



Tampa Letter Carrier

From the President's Desk

Members' uninformed or misinformed decisions can hurt us.

Reflecting on the past year it is hard to understand why we have had the difficulties encountered in moving this organization forward. The officers of this branch have worked diligently for improving the circumstances that were created by the economic times we are in. We have moved the entire organization under one roof through the dissolution of Tampa Letter Carriers, Inc. and eliminated the officers and professional expenses that were required by that portion of our organization. This was a huge undertaking and was slowed and delayed by stern opposition for various reasons. You, the members, are totally in charge of making all the major decisions for the entire entity that is now A. R. "Tony" Huerta

National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 599, Inc. That means that there is no board or individual that will make any decision where the members won't have the final say, unlike what happens at your work location where you do what they tell you to do. Here, we do what *you* tell us, at least when you come to the meetings where you have the right to voice your concerns. What I am leading up to is the disrepair of our house and the need to have it put in working order. Just like the Postal Service and the nightmare created by consolidation of operations and the cost-cutting measures that seem to cost even more on the surface, eliminating positions and employees put more work on those that remain to produce the product. This is not any different in our organization. With TLC Inc., we had additional officers' expenses as well as a CPA paid to do all the monthly statements and the taxes



Alan W. Peacock
President, Branch 599

and labor reports. Now we are saddled with asking our officers to absorb this much larger undertaking and do it *without* the expertise needed to avoid costly reporting errors to the IRS and the Department of Labor. The majority of our members agree that we need to obtain the expertise that is necessary to avoid any inaccurate reporting, but what is required is more than a majority, we need two-thirds of members voting in order to obtain the experts required. The analogy I would like to make is that if your house needs repair, you would not want to rely on a novice repairman who wouldn't know the proper codes, who wasn't licensed and insured or bonded to do the repairs. So why would we want a novice to do something that has been done

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Branch Meeting
Thursday
January 5
7:30 PM

Branch 599 Office

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Monday-Friday

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Tampa Letter Carrier

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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 no later than the 5th of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

Officers

Position	Officer	Phone	
President	Alan W. Peacock	813.765.0599	apeacock.nalc@verizon.net
		office 813.875.0599	
Vice President	Tony Diaz	813.598.9635	dcoach9@tampabay.rr.com
Recording Secretary	Michael Brink	813.661.1639	recording.sec@nalc599.com
Financial Secretary	Gilbert Cabanas	813.855.0516	financial.sec@nalc599.com
Treasurer	Ray Garcia	813.787.3640	treas.ray@nalc599.com
Sergeant-at-Arms	J.C. Howard	813.310.0689	
MBA/NSBA	Al Guice	813.422.4967	
Health Benefit Rep.	Terry Franklin	813.758.3061	
Director of Retirees	Lance Jones	813.220.1292	
Trustee Chair	John Gebo	813.503.1256	
Trustees	Joe Oliva	813.299.8442	
	Lori McMillion	813.263.7101	
Labor Management	Sam Santilli	813.215.7595	
	John Rowland	813.770.7769	
Presidents Emeritus	Garland Tickle • Orbe Andux		
	Donald Thomas • Michael Anderson		
	James Good		

Executive Board
Meets
Thursday 6:30 PM
January 5

Shop Stewards
will Meet
Tuesday 7 PM
January 3

Shop Stewards

Station	ZIP	Steward	Station No.	Steward's No.
Brandon	33510	Terry Franklin	813.661.1639	813.758.3061
	33511	John Lykins	813.661.1639	727.542.4092
Carrollwood	33618	Brian Obst	813.960.8894	727.458.0679
Commerce	33602	Pedro Jimenez	813.242.4507	813.727.9280
Forest Hills	33612	Alan Robinson	813.935.2954	813.843.9762
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
Hilldale	33614	Sam Santilli		813.215.7595
Hilldale Annex	33634	Julio Acosta	813.889.3913	
Hyde Park	33606	Tom Cobert	813.873.7189	813.694.0711
Interbay	33611		813.831.2034	
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Sammy Graham	813.831.2034	813.454.3319
Palm River Annex	33619	J.C. Howard	813.663.0048	813.310.0689
Plant City	33564	Varick Reeder	813.719.6793	315.491.6234
Port Tampa	33616			
Produce	33610	John DeRosa	813.237.4280	813.850.8418
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Jack Hencoski	813.634.1403	813.928.9034
Seminole Heights	33603	Tony Diaz	813.237.4569	813.598.9635
Sulphur Springs	33604	John Rowland	813.237.4569	813.770.7769
TCA/Peninsula	33609	J.R. Harazin	813.873.7189	727.418.8090
TCA/West Tampa	33607	George McClelland	813.873.7189	
Temple Terrace	33617	Warren Sumlin	813.899.2405	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

