



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 3

MARCH 2018

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

3CCAs Converted to Fulltime Regular

Congratulations to the top three CCAs, they were converted to full-time regular carrier on Saturday, February 3. All three served as a CCA a little over 34 months.

Congratulations to Charkemma Hinnant, TCA; Landon Douglas, Temple Terrace; and Brijana Mitchell, Palm River. Terrell Brown, Town n Country is now the #1 CCA on the relative standing (CCA seniority) list. We are looking into additional conversions.

Brothers and Sisters, I am sure by now you are aware management is cracking down on sick leave use. Management believes sick leave is being abused, and more discipline is being issued. How can you protect yourself? FMLA coverage is a carrier's best friend. If you

or a family member have a health issue, do yourself a favor and apply for FMLA Coverage. You can have multiple cases, pertaining to specific situations. Perhaps one case for your health issue and another case for a family member's health issue. Family and Medical Leave Act is designed to help employees balance their work and family.

The following are frequently asked questions; hopefully these answers will be helpful:

FMLA Purpose and Pay

What is the purpose of the FMLA?
The FMLA is designed to help employees balance their work and family responsibilities by providing them with up to 12 workweeks of protected leave to attend to serious medical issues and certain family matters, including leave needed due to certain military deployments of family members. The FMLA also allows employees up to 26 workweeks of protected leave to care for certain military service members who have suffered a serious injury or illness during, or as

a result of military service.

Is FMLA Paid or Unpaid Leave?

FMLA is unpaid leave. However, the law permits – and the Postal Service allows employees to substitute their paid leave for FMLA leave, so long as the employee complies with all normal leave rules to obtain such paid leave.

Eligibility for FMLA Leave

Who can take FMLA Leave?

Employees who have:

- worked for the Postal Service for a total of 12 months at any time during the past seven years, and who have
- worked at least 1,250 hours in the 12 months prior to the start of the leave.

Does the 1,250 hours include time such as annual leave or court leave?

No. It includes only hours



Tony Diaz
President

Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday
March 1
7:30 PM

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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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	Warren Sumlin	813.486.7612	
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/Branches		Chief Steward, Brian Obst		727.458.0679
Brandon	33510/11		813.661.1636	
Carrollwood	33618		813.961.2962	
Commerce	33602	Vic Figueroa	813.242.4507	845.380.6386
Forest Hills	33612	Ed Humphries	813.935.2954	813.787.3914
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
Hilldale	33614	Troy Figuero	813.879.4309	347.403.1644
Hilldale Annex	33634	Varick Reeder	813.879.4309	315.491.6234
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	Melinda Alejandro	813.634.1403	386.237.2715
Seminole Heights	33603	Walt Rhoades	813.237.4569	813.389.1708
Sulphur Springs	33604	Steve Hall	813.237.4569	813.494.4669
TCA/Hyde Park	33606	Thomas King	813.873.7189	727.504.3866
TCA/Peninsula	33609	Mike Williams	813.873.7189	813.541.3092
TCA/West Tampa	33607	Michael Smith	813.873.7189	813.326.0717
Temple Terrace	33617	Warren Sumlin	813.988.0152	813.486.7612
Town 'N Country	33615/35	Brian Obst	813.884.0973	727.458.0679
Ybor City	33605		813.242.4507	

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

actually worked and does not include non-work time such as annual leave, administrative leave, sick leave, or court leave.

If an employee was out on military leave, does this absence affect eligibility for FMLA?

No. The time of the employee's service in the military is counted the same as if they had been working. Therefore, their service time counts towards the 12 months and 1,250 hours.

Qualifying