

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 7

IULY 2020

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

Brothers and Sisters, I hope this July edition of the Branch 599 newsletter finds you and your families safe through the COVID-19 and the demonstrations/protests. Life as we know it has been different, concerning, troubling, and stressful. The stress and anxieties all of us have experienced over the past three plus months is unlike anything any of us have experienced and hopefully will not experience again in our lifetimes. While the economy reopens, please protect yourselves and your families from the surge in COVID-19 cases that have now accompanied the reopening of many, many businesses. Do not rely on anyone else to protect you, be proactive.

Branch Meetings

Thank you to the 37 members who attended the June 11 Branch 599 meeting. The monthly meetings have been a challenge, from the steward meetings to the Executive Board meetings and the Branch meeting. Our June Branch meeting was the first since March 5; the steward

meetings have continued with social distancing practiced because of the number of Branch stewards. The Executive Board meetings in April and May were conducted telephonically. The members who attended the June Branch meeting followed the rules posted, in accordance with the CDC guidelines. Masks were required; seating was set-up so members stayed 6 feet apart. The regular gathering after the meeting in the Recreation Room was cancelled. In addition, coffee during the meeting and the sandwiches after the meeting we are accustomed to were not available. Tape was placed on the floor at the microphone and at the sign-in table. The sign-in sheets were closely monitored with Sergeant-at-Arms, Mike Williams, printing each member's name to avoid multiple pens and touching. Roll call was used during the steward meeting and the Executive Board meeting. We will continue to monitor and practice social distancing to protect our members. I hope our members continue to

support our efforts through these different times as



Tony Diaz President Branch 599

we work through conducting business in a safe manner. For those members who attended, if you saw anything that we can improve on, please contact me...we are in this together. Should social gatherings be shut down once again, we will give notice to all members regarding the July 9 Branch meeting.

Is your career job worth the risk?

A letter carrier's annual top pay without overtime is about \$65,000. Benefits include annual leave, sick leave, paid holidays, COLA and step increases, and retirement. Earning power in 10 years is \$650,000, 20 years would be \$1,300,000, and so on. Not a bad way to support a family, buy a home, send children to college, build for retirement, fund your hobbies, and live a

Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

Branch 599 Meeting

> Thursday July 9 7:30 PM

> > (Continued on page 3)

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Please submit any and all articles to be published in the Tampa Letter Carrier to the Editor via email at editor@nalc599.com and also to the Branch Office at nalc599@verizon.net no later than the 5th of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

Officers

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	Michael Smith	813.326.0717	mosmith46@gmail.com	
Presidents Emeritus	Garland Tickle • Orbe Andux • Donald Thomas Michael Anderson • James Good • Alan Peacock			

Shop Stewards

Station	ZIP	Steward	Station No.	Steward's No.
Tampa Stations/Branc	ampa Stations/Branches Chief Steward, Varick Reeder			
Brandon	33510/11	David Rivadeneira	813.661.1636	813.403.9525
Brandon	33510/11	Luis Cruz	813.661.1636	813.431.3223
Carrollwood	33618	Lori Thompson	813.961.2962	813.777.8008
Commerce	33602	Cynthia Williams	813.242.4507	813.778.4373
Forest Hills	33612	JR Sanchez	813.935.2954	773.849.6229
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
Hilldale	33614	Michael Smith	813.879.4309	813.326.0717
Hilldale Annex	33634	Latoya Dupuy	813.879.4309	305.414.3527
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Jonathan Jones	813.831.2034	813.293.2208
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Clement Cheung	813.831.2034	813.758.5910
Palm River Annex	33619	Pam Benton	813.663.0048	813.475.0753
Plant City	33564	Varick Reeder	813.719.6793	315.491.6234
Produce	33610		813.239.4084	
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)

comfortable life. With this said, time after time I am dealing with carriers making bad decisions, risking all this, and their postal careers. Some carriers are jeopardizing their earning potential, their retirement and facing possible prosecution and incarceration. Call it bad decisions, poor choices, desperation, but none of it is worth the risk. The United States Postal Service through the Office of Inspector General and the Postal Inspectors are watching, filming, documenting, interviewing, planting mail, and investigating 24/7. I have reviewed video footage while investigating a number of cases over the years. The surveillance being used now is high definition video, leaving no doubt as to who is on the film. The video surveillance could be anywhere, in your vehicle, on the dock, in the office ceiling, at your case, or in the peepholes. If the inspectors are observing and focused on a specific carrier, other carriers could get caught in the web if they are not doing the right thing. The advice is simple, do your job and deliver the mail to which you are paid to do. The majority of letter carriers do their jobs; that is very clear. There is no place for theft of the mail, credit card theft, dumping mail, hiding mail, or falsifying records. Do not be tempted and risk your career. How do you explain this to your family? How do you explain not having a bi-weekly paycheck? How do you rationalize your decision? Things to think about...