From the President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

previously by experts professionally trained and will protect you from any regulatory damages or fines? Our own national officers recommended that we hire a CPA/Florida Tax Attorney and with your support this is what we did and it is my personal recommendation that we continue to hire this CPA/Florida Tax Attorney as insurance and protection to you, the members, and the assets of your organization. There is one difference in hiring this expert... the decision is by the membership, unlike when one was hired by TLC and you either weren't aware of it or were not allowed to vote for it. The fate of your house depends on each of you to be involved. The directors of TLC did what they were empowered to do and now that empowerment only comes from the members. I have talked to several Presidents of other large branches that have CPAs doing their tax returns and LM2 reports and they all will tell you the same thing, that they never worry about an audit. That is exactly the status I would like to assure our membership with.

Community Involvement

More reflection on the past year which saw our branch have a very successful food drive; we were second highest in the entire nation! Our efforts for MDA were almost ten times more than the previous year...support that was badly needed. We just finished another successful *Toy for Tots* drive. Congratulations go out to Lori McMillion and to Sam Santilli as the outstanding coordinators for those events.

Representation

I want to begin this year by telling you that the efforts of your representatives and the tireless efforts of all the stewards and officers make me proud to say that I am your President. No

matter how difficult things seem, they all rise to the occasion and many go far and above the call of duty. I totally support all our officers and stewards and will give them all the credit for whatever success we have in representing our members. When you feel that the whole world is crashing down on you, I assure you that they will be diligent and reverent in their advocacy of your issues. Many of our stewards have to take on additional duties because we don't always have a leader that will stand up at every office. Today's stewards definitely are a rare breed of leaders because they are under the same constant pressures that all of you are, but they make the sacrifice for the little reward and appreciation they receive. There are other qualified leaders in our membership, but they choose not to be stewards for various reasons and we have others who just feel like they need a break from it. We can only hope that they will give their support in other ways and wish them well. This being said, our burdens continue to be many and our numbers are few. Everyone needs to step up sometime, like I have said in the past...all give some, but few give all.

Building Manager needed

On another note, we will be seeking a new Building Manager. After long consideration, Don Thomas feels that his current health condition requires more of his attention. We thank Don for all the sacrifice he has given our branch and we wish him health and happiness. Who ever may have the desire for this position should more than likely be a retiree who has the health and the time to conduct the business necessary during normal business hours. We are also seeking to find other members who are interested in being rental agents and desire to be trained to work our rentals. We

already have a few who want to be trained to earn some extra income. It requires that once trained, you would have to be available for the setup time, time of the event and closing. Most events are on Saturday nights; occasional Friday and Sunday events are available. There is still a need for improvements to our building and will require that we look for additional ways to raise money for those improvements as long as we desire to do necessary maintenance to keep and maintain this hall.

Contract Negotiations

By the time this article is received we hope to have a new contract or word of the direction negotiations are heading. There has been no effort on the part of the Super Committee or the legislative bodies to rectify the unfair burden that was placed on the USPS in 2006, which has lead to our current financial condition. They seem to have the approach that the cash cow is dried up and it is time to shut down the dairy. They taketh and they won't correct what they should have never taken. You can believe one thing...if they ever are successful in privatizing the best universal postal service in the world with the lowest rates, then the public outcry will be: whatever happened to that inexpensive way of getting something delivered? American corporatists love profit and the Walmart post office is where it will start, along with the Walmart wages, and just when you thought things were bad now.

I want to wish you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Faternally and in Solidarity,

