



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2020

Around The Horn from The President's Desk



Tony Diaz
President
Branch 599

Brothers and Sisters, do you know anything about the new Postmaster General? Do you know his name? When he began? How did he become Postmaster General? Is he familiar with operations of the United States Postal Service? Was he a USPS employee at any time? What is his track record? Will he be influenced by the current administration?

I decided to research the new Postmaster General and present my findings in this article. While I will refrain from making this a political article, we must all look at the facts as to what is happening to the Postal Service and reasons why. The National Association of Letter Carriers supports legislative friends of letter carriers throughout the country, those who support letter carrier needs, no matter the party, democrat or republican.

1. The new Postmaster General's name is Louis DeJoy.
2. Louis DeJoy is the 75th Postmaster General of the United States.

3. He is 63 years old.
 4. He is from North Carolina.
 5. His term as Postmaster General began June 15, 2020.
 6. He is only the fifth Postmaster General since 1971 not to come from within the U.S. Postal Service's bureaucracy. (No experience with postal business.)
 7. He was chosen to head the service by a Trump-appointed Board of Governors.
 8. He is a major donor to the president and other republicans.
 9. He is a former supply-chain CEO and he has 35 years' experience in labor analytics—the art of eliminating as many jobs as possible.
 10. His company has a terrible labor record, rife with red flags including sexual harassment, discrimination, speedup, workplace injuries, excessive use of temps, misclassifying workers as independent contractors, and inadequate sick leave during the current pandemic.
- Already DeJoy has been the target of multiple letters

from members of Congress who have called on the postmaster general to rescind his measures and have complained about a lack of transparency from the agency. **Eighty-four House members, including four Republicans,** signed a letter that said it is *vital that the Postal Service does not reduce mail delivery hours, which could harm rural communities, seniors, small businesses and millions of Americans who rely on the mail for critical letters and packages.*

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., had a closed-door meeting with DeJoy the week of August 3-7 to discuss the agency's worsening performance and need for emergency funding. Schumer later described it as *a heated discussion.* The postmaster general admitted during the closed-door

Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

Branch 599
Meeting
Thursday
September 3
7:30 PM

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Shop Stewards

<i>Station</i>	<i>ZIP</i>	<i>Steward</i>	<i>Station No.</i>	<i>Steward's No.</i>
Tampa Stations/Branches		Chief Steward, Brian Obst		727.458.0679
Brandon	33510/11	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		813.719.6793	
Produce	33610	Vanessa Andujar	813.239.4084	813.521.9209
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)

meeting that he is behind the wave of mail delays rolling across the country in recent weeks. Pelosi and Schumer followed-up with a letter to DeJoy that said the operational changes *threaten the timely delivery of mail – including medicines for seniors, pay-checks for workers, and absentee ballots for voters – that is essential to millions of Americans.*

Sen. Gary Peters (D-Mich.), the top Democrat on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, said that he was starting an investigation into postal delivery delays. **Heads of postal worker unions have unanimously opposed the DeJoy delay tactics, noting, in so many words, that there is nothing more sacred to post office workers than getting the mail out on time.**

There has been a reshuffling of top managers and executives. Two top executives overseeing day-to-day operations and 23 more postal executives were reassigned, centralizing power around himself as delays grow at USPS ahead of a mostly vote-by-mail election, in addition to a hiring freeze and push for early retirements. *Worried postal analysts, who say the tone of DeJoy's first eight weeks and his restructuring, have recast the nation's mail service as a for-profit arm of the government, rather than an essential service.*

U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-Paterson NJ) is seeking an independent investigation to determine whether political interference by the Trump administration led to the resignations of the two highly-ranked U.S. Postal Service officials.

–*People's World, Postal News.com*

Stay tuned.....

Quick Hits:

Information you should know

Postal Facts:

15 Facts you may not know

1. The USPS traces its roots to 1775 during the Second Continental Congress, when Benjamin Franklin was appointed the first postmaster general. It was elevated to a cabinet-level department in 1872 and was transformed by the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 into the **United States Postal Service** as an independent agency.
2. The Post Office Department was founded in 1775 with Benjamin Franklin as the first Postmaster General. His annual salary was \$1,000. Before 1971, the PMG was a Cabinet member.
3. Veterans. The Postal Service employs more than 97,000 military veterans and is one of the largest employers of veterans in the country.
4. The most unusual delivery method used by USPS is a mule train in Arizona. The mules carry mail, food, and supplies down an 8-mile trail to the Havasupai Indians at the bottom of the Grand Canyon.
5. In 2019 Postal Inspectors reported 5,759 arrests and 4,995 convictions related to postal crimes, primarily those involving mail thefts, mail fraud and prohibited mailings.
6. The Postal Service has the nation's largest retail network – bigger than McDonald's, Starbucks and Walmart combined, domestically.
7. There are 31,322 Postal Service-managed retail Post Offices in the United States.
8. The USPS communications network supports and maintains more than 147,000 desktop computers, 31,000 notebook computers, 86,000 printers, 23,000 smartphones, 250,000 phone lines, and 310,000 handheld scanners.
9. Vehicles. The Postal Service has more than 228,000 vehicles, one of the largest civilian fleets in the world. New next-generation vehicles will have improved ergonomics, safety features, fuel efficiency and design flexibility.
10. The Postal Service purchased nearly 579,000 tires in 2019. If they were stacked end-to-end, they would be 244 miles long – the distance between Dallas and Houston TX.
11. Global business. The Postal Service processes and delivers **48% of the world's mail.**
12. America's first president, George Washington, was the first one to be on general-issue stamps that were released in 1847, and since then, he's been on more stamps than any other person.
13. The oldest continuously operating post office is the Hinsdale Post Office in Hinsdale, New Hampshire. It had been a general store before it was converted into a post office in 1816.
14. In 2019, **5,777** carriers were attacked by dogs in over **2,270** cities.
15. **Zero tax dollars used. The Postal Service receives NO tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products, and services to fund its operations.**