The Employee Labor Manual (ELM) addresses the employees conduct, **662 Federal Standards of Ethical**

Conduct

662.1 Publication

To ensure that every citizen can have complete confidence in the integrity of

the federal government, each federal employee, including each postal employee, must respect and adhere to the principles of ethical conduct set forth in 5 CFR 2635, 5 CFR 7001, and 39 CFR 447.

661.2 Application to Postal Employees (not listing all)

- d. Prohibition against bribery, graft, and conflicts of interest
- j. Prohibition against:
 - (1) Embezzlement of government money or property.
 - (2) Failing to account for public money.
 - (3) Embezzlement of money or property of another person in the possession of an employee by reason of his or her employment.
- n. Prohibition against carriage of mail contrary to law.
- o. Prohibition against desertion of mail.
- p. Prohibition against obstruction of correspondence.
- q. Prohibition against delay or destruction of mail or newspapers.
- r. Prohibition against theft of property.
- s. Prohibition against theft of mail.
- t. Prohibition against theft of newspapers.
- u. Prohibition against misappropriation of Postal Service funds
- Prohibition against the use of deceit in an examination or personnel action in connection with government employment.

The Office of Inspector General for the Postal Service and the Postal Inspectors while grouped together, have different responsibilities. Both the OIG and the Postal Inspectors are federal marshals with the ability to carry weapons and investigate across state lines and in every territory of the United States. They have enforcement power that far outstretches the local police and can subpoena the right to film, record and monitor in order to protect the public.

The OIG deals with internal issues within the postal service with employees, for instance, internal fraud, theft, and employees acting against the interests of the postal service.

Postal inspectors, which we deal with more frequently, deal more with the public and fraud related issues. Their plate is full: mail fraud, mail theft, suspicious mail, identity theft, money laundering, mailbox vandalism, bogus change of address, charity fraud, fake check scams, cybercrime, illegal narcotics, reshipping scams and return to sender scams regarding postage, threats on an employee, robbery of an employee, and workplace violence. While researching information for this article, I was able to speak to a member of upper management who I deal with when discussing/investigating these serious cases. Here are a few quotes I obtained that I wish to share with you, with permission to print, The OIG and the Postal Service have a statutory duty to police any and all of these issues mentioned above. They are obligated by ethics and law to ensure that the mail is protected; it is not aimed to dislike any employees. Even more important is that there is an obligation to protect the integrity and honor of all those good employees that do a great job every day and spend their whole career doing the right thing. The good employees are diminished in the eyes of the public by the few who choose not to do the right thing.

Dealing with death of a coworker In May, carriers at Ybor Station dealt

(Continued on page 4)

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to Soljah and family, whose mother, Selena Williams [Ybor City] was tragically killed in an automobile accident, May 27; to the family and friends of Thomas Kilbane [retiree] whose passing was May 22; and to Steve Cueto [Ybor City] and family at the passing of his mother, Rita Rodriguez, May 30.

Speedy recovery and healing prayers for **Alan Robinson's** [Branch 599 Director of Retirees] mother, Pat, as she deals with a health issue.

Langgle Retired!

Branch President Tony Diaz presented retiree, William *Bill* Langgle, his retirement pin and gratuity while practicing social distancing. Bill was scheduled to come to our April meeting, and then May's, but with our meeting cancellations due to COVID-19, we had to wait until June.



Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 3)

with the passing of a popular coworker, Selena Williams, who was tragically killed in an automobile accident on her way home from work. The following morning, I was joined by the postmaster to break the news to the carriers during their morning huddle. Reaction ranged from becoming emotional to disbelief to shock. Everyone handles death and tragic events differently. There is no right was or wrong way, however, some may require professional help after several weeks of struggling with an event. Speaking of professional help, the following morning I was joined by EAP Specialist, Eric Siegal. Eric explained the mind's thought process after a sudden loss of life. It seems we spend more time with coworkers than with our family. Some of the common signs of grief are disbelief and shock, accepting the truth carries with it a profound sense of sadness, sorrow, and despondency; you may feel anger toward the person for not being with you anymore, you may feel guilt for not being able to say goodbye or sorry for something. On Friday, June 5, the viewing was scheduled and about 30 carriers, mainly from Ybor City Station, in uniform paid their respects to Selena. I was proud to stand with them all and talk about her and her career. She will be missed.

Quick Hits: Information you should know *The COVID-19 Heroes Fund...there is legislation proposed by Senate Democrats for Pandemic Premium Pay to Reward, Retain, & Recruit Essential Workers. As Congress looks at a potential fourth COVID-19 bill, the following proposal is meant for consideration by members of Congress. One of the components is a \$25,000 pandemic premium pay increase for essential frontline workers, equivalent to a raise of an additional \$13 per hour from the start of the public health emergency until December 31, 2020. Stay tuned!

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

Unionism – Article 35 – Employee Assistance Program

...and the man in the mirror has sad eyes. Derek Dick 1985

This year has been a long strange trip and it is only half over as of the writing of this article. Between the COVID-19 pandemic and the political upheaval with the coming elections you would think things couldn't get much worse, yet they did. The George Floyd death at the hands of the police in Minneapolis MN and the following protests and riots that were sparked during the peaceful protests have driven many of us to question our ability to handle all that is coming at us during this time in our lives.

Many people attempt to escape life issues by self-medicating with drugs or alcohol, even for a brief period of time from the issues affecting their daily lives. This is a path to devastation in one's life and once started you might find yourself unable to put a stop to it. Addictive personalities can find themselves in the grip of addiction, unable to break free and unaware of where to find help to get back control of their life.

The NALC and the Postal Service have negotiated a program in our National Agreement, Article 35 – The

Employee Assistance Program, designed to be a place where we can go to receive assistance in dealing with issues of this type and many others. If you have a substance abuse problem, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP for short) is available to provide help in getting on the right track in dealing with your problem. The EAP is strictly a voluntary program and the professional counselors will not speak to others about your issues and they will not provide any information to the Postal Service about your condition or issues discussed. Confidentially is the cornerstone of the program, as no one wants to be worried if postal management is getting information about any sessions an individual has had with a counselor. The purpose of the program is to make help available should an individual feel the need for help for any number of issues; this program is not limited to drug/alcohol problems. If you have experienced the death of a coworker, you have probably seen the EAP counselor at your station to speak about the help available to deal with the issues of loss felt by those who are left behind.

As I stated, there are many issues that the counselors are available to help you

address and not only are they available for the employee but for the employee's family as well. As you look around



Brian Obst Vice President Branch 599

today you can see the many issues placing stress on us daily and sometimes it can be just too much. The ability to talk to someone who can get you back to a level playing field, so to speak, is just what is needed by many of us. There is no shame in seeking help when you are feeling overwhelmed by life and this is the reason the program was developed.

Our Branch officials as well as postal management have handouts on the program and are available to answer any questions you might have, so seek them out if you need more information on this important benefit. Also, please take the time to read Article 35 of the JCAM, it is only two pages long, but I'm sure the time it takes to read it will be time well spent.

Until next month I leave you......

Knowledge is the Key.

*Brian Obst*Vice President

Save the Date

Our 7th Annual Branch 599 Golf Tournament to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association has been scheduled for November 22, 8 AM Shotgun Start.

We are hopeful we will be able to host this great Sunday outing, so important to MDA. We have grown every year since we began this event, and Alan Robinson will again lead our charity effort.

Proposed Bylaw Changes

ARTICLE VII, Fees, Dues, Fines and Assessments Section 1E

Currently reads as follows:

(E) The Branch Action Fund Account currently capped at \$350,000.00 (three hundred fifty thousand dollars) for the purpose deemed by the membership for any Branch Expense. Such funds shall be under the control of the Trustees and shall be used only for expenses determined by the membership of NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers) Branch 599 as required by a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote of the members voting when properly notified in accordance with the Constitution of the National Association of Letter Carriers and the Bylaws of NALC Branch 599. These funds shall be set aside in an appropriate savings institution earning a guaranteed interest rate. The interest on these funds shall be deposited in the Branch Action Fund to be used exclusively for Branch expenses as deemed by the membership.