Alan Peacock
President

Treasurer's Report for November 2011

Branch Operating Acct - November Beginning Balance	Payments	Deposits
President [2 PP]	4,061.53	
Branch Office Secretary [2 PP] + HBP	2,592.40	
Shop Stewards [16]	1,862.45	
Financial Secretary	524.56	
Treasurer	583.45	
Labor Management Reps/Shop Steward [2]	292.49	
Wages lost by Shop Stewards [3]	180.54	
Vice President/Steward	280.36	
Trustee/Shop Steward [2]	75.48	
Sergeant-at-Arms/Steward	149.83	
Health Benefit Rep/Steward	126.25	
Recording Secretary	94.35	
MBA/NSBA Rep	47.17	
Director of Retirees	23.59	
US Postal Service	1,109.20	
Account/Tax Attorney	800.00	
Security Guard 12-1-2011	45.00	
IRS Taxes [Form 941 - Oct]	3,046.93	
Retirement Gratuity	150.00	
NALC Finance Dept	20.00	
State Training [5]	670.67	
Great American Leasing [1 van]	719.32	
Postmaster [Bulk Rate Account]	375.00	
Petty Cash	206.71	
Brown's Trophies [3]	28.73	
MDA Donation [Bowlathon]	1,498.27	
Spaghetti/Refreshments for Union Meeting	132.04	
Verizon (phones/internet)	360.61	
AT&T Mobility [cell phone]	93.61	
Staples Credit Plan	442.81	
Akita Copy Products [2]	633.85	
Computer Repair/Upgrade	390.00	
BB&T Service Charge	14.95	
Adjustment back pay [2]		100.00
BB&T Interest		.33
Lakeland Letter Carriers		271.90
MDA Bowlathon		1,700.50
Newsletter Advertisement		50.00
Retiree Annual Dues		20.00
NALC Secretary-Treasurer		19,387.46
US Dept of Treasury		7,113.11
Totals	\$21,692.65	\$28,643.30
November Ending Balance	\$23,303.06	

BANKING ACCOUNTS

BB&T Operating Acct	23,303.06
BB&T Building Fund	39,524.43
Mid FL Credit Union	254.66
Mid FL CD	100,000.00
Regions CD	50,000.00
US AmeriBank	200,000.00
US AmeriBank Training Fund	15,602.08
Grand Total	\$428,684.23



Ray Garcia
Treasurer
Branch 599

Point of Personal Privilege

The joke's on me!

To debunk the many naysayers, I campaigned and passed out pamphlets that stated I had knowledge of accounting and bookkeeping. I never stated, wrote or inferred that I had a college degree in either bookkeeping or accounting! Nor did I state I was a CPA or Tax Accountant. I got approximately 24 hours of training from the outgoing Treasurer of 17 years. I asked him to continue to come into the office and I would pay money out of my pocket for additional training. I was told to *wing it*. I attended a National Training Seminar in Orlando from 2/27 to 3/1 with President Peacock and Financial Secretary Cabanas or 2.5 days. This did not cover every portion of filing all forms in the needed depth for newly elected officers. For example: the form UCT-6 for state quarterly taxes, form 941 for monthly Federal Taxes, forms W-2, W-3 and W-4, form 940 annually, form 990 annually and the LM-2 for branches with over \$250,000 in assets! I attended the State Convention for 8 hours on my own dime to try to get more training. (Now with Bingo and TLC, Inc. defunct, I have to file sale taxes on all rentals, file 1099s for those workers, and file taxes with the county and city. While this was under TLC, an accountant (CPA) was paid a larger sum than \$1,000 to do their taxes and form filing annually.) At these meetings I was told that the IRS and DOL laws prohibit the direct paying of moneys to *any volunteers*.

During the month of March 2011, the President, Financial Secretary and I spent on average 8 to 12 hours a day, Monday-Friday trying to reconcile the 2010 LM-2 with figures provided by the LM-2 of 2009 that was signed by President Good and Treasurer

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Around the Horn

Brothers and Sisters, Happy New Year to all!

Due a computer issue I was not able to submit my *Around the Horn* article for the December newsletter on time. I want to thank my loyal readers who inquired about the absence. So to all, a belated Merry Christmas.

I begin by offering my condolences to the family of Mike Brousseau. Mike was a tireless union activist and was a former shop steward and Branch 599 officer. Mike was a fixture at the union hall, spending countless hours processing grievances and volunteering for union functions. Mike attended many National and State Conventions and was well known around the state. At the recent state training seminar in West Palm Beach, I was approached by a number of our union leaders offering their condolences to his family and Branch 599. I served on many different Branch boards with Mike, and his knowledge of the bylaws and the contract will be greatly missed. God Bless you, Mike, and thanks for serving Branch 599.

Under Attack

In my continuing attempt to better educate and update the membership on important issues aimed at saving our jobs, I find it alarming at the apathy amongst many of our union members. Look around, in the newspaper, on radio, on television, and on the internet, the United States Postal Service is a hot topic. Not only is the NALC in collective bargaining negotiations with the USPS, there are several powerful politicians trying to dismantle and at least derail the fabric of our union. Locally we have asked and will continue to ask for involvement from you, the membership. With limited interest from the majority of our members, thanks to those who have stepped up. We will continue to push

forward and do what is necessary to protect our jobs. Sending a message and fighting for a cause is always more effective in numbers.