–*Postal Facts.com*

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

Be Safe!

Wear a Mask
Social Distance

Wash/Sanitize Hands Often

Borderieux and Hinton Retired!



Town 'N Country Carrier **Tom Borderieux**, the oldest active letter carrier in Branch 599, retired on Thursday, July 30. Tom is 78 years old and retires with 38 years of service.

Previous to becoming a letter carrier, Tom owned his own Maaco Paint and Body Shop in Tampa. They were famous for the \$79.99 paint job.

Congratulations Tom, here's to many, many years of happy retirement!



Andre Hinton and Tony Diaz

Ybor City Carrier **Andre Hinton** received his retirement pin and gratuity from President Diaz during our August Branch meeting. Congratulations, Andre!

Andre has been a valuable asset to Branch 599 since he transferred to Tampa from Nashville in 2013. He became a shop steward, and he and his wife, JerryLann, have always been helpful in Branch events. Until his last days at work, he was helpful to the two new stewards in Ybor City and he is very respected by his coworkers.

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.

Unionism — Weingarten Rights

It has recently come to my attention that one of our brother carriers was approached by a postal inspector, who inquired if he could ask him some questions. The carrier said okay and spoke with the inspector for a while. The carrier stated that the inspector was a nice guy, who even gave him some tips on how to prevent getting into trouble. Shortly after this investigative interview the carrier received a suspension based on the answers given to this nice postal inspector.

Brothers and sisters, let me tell you that the postal inspectors do not come around to shoot the breeze with you for fun, nor do they care for you in any way other than getting you to answer questions that can and usually do lead to you receiving discipline.

Anytime that you are approached by a postal inspector and/or an OIG (Office of Inspector General) agent wishing to ask you questions you should do two things. First ask if the questions you are going to be asked could lead to disciplinary action and second ask for your union steward for representation in any interview. This is known as invoking your Weingarten Rights.

The right to representation during any investigative interview which the individual has a reasonable belief may lead to disciplinary action is referred to as the Weingarten Rule.

The Weingarten Rule may only be applied to meetings that are investigatory interviews, where management is searching for facts and trying to make a determination of innocence or guilt of the employee. These interviews help management make a decision whether to impose discipline in those cases being investigated. The interviews we

are speaking of are the standard I.I. (Investigative Interview) as well as postal inspector interrogations.

Remember as referenced above that an individual only has Weingarten representation rights where they have a reasonable belief that the investigation could lead to disciplinary action against them. The determination of *reasonable* is based upon the circumstances of each individual case. Simply because the supervisor says *there is no need to worry, it's just an investigation*, does not set the determination of reasonable belief for the interviews.

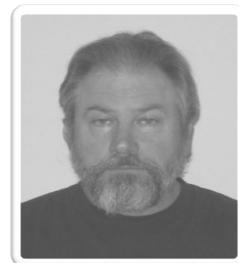
Weingarten Rights are not automatic and they cannot be exercised by your steward for you. The only way you get your Weingarten Rights is to ask for your steward to represent you during any investigative interview whether by local management or postal inspectors. Remember that an Investigative Interview is one where management begins to ask you questions about anything, management is good about asking you to come in for a discussion and then start asking you questions.

Federal courts have determined that you are entitled to a pre-interview consultation with your representative (steward) as one of your Weingarten Rights. This right also extends to any postal inspector's interrogation, so do not let postal inspectors talk you out of your rights. The postal inspectors will try to get you to go through the interview without representation by saying things like: *it's just a couple of questions or if you didn't do anything wrong you don't have anything to be afraid of*. Remember this, when a postal inspector goes into an Investigative Interview as the interviewee, they always take in a representative with them so you

should do no different. Always ensure that you request your representative prior to any

investigative interview and refuse to answer any questions until the representative has arrived and you have had your pre-interview consultation. Simply inform management or postal inspectors that you want to cooperate, but that you will be unable to answer any questions until your representative arrives and reaffirm your request for your steward before proceeding. By the way, this also includes if the postal inspectors wish to show you any videos or evidence before your representative arrives. This is considered asking questions and is a sneaky way to try to get you to give up your Weingarten Rights without knowing you have done so. If they try this, simply refuse to engage and restate that you need your representative.