Proposed to read as follows:

(E) The Branch Action Fund Account currently capped at \$350,000.00 (three hundred fifty thousand dollars) for the purpose deemed by the membership for any Branch Expense. Such funds shall be under the control of the Trustees and shall be used only for expenses determined by the membership of NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers) Branch 599 as required by a two-thirds (2/3rds) vote of the members voting when properly notified in accordance with the Constitution of the National Association of Letter Carriers and the Bylaws of NALC Branch 599. These funds shall be set aside in an appropriate savings institution earning a guaranteed interest rate. The interest on these funds shall be deposited in the General Fund to be used exclusively for Branch expenses as deemed by the membership.

Bylaw proposal signed by: Mike Brink, Alan Peacock, John Gebo, and Alan Robinson

ARTICLE VII, Fees, Dues, Fines and Assessments Section 1F

Currently reads as follows:

(F) Each pay period \$2.00 per active member shall be set aside in the appropriate savings institution as follows: \$1.00 each pay period per active member shall be placed in the Training and Convention Fund and \$1.00 each pay period per active member shall be placed in the Building fund.

Proposed to read as follows:

(F) Each pay period \$2.00 per active member shall be set aside in the General Fund. Of that \$2.00, \$1.00 shall be allocated for use for Training and Convention expenses and \$1.00 shall be allocated for use for Building Maintenance expenses.

Bylaw proposal signed by: Mike Brink, Alan Peacock, John Gebo, and Alan Robinson

Proposed Bylaw Changes

ARTICLE XI, Funds Section 3

Currently reads as follows:

All funds shall be devoted to such uses as the Branch may determine. No appropriation shall be made except when ordered by not less than a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a regular meeting. Duly authorized bills and receipts for expenses must be presented to the Treasurer for proper reimbursement. Branch Officers may spend reasonable and proper amounts between Branch meetings as provided in Article XIII, Section 1 of these bylaws. All bills and claims in excess of \$1000.00 will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval before being acted upon by the Branch.

(A) The President and/or his/her designee will attend all necessary Union Functions approved by the majority of the Executive Board. If approved expenses will be paid by the Branch.

Proposed to read as follows:

All funds shall be devoted to such uses as the Branch may determine. No appropriation shall be made except when ordered by not less than a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a regular meeting. Duly authorized bills and receipts for expenses must be presented to the Treasurer for proper reimbursement. Branch Officers may spend reasonable and proper amounts between Branch meetings as provided in Article XIII, Section 1 of these bylaws. All bills and claims in excess of \$3000.00 will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval before being acted upon by the Branch.

(A) The President and/or his/her designee will attend all necessary Union Functions approved by the majority of the Executive Board. If approved, expenses will be paid by the Branch.

Bylaw proposal signed by: Mike Brink, Alan Peacock, John Gebo, and Alan Robinson

Customer Connect Lead a Success!

Congratulations to Interbay carrier, Kevin Ridenour, who is pictured with the staff at Street Fit 360 Bike and Fitness Shop, on his route. Kevin submitted a lead and it resulted in an estimated new annual revenue of \$690,000 for the USPS.

Kevin says, I believe it all comes down to providing good customer service. I listen to the customers! We were able to get him the logistical support he was looking for to enable his business to grow.

It takes the involvement of an entire team!



Proposed Bylaw Changes

ARTICLE XIII, Executive Board Section 1

Currently reads as follows:

There shall be an Executive Board of this Branch, which shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-At-Arms, Board of Trustees, Labor Management Representatives, MBA/NSBA Representative, Health Benefits representative and the Director of Retirees.

This Executive Board shall be empowered to act on behalf of the Branch membership between meetings and shall have the power to expend Branch funds, (with the exception of the Branch Action Fund), not in excess of five hundred (\$500.00), when in the judgment of a majority of the members of this board, an expenditure of such Branch funds in necessary in order to maintain continued operations of the Branch and/or meet the need as deemed appropriate or required as necessary by the President or the Vice-President if he/she is acting as President of the Branch at the time.