We do need some of the younger carriers to help lead the crusade to ensure there is a job when you retire. The average age of Letter Carriers in the workforce is approaching 54 years old. When I attend National and State Conventions, seminars, rallies or just Branch 599 union meetings, the number of veteran and retired carriers involved is overwhelmingly in number compared to the younger carriers. Get involved...don't take this job for granted! There is no guarantee anymore that this is a career job like it was viewed in the past.

H.R. 2309—A plan to dismantle the USPS

The GOP-controlled House Oversight and Government Reform Committee "marked up" and passed a radical and partisan postal reform bill offered by its chairman, Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) on October 13.

Rather than address the postal crisis caused by the pre-funding mandate, the Issa bill seeks to exploit the crisis to advance anti-worker ideological goals. Radically downsizing the government and gutting the collective-bargaining rights of hard-working postal employees appear to be the main goals of the legislation.

Unfortunately, by destroying the hub of a \$1.3 trillion industry that employs 7.5 million private-sector workers, H.R. 2309 may be the most anti-business bill taken up by Congress in years. Slashing service and forcing a massive round of post office closings would seriously damage the printing, publishing, paper and financial services industries. Tens of thousands of veterans who work for the Postal Service

would face the loss of their jobs. At a time of massive unemployment, H.R. 2309 would mandate, not just lead to, the destruction of hundreds of thousands of jobs. source: *NALC.org*

HR 2309 is our biggest battle; our union at the National level has an aggressive campaign to combat this bill. If this bill should pass, the bill and the resolution currently on the table now, HR 1351 and Res. 137 may never be heard. It is very important to become an e-activist; it's FREE and SIMPLE to sign up online. The emails you receive from our National President and Congressional Department are very informational and at times call for action. Again...get involved!

Quick Hits:

Information you should know

*) Ohio's new law limiting the collective bargaining abilities of 350,000 unionized public workers has been defeated after an expensive union-backed campaign that pitted firefighters, police officers and teachers against the state's Republican establishment. This is a huge labor victory backed by the AFL-CIO. This victory was accomplished by a *get out to vote* campaign and big turnouts for planned informational pickets. Hopefully this will send a message to other states that were following Ohio.

*) With the newly implemented 0800 starting times, the safety concerns regarding delivery after dark is being addressed in the Labor-Management Meeting and the Leadership Safety Committee Meeting...both scheduled for the month of December.

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



Tony Diaz
Vice President
Branch 599

Proposed Bylaw Changes

Now reads as follows: **Article IV, Officers, Section 6**

Regularly monthly dues shall be reimbursed during their term of office for the President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms, MBA-NSBA Representatives, Health Benefits Representative, Labor Management Representatives, Director of Retirees, MAPS Coordinators and Board of Trustees composed of three members.

Change to Read as follows: **Article IV, Officers, Section 6** — [This section is to be deleted as of January 1, 2012.]

Signed by: Leslie Ray Garcia, Gilbert Cabanas, Albert Guice, Julius C. Howard, and John DeRosa.

Now reads as follows: **Article IV, Officers, Section 7**

Station Stewards must attend at least two-thirds of the Branch meetings or Steward Training meetings each year from the time they are elected or appointed for dues reimbursement.

Change to Read as follows: **Article IV, Officers, Section 7** — [This section is to be deleted as of January 1, 2012.]

Signed by: Leslie Ray Garcia, Gilbert Cabanas, Albert Guice, Julius C. Howard, and John DeRosa.

Now reads as follows: **Article IV, Officers, Section 7**

(A) All dues to be reimbursed at the close of each year. If a member holds more than one (1) position as outlined Article IV, Section 6 and 7, only one (1) reimbursement shall be allowed.

Change to Read as follows: **Article IV, Officers, Section 7** — **(A)** [This section is to be deleted as of January 1, 2012.]

Signed by: Leslie Ray Garcia, Gilbert Cabanas, Albert Guice, Julius C. Howard, and John DeRosa.