During the interview process, Weingarten states that you are entitled to assistance from your representative. While we all know that management would rather have us in the interview as a silent presence, this is not the case. The steward is there to assist you during the interview and if management refuses to allow the steward to do so, a grievance on violation of Weingarten Rights would be filed and management could find themselves unable to use the results of the interview in any pending action against the interviewee. Remember, your steward is there to help and may be an active vocal presence during the interview, getting clarifications, and preventing



Brian Obst
Vice President
Branch 599

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Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM
September 1
September 29

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM
September 3
October 1

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM
September 3
October 1

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

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to **Michael Anderson** [MBA/NSBA Rep./ President Emeritus] and family at the passing of his sister, Karen Stevens, August 7.



SEPTEMBER 7

Celebrate your well earned holiday with safety and appreciation for the labor unions that fought for it! It became a national holiday in 1894. NALC was founded in 1889. Learn more at nalc.org/about/labor-ties

Unionism — Weingarten Rights

(Continued from page 5)

badgering of the interviewee.

This is a brief introduction on Weingarten Rights and most of this information has been taken from the 2014 edition of the JCAM in Article 17. Please go to this and read all the information and speak with your steward if you have any questions.

The best advice that I as a steward can

provide you on this matter is, any time that management or the postal inspectors ask you to come into the office to submit to an investigative interview, clearly state for them that you wish to cooperate, but that you desire your steward present and that you will not answer any questions until your steward is present and you have had time to consult with them first. Remember, these people are not your friends and

the whole purpose of investigative interviews/postal inspector's interrogations is to develop evidence against you for the purpose of disciplinary action. Be smart, always have representation with you.

Remember — **Knowledge is the Key.**

Brian Obst
Vice President

Robert's Corner

Another reprint from days gone by: My last article dealt with how to properly introduce new business into a meeting of the assembly and what precedes debate. Since I have covered what *precedes* debate, I should first define *debate*.

Merriam Webster (m-w.com) defines debate as:

1. a discussion between people in which they express different opinions about something
2. the formal discussion of a motion before a deliberative body according to the rules of parliamentary procedure

After a question has been stated by the chair, it is before the assembly for consideration and action. This is often done by and through debate. As a result, debate is *sometimes* necessary or thought to be necessary by at least one of the members present at the assembly.

All resolutions, reports of committees, communications to the assembly, and all amendments proposed to them, and all other motions (except the *Undebatable Motions* of which there are twelve), may be debated before final action is taken on them, unless by a two-thirds vote the assembly decides to dispose of them without debate. By a two-thirds vote is meant two-thirds of the votes cast, a quorum being present.

As a general rule, the chair should recognize the person who rises first after the previous speaker has finished

and sat down. One cannot, while someone is still speaking, interrupt or try to signal that you want to speak next. You must wait until the person who is speaking finishes and sits down before standing and seeking the chance to speak by calling out the chair's title.

There are three common exceptions to this rule:

1. If you are the maker of the motion, you have a one-time right to preference in speaking about it.
2. Although in debate each member has the right to speak twice on the same question on the same day (except on an appeal), but cannot make a second speech on the same question *as long as any member who has not spoken on that question desires the floor*.
3. When the chair knows or suspects that persons seeking the floor have opposing opinions on the motion, he/she should try to alternate between the speakers who favor and those who oppose a proposal or motion that is being debated.

Debate must be limited to the merits of the *immediately pending question* – that is, the last question stated by the chair that is still pending; except that in a few cases the main question is also open to debate. In other words, stick to the subject in debate. **Your speech must relate to the motion under discussion. Your remarks must be germane to the motion currently being debated.** Your remarks must have a bearing on whether the pending motion should be adopted. **Going off on irrelevant topics is not in order.**



Michael Brink
Recording Secretary
Branch 599

One of the most important rules of debate is that the proposal, not the member, is the subject of debate. Speakers must address their remarks to the presiding officer, be courteous in their language and deportment, and avoid all personalities, never alluding to the officers or other members by name, where possible to avoid it, nor to the motives of members. Criticizing an opponent's reasoning is different from criticizing the opponent personally. If debate were allowed to include personal attacks, it might intimidate many from taking part in the debate. **The most important of these is that in debate you speak as though you talking to the chair, not directly to other members.** As much as possible avoid using the names of other members in debate. It is preferable to say, *the previous speaker* instead of referring to the previous speaker by name.

In next month's newsletter I will cover and discuss a call by a member to end debate altogether by stating: *I move the previous question.*

The above excerpts may have been taken from www.robertsrules.org and *Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised In Brief*, written by Henry M. Robert, III, William J. Evans, Daniel H. Honemann and Thomas J. Balch with the assistance of Daniel E. Seabold and Shmuel Gerber.



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