed and that is why we make ourselves available. Remember, this is not rhetoric, if I didn't want you to call me, I wouldn't post my phone number.

The information used to create this article comes from *The Union*Steward's Complete Guide 2nd Edition edited by David Prosten. This text is highly recommended for all stewards as a complete resource for the job of shop steward and is so highly thought of that it is provided to attendees of the NALC Leadership Academy in Washington, D.C.

As always I'll leave you with – **Knowledge is the Key**.

Brian Obst Vice President

65-year Pin for Sanchez!

Long time retiree Denio Sanchez is presented his 65-year NALC pin from President Diaz. Denio began his career with the United States Postal Service in 1955 and has been a member of the National Association of Letter Carriers his entire career. Congratulations on your achievement!



Safety Depends on Each of Us

Debra McEndree Member Branch 599

Safety depends on me. It took me a long time to really understand what this phrase meant. Not only to understand it, but to actually follow it. To choose safety first.

We can compromise our safety every day with the choices that we make. It is truly and clearly our choice. But not only is it a choice, it's a job requirement. We are required to work safe.

One of the greatest things about being a letter carrier is that we do the same thing every day, yet every day is different. Our basic, consistent, task is to deliver all of the mail in the safest way. That is the task of a letter carrier. Anything else that is put in front of us are speed bumps. Speed bumps that obviously take *time*. What we have to remember though, is not to compromise our safety by not taking the *time* to be safe.

I am disturbed by the number of times that I hear coworkers say, *I didn't have time*. I didn't have time to fill out the 3849 completely. I didn't have time to attempt the certified letter at the

door. I didn't have time to place the parcel in a discreet place or at least knock. I don't have time to perform an expanded vehicle check using the buddy system. I don't have time to use the mirror station... This also implies that they might not have had the time to stop completely at the stop sign, or that they didn't have time to close their door, didn't have time to take their lunch, didn't have time to stay hydrated, didn't have time to look both ways then left again, didn't have time to yield to on-coming traffic when making a left hand turn, didn't have time to use the bathroom, didn't have time to set the hand brake...

If anyone is planning on making this a career, our sound advice is to *take the time* to perform your task in the safest, most efficient way. Never push your safety to the back in order to fulfill others' expectations. You know your own capabilities and limitations. Work safe.

Minutes matter.

All of the additional duties that have

been put upon letter carriers, takes time. Duties such as having to scan every parcel, once while loading them and again upon delivery. Safety texts which require us to drive to a safe location to read such texts. SMPs (Sample Mail Pieces), MSPs (Managed Service Points). Filling our gas tanks. P.R. work through customer connect to try to drum up new business. Returning to the station for late parcels or mail. Certified letters in the DPS. Safety stand-up talks in the morning, looking for empty equipment to load and unload our vehicles, waiting for a clerk to clear our accountables, heavier traffic when returning to station due to later starting time in the morning, ENDORSING POLITICAL UBBM, re-distributing mis-thrown parcels... The clock does not stop for any of these matters.

Collectively, minutes matter. Take the time. No one can make you be safe. Safety depends on you.

Debra McEndree
City Letter Carrier, Sulphur Springs

Branch 2020 meetings...

March 5 • April 2 • May 7 • June 4 • July 2 • August 6 • September 3 • October 1



REMEMBER TO VOTE



2020 Presidential Preference Primary

Early Voting: March 2 - 15, 10 AM - 6 PM **Election Day:** March 17, 7 AM - 7 PM

Mail ballots must be in by 7 PM on March 17.



"Mary Lou Jackman - William Corbeau" Florida State Association of Letter Carriers Scholarship Application

Al Priedman, Prosident

| ****PLEASE BO NOT REDUCE THE SIZE OF THIS APPLICATION, AND PRINT LEGIBLY | | | | | |
|--|----------------|-------------------------|--|--|--|
| Name of Student: | | | | | |
| Viale Female | | | | | |
| Address: | | | | | |
| City | State | Zip | | | |
| NALC Branch Name/Number: | | | | | |
| Branch Contact Phone Number: | | | | | |
| NALC Branch Member's Name: | | | | | |
| By signing below, I certify the above restanding. | arned member o | of the FSALC is in good | | | |
| standing. Signature of Local Branch Pres | | Date | | | |

To qualify, the following requirements must be met:

- 1) The student must have graduated from an accredited High School or have a GED.
- The Student must be a dependent of a member or the spouse of a deceased member of the FSALC who has not remarried.
- Applicant must enroll as a full-time student in an accredited college or university and submit proof of enrollment to receive the funds if awarded. Winners will be notified by mail. DO NOT SUBMIT PROOF OF ENROLLMENT AT THIS TIME.
- 4) Applications must be postmarked on or by July 1, 2020.

This scholarship award is based on a random drawing, not on academic records or qualifications. There will be a lotal of four (4) scholarships awarded - two for female applicants and two for male applicants - each in the amount of \$2000.00. This drawing will be held during the NALC 72nd Biennial Convention August 17 - 21, 2020, in Honolulu, Hawali.

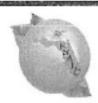


RETURN ALL APPLICATIONS TO:

FSALC Director of Education, John W. Witchell G/O Sciench 1778 NALC

2434 Golfstew Street

Labeland, Ft. 33603



Notice...

Special Meeting of Executive Board Members

A Special Meeting of Executive Board Members is to take place at the Union Hall on

March 19 from 6-9 PM

to allow three (3) commercial realtors to show the Board their individual presentations with regard to the sale-ability and projected value of our property.

Each realtor will be allocated 1 hour to present his opinion on the projected value of our property.

All Executive Board members are encouraged to attend.





at nalc.org

Get involved! Your future depends on it!

Teach-in with Williams and Flournoy



TCA carrier, Mike Williams, and Sulphur Springs carrier, Elina Flournoy, helped educate several classes at Trinity School in Tampa. This year the annual teach-in was held on January 29. The students were explained the process from when a letter is mailed to when the letter is delivered. Many questions were asked, some very good and detailed. Questions such as: What is the hardest part of your job, what do you enjoy the most about your job, how many stops does a letter carrier deliver daily, have you ever been attacked by a dog, have you ever had 1,000 packages in one day?

The students were also given an up-close look at the LLV that was made available, with all the mail for delivery that day. The teachers were very pleased and the students were very excited, especially when the USPS coloring books and crayons were passed out. **Great job Carriers!**

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM March 3 March 3 I

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM
March 5
April 2

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM March 5 April 2

Sunday Work Party

at our Hall 9-11 AM March 8 April 5

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday March 2 9 AM

Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce

Tuesday March 10 8 AM

Bob Evans Restaurant off Fletcher

Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive



The 28th annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive is on Saturday, May 9.

This year, Branch 599 will be partnering again with Metropolitan Ministries for the 3rd year. All collected food stays in Hillsborough County, feeding the hungry and filling food banks.

- Last year we collected 13,352,700 pounds of food and were recognized as the #1 Branch in category 3, (999-1499 members) in the country.
- It is the largest 1-day Food Drive in the world, recognized by the Guinness Book of Records.
- Nationwide, letter carriers will collect over 70 million pounds of food.
- The U.S. Postal Service No other company can deliver 8 million bags throughout the State of Florida, pick up all the food collected, and distribute it to the food pantries.



A.R. *Tony* Huerta Branch 599
National Association of Letter
Carriers

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