Now reads as follows: **Article VI, Duties of Officers, Duties of Financial Secretary, Section 5**

The Financial Secretary shall keep a record book showing the names of members, when admitted and place of residence, collect dues and all other monies due to Branch, keep a regular account thereof, and at each meeting (or prior thereto whenever the prompt payment of the National Per Capita Tax or other necessity may require same) pay same to Treasurer, take his/her receipts and retain them as vouchers in settlement. He/She shall personally, or through duly authorized deputies, appointed when necessary to each station, and who shall whenever practicable be the station delegate or representative selected or appointed to represent the station, solicit payment from all members in arrears, and on the day of an election and before a ballot is taken, furnish the President with a list of members not entitled to vote. He/She shall semi-annually furnish the National Secretary-Treasurer with a list of names of all members of the Branch in good standing, and shall notify the National Secretary-Treasurer's monthly of the election of new members, also those suspended, expelled, deceased or resigned. He/She shall keep an account of all properties, investments and funds of the Branch which at all times shall be open for inspection, and at the end of his/her term make a report, and deliver to his/her successor in office, when qualified, all the book papers and proper in his/her possession belonging to the Branch. To insure the faithful performance or their duties, the Financial Secretary and his/her deputies shall be bonded in such amount and in such manner as the Branch may direct. The Financial; Secretary shall receive two percent (2%) of the total dues collected for the year for allowed expenses.

Change to Read as follows: **Article VI, Duties of Officers, Duties of Financial Secretary, Section 5**

The Financial Secretary shall keep a record book showing the names of members, when admitted and place of residence, collect dues and all other monies due to Branch, keep a regular account thereof, and at each meeting (or prior thereto whenever the prompt payment of the National Per Capita Tax or other necessity may require same) pay same to Treasurer, take his/her receipts and retain them as vouchers in settlement. He/She shall personally, or through duly authorized deputies, appointed when necessary to each station, and who shall whenever practicable be the station delegate or representative selected or appointed to represent the station, solicit payment from all members in arrears, and on the day of an election and before a ballot is taken, furnish the President with a list of members not entitled to vote. He/She shall semi-annually furnish the National Secretary-Treasurer with a list of names of all members of the Branch in good standing, and shall notify the National Secretary-Treasurer's monthly of the election of new members, also those suspended, expelled, deceased or resigned. He/She shall keep an account of all properties, investments and funds of the Branch which at all times shall be open for inspection, and at the end of his/her term make a report, and deliver to his/her successor in office, when qualified, all the book papers and proper in his/her possession belonging to the Branch. To insure the faithful performance or their duties, the

Financial Secretary and his/her deputies shall be bonded in such amount and in such manner as the Branch may direct. The Financial Secretary will receive \$700.00 per month for allowed expenses.

Signed by: Julius C. Howard, Albert Guice, John DeRosa, and Leslie Ray Garcia.

Now reads as follows: Article VI, Duties of Officers, Duties of Financial Secretary, Section 5

The Financial Secretary shall keep a record book showing the names of members, when admitted and place of residence, collect dues and all other monies due to Branch, keep a regular account thereof, and at each meeting (or prior thereto whenever the prompt payment of the National Per Capita Tax or other necessity may require same) pay same to Treasurer, take his/her receipts and retain them as vouchers in settlement. He/She shall personally, or through duly authorized deputies, appointed when necessary to each station, and who shall whenever practicable be the station delegate or representative selected or appointed to represent the station, solicit payment from all members in arrears, and on the day of an election and before a ballot is taken, furnish the President with a list of members not entitled to vote. He/She shall semi-annually furnish the National Secretary-Treasurer with a list of names of all members of the Branch in good standing, and shall notify the National Secretary-Treasurer's monthly of the election of new members, also those suspended, expelled, deceased or resigned. He/She shall keep an account of all properties, investments and funds of the Branch which at all times shall be open for inspection, and at the end of his/her term make a report, and deliver to his/her successor in office, when qualified, all the book papers and proper in his/her possession belonging to the Branch. To insure the faithful performance of their duties, the Financial Secretary and his/her deputies shall be bonded in such amount and in such manner as the Branch may direct. The Financial Secretary shall receive two percent (2%) of the total dues collected for the year for allowed expenses.

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Signed by: Julius C. Howard, Albert Guice, John DeRosa, and Leslie Ray Garcia.

Now reads as follows: Article XV, Station Stewards, Section 6

All Station Stewards shall receive \$85.00 per month for allowed expenses. All Station Stewards shall receive \$45.00 for attending monthly Shop Stewards Training meetings. The President and Vice-President shall be paid \$45.00 a month for attending the monthly Shop Steward Training meetings. The above mentioned stewards and officers shall not have any reduction in pay, due to illness, dependent care, on annual leave or any valid circumstance that would keep them from attending such meetings.