This Executive Board shall also be empowered to act for the Branch between meetings and shall have the power to expend Branch funds not in excess of the sum of one thousand dollars (\$1000.00) when in the judgment of a majority of the members of this board, an emergency exists which justifies an expenditure of such money for the best interest of the Branch or the National Association of Letter Carriers.

Proposed to read as follows:

There shall be an Executive Board of this Branch, which shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-At-Arms, Board of Trustees, Labor Management Representatives, MBA/NSBA Representative, Health Benefits representative and the Director of Retirees.

This Executive Board shall be empowered to act on behalf of the Branch membership between meetings and shall have the power to expend Branch funds, (with the exception of the Branch Action Fund), not in excess of five hundred (\$500.00), when an expenditure of such Branch funds is necessary in order to maintain continued operations of the Branch and/or meet the need as deemed appropriate or required as necessary by the President or the Vice-President if he/she is acting as President of the Branch at the time.

This Executive Board shall also be empowered to act for the Branch between meetings and shall have the power to expend Branch funds between five hundred and one dollars (\$501.00), but not in excess of the sum of one thousand dollars (\$1000.00) when in the judgment of a majority of the electronically or telephonically polled members of this board, an EMERGENCY exists which justifies an expenditure of such money for the best interest of the Branch or the National Association of Letter Carriers.

Bylaw proposal signed by: Mike Brink, Alan Peacock, John Gebo, and Alan Robinson





Our letter carriers need your help to continue delivering for America.

Take a stand and demand action from Washington to help our letter carriers!

The USPS is playing a critical role for our nation, particularly in the time of COVID-19. USPS is in danger of running out of money within months, threatening a disruption in service and a loss of income to letter carriers. Americans from all walks of life need politicians in Washington to step up to support the Postal Service and its letter carriers. Our letter carrier heroes need your support. Take action and tell your legislators to support funding for our U.S. Postal Workers.

Friends and family can help the cause now!

Here is their link:



https://heroesdelivering.com



Please pass this website along to all your friends and family!

Please do this EVERY DAY!



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

Al Priedman, Prooldont

Name of Student:		
Male 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 name		
standing. Signature of Local Branch Presiden	t or Secretary	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.
- 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 tentale 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, Hawall.



RETURN ALL APPLICATIONS 10:

FSALC Director of Education, John W. Nittotelli G/O Smarch 1//8 NALC 2424 Gothney Street

Labeland, Ft. 33603



Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM
July 7
August 4

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM
July 9
August 6

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM July 9 August 6

Sunday Work Party

at our Hall 9-11 AM

Date to be Announced

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday Date to be Announced 9 AM Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce

2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday *Date to be Announced* 8 AM Bob Evans Restaurant off Fletcher

12272 Morris Bridge Road, Temple Terrace 33637

The COVID-19 Heroes Fund

Addressing Hazardous Pay

We have been asked countless times by carriers: Is there such a thing as Hazardous Pay for being essential workers? While letter carriers are on the front lines and dealing with the public throughout their daily deliveries, the answer is no. To further explain, letter carriers must deliver in a safe manner by using common sense and the protective supplies that have been provided. With that said, there is legislation in place that addresses Hazardous Pay for all frontline workers. Letter carriers are included in the proposal.

Senate Democrats' Proposal for

Pandemic Premium Pay to Reward, Retain, & Recruit Essential Workers:

Essential frontline workers are the true heroes of America's COVID-19 pandemic response. Senate Democrats believe in providing premium pay to frontline workers during this pandemic to reward essential frontline workers, ensure the retention of essential workers who are working grueling hours on the frontlines of this crisis, and promote the recruitment of additional workers who will be needed in the months ahead.

As Congress looks at a potential fourth COVID-19 bill, the following proposal

is meant for consideration by members of Congress, key stakeholders, and the American people. The proposal consists of two major components:

- A \$25,000 pandemic premium pay increase for essential frontline workers, equivalent to a raise of an additional \$13 per hour from the start of the public health emergency until December 31, 2020.
- A \$15,000 recruitment incentive for health and home care workers and first responders to attract and secure the workforce needed to fight the public health crisis.



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