Change to read as follows: Article XV, Station Stewards, Section 6

All Station Stewards shall receive \$130.00 per month for allowed expenses. All Station Stewards shall receive \$50.00 for attending monthly Shop Stewards Training meetings. The President and Vice-President shall be paid \$50.00 a month for attending the monthly Shop Steward Training meetings. The above mentioned stewards and officers shall not have any reduction in pay due to illness, dependent care on annual leave or any valid circumstance not to exceed 30 days must have prior approval by the President that would keep them from attending such meetings.

Signed by: Julius C. Howard, Albert Guice, John DeRosa, Gilbert Cabanas, and Leslie Ray Garcia.

Sharing Our Members' Joys & Sorrows

Get well wishes & prayers

are sent to **Ray Wallace** [retiree]; to **Don Thomas** [retiree]; and to **Michael Crowder** [Interbay].

Our deepest sympathy

and prayerful support is extended to **Bill Weimer** [Interbay] and family at the passing of his brother, James, November 21.

Please help us keep up with our brothers and sisters by contacting

the Branch Office when you hear of a member's joys or sorrows [marriages, births, honors, hospitalizations, deaths, etc.]



Shop Steward Training

was October 28-30, West Palm Beach.

Branch 599 members from left to right, Varick Reeder, Julio Acosta, Tony Diaz, Terry Franklin, Brian Obst, John Rowland, Detlev Aepfel, and George McClelland share a photo with FSALC President Matty Rose at the conclusion of the training seminar.

Point of Personal Privilege

(Continued from page 4)

Anderson. They even came to the Branch for 3 days to try to rectify the LM-2 2009 problem to no avail. We were told it was a *GLITCH!* The problem seemed to involve an overpayment to a steward in the amount of \$30,000 and the non-reporting of discretionary taxes for the previous 9 years. This caused a snowball effect, as the problem only increased. It could have been a clerical error, but even when changing the financial figures, the LM-2 did not balance. On March 31, 2011, Alan Peacock and I sent the 68-page 2010 LM-2 to the DOL with an explanation of why the LM-2 did not reconcile. We immediately requested a 90-day extension for the 990 that was granted. This was the reason for seeking Tax Attorney/CPA Ms. Bourlon's assistance once we received permission from the Branch. Ms. Bourlon asked the IRS for an additional 90-day extension which was granted in June. We were asked to furnish all financial

records for 2005 to 2010. The President, Financial Secretary and I only found complete records for 2007. All the other years were incomplete or unable to be found.

Now comes the hilarious part of the joke on me. We are being accused of a *witch hunt!* To those accusers or to anyone else, if it were a *witch hunt*, we would have turned the entire financial problem over to the IRS/DOL investigators! President Peacock and I will not be charged with improper filing as we were not the signers of the 2009 LM-2. The penalty for filing false reports (knowingly or not) is a fine of up to \$100,000 and up to 5 years in federal prison or both. The repercussions and ripple effect of this black mark could generate annual audits by the IRS/DOL. We attempted on 12/1/2011 to get approval from the Branch for \$1,000 in order to file a proper 2010 LM-2, but it was voted down. Were those voting against the motion made aware of the possible alternatives? What is the

naysayer's agenda? Could it be sour grapes? I have talked to my uncle, who is a retired CPA with an MBA degree and a friend who is a retired tax accountant, as to what should be done with any business that has over \$250,000 in assets. Their recommendation was to hire a Tax Attorney and CPA to file the necessary forms monthly, quarterly and yearly because the tax codes and forms are constantly changed. A lay person like me might file incorrectly and the Branch could be charged thousands of dollars in penalty fines. Of course, Pandora's Box has been opened to a much larger problem than I want to experience!

Oh, don't tell me of facts – I never believe in facts; you know Canning said nothing was so fallacious as facts, except figures. -Sydney Smith

Fraternally and respectfully,
Leslie Ray Garcia
Branch Treasurer

Things You Should Know



Gilbert Cabanas
Financial Secretary
Branch 599

Proposed Bylaw Changes

As you read through our newspaper this month, you may notice that we placed a few new bylaws to be considered. One of them has to do with the Shop Steward bonus rebates at the end of the year. We need to change that bonus rebate check language in our bylaws in order to stay clear from the Labor Department's and the IRS's scrutiny. At our Orlando training seminar, National and our CPA instructors have advised us to drop that bonus rebate bylaw because it might imply that those members are not paying their Union dues. In order to comply with these new suggestions, we have proposed to eliminate those bylaws that are associated with that dues rebate language. This is by no means a way to cut our Shop Stewards' pay because our second new proposed bylaws will address these issues.

We would also like to eliminate the 2%

language in our bylaws for the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, as the allowed expenses. Instead we would like to propose a flat salary as the allowed expense. This would be in line with all the other officers' salary language in our branch. This 2% language has caused some difficulty in the past for those officers, as the pay fluctuates on different dues on a monthly basis.

Services of CPA/Attorney are imperative

We would like to have a CPA/Attorney finalize our combined expenses from TLC and our new building fund operation for the ending year account. TLC always employed a CPA for their expenses during the past years. This CPA has charged \$250 on a quarterly basis plus \$2,000 at the end of the year for this service. Our CPA/Attorney, E.G. Bourlon PA, will combine both those funds through August with our new

building fund for a charge of about \$800. This will complete our paperwork for that fund. These new bylaws are intended to simplify our expenses on all of our accounts. We would like to correct our LM2 report for 2010; those numbers were created by the former administration and there was a discrepancy with the final numbers in 2010 in the LM2 report. This report can be adjusted by the CPA/Attorney, not by our Treasurer who didn't create any of those numbers for that year.

We are all on the same team but you must go to the Union Hall to make your own decision count.

I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays, and hope next year we will bring a better financial outcome for everyone.

And the Beat Goes On

Ray Wallace
TLC Board
Branch 599

Happy New Year to all...

This is an article that I never thought I would get to write, especially this soon. *Thank you* to Don Thomas, who helped to save my life and has helped out many other veterans...if not for him, I believe I would be dead today. Don pushed me into going to the VA Medical Center and from there they told me to get a heart stress test. I told them I go to a heart doctor in Tampa and that he said my heart is fine. Well, on November 4, at the VA, I found the case to be much different. They tried to put in a stint where I had a 95% blockage. November 6, they performed a triple bypass. After I came out of surgery I started bleeding and they had to open me up a 2nd time and I was told they had to tap me twice

back to life; I was critical for 7 days. Needless to say, I feel like a bus hit me. The care I got at the VA was wonderful, as is all of the follow-up care. I had a few related problems after I was released and I called Don, as they won't let me drive for a while and my wife doesn't drive; Don has never once said no, even when I know it had to be an inconvenience for him. To me, Don is one in a million.

When I got home, the amount of get well cards from carriers that I worked with in Brandon was overwhelming. I thank all of you for your thoughtfulness and most of all your prayers.

If you are going to a heart doctor, please get a second opinion on all he says.

Up until November, I was staying on top of all the news with the NALC. I know with the lack of mail and the lack of \$5 donations to COLCPE to save your job, things do not look so good. I'm sure I speak for all retirees when none of us ever thought the PO would be in such bad shape as it today, thanks to the computer.

A few carriers told me they miss reading *As the Beat Goes On*...even though I'm in some pain, I don't want to disappoint you. Let's hope the New



Year-end Thoughts for 2011

Well it is December and the year is almost complete, time for me to write an article off my usual topic. This is the time of year where I like to look back as well as forward and I hope you will tolerate my musings for this one article.

First I would like to thank the members of Branch 599 for all their assistance over the past year in helping me to be the best representative I can. This includes the various training seminars and meetings, where training is foremost in our minds, without them it would be much more difficult to maintain the base of knowledge required to be successful as both a steward and representative for our members. Additionally I would like to thank the carriers in my home station of Town and Country, who have elected me to be their steward for the 12th year in a row. Thank you for your faith in me to represent you in all your dealings with management over the next year. The encouragement I receive from you makes my job easier than you know. I also want to thank the carriers in my adopted station of Carrollwood for working with me to help me assist you with management and the many issues that have come up through the year. To the many other carriers I have helped in the city this year, I hope my representation was all you could have hoped for and I look forward to being available to assist you again, should the need arise.

Over the past year the letter carriers have been faced with numerous challenges and roadblocks that both Postal Management, as well as the many members of the Government, have thrown in our way. From the many attempts to do away with six-day delivery to the recent change in our starting times, we have been under what seems like constant attack. You can be proud though, no matter what attack was brought against us, the letter carriers have stood strong and united. Our re-

solve to ensure that the country's mail service not be interrupted or changed to the detriment of our customers always wins out. Our National Officers are ever vigilant and through our **E-Activist Network** they reach out to get our help to ensure the Congress and the American People are informed when attempts are made to harm the Postal Service. If you are not an E-Activist, you can become one simply by seeing your steward for the form and providing an email address so National can contact you when your help is needed. It doesn't cost anything and it will not be given to anyone else, it will only be used to communicate directly with you from our National President when he needs your help or important information is being provided to you.

There have been a number of political action issues this year and I would like to thank all of the members who took part in the informational pickets and petitions drives to help maintain six-day delivery. Many people do not know enough about the Post Office and it has always been my position that the more you know the better you will understand the issues and make better decisions, as I am want to say from time to time – **Knowledge is the Key**. If you haven't been able to help out yet, there is still time, as the petition drives have been extended until the end of the year. See your steward and he will help you get the information and forms you need to help out; it is important for your job, so don't hesitate to get involved.

As a steward I speak with many members about the issues and actions the NALC is taking and I wish to point out that the information is readily available to all interested parties online. Our National website, nalc.org, is full of useful information from the latest news to the **MRS (Materials Reference System)**, a listing of important decisions on a multitude of issues, to the **JCAM (Joint**

Contract Administration Manual)

which is the grievance bible for all contractual issues at grievance. Also available are digital copies of all Postal Handbooks and Manuals, so keeping informed and up to date is easier and we can prevent abuses from management by knowing the information they are required to operate by but they tend to forget about.

I would like to take this time to ask the members to take a moment to think and see if there is anything you can do to help out in your branch. There are numerous things that are available and all members are welcome to get involved. Writing an article or submitting cartoon artwork on letter carrier issues for the newsletter is one simple way to get involved. I know that most people have something to say, so why not try to pass it along to others through an article? We have an editor and many others that will help you get started, so why not think about it? If you would like to get involved, simply call the Branch office at 813.875.0599 and let them know and I'm sure your assistance will be greatly appreciated. Remember, the Union is not an entity unto itself—it is you, me and all the other members—together we make it stronger than its individual parts.

Finally I would like to express my most sincere wishes, for each and every one of you and your extended families, for a safe and Happy Holiday Season. I look forward to a rewarding 2012 and continued success for all Postal Service employees. I ask all to resolve to make next year the best year in Postal history.

I will leave you with my usual – **Knowledge is the Key**.

Happy Holidays,
Brian Obst



Brian Obst
Shop Steward
Town n' Country
Branch 599

Retirees Corner



Lance Jones
Dir. of Retirees
Branch 599

Your Branch
Officers and Staff
wish each of you a
safe, healthy,
prosperous, and
peace-filled
New Year!

Retirees Dinner

I just returned from the monthly retirees' breakfast; normally I would give a list of who attended, but more important this month is the following information on the retirees' dinner. It will be held...

Saturday January 21 6 PM

Chart House

7616 Courtney Campbell Causeway, Tampa FL

Seating will start at 6 PM.

RSVP the Branch office, 813.875.0599 or 813.877.5491, no later than January 6, 2012 if you plan on attending and if you are bringing your spouse [free]. There will be a cost of \$47 for each additional guest and/or others who wish to attend the dinner.

Don't forget to call the Branch office if you plan to attend!

In Unity, *Lance Jones*

Retirees Breakfast *Date Change*

Monday January 9 9 AM Coffee Cup

4407 N. Hubert Avenue, Tampa

ARSLAN UNIFORMS

Bill & Shirley Moran

Retired Letter Carrier 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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**We're Now on Facebook...
But We Need YOUR Help!**

As a 'Fan' of Tampa Postal FCU's Facebook page, you'll be invited to Special Facebook-Only Contests, gain access to financial education, and be the first to know about Credit Union events and new promotions.

Financial Fridays - Get Paid for Your Financial Tips!

Every Friday, we want to give Fans a quick financial tip to make the most of their money. But we need your help. If the sluggish economy taught us one thing, it's how to get the most out of every dollar we earn. We want to know how you've dealt with the economy. Tell us your best financial tips!

SUBMIT YOUR BEST FINANCIAL TIPS FOR CASH!
Email us at tips@tpcu.org

*Include your Name, Email & Phone #.
DO NOT submit your Account #.*

If we use your financial tip on a Financial Friday during the year, we'll deposit **\$10.00** into your Credit Union Account!* It's that simple.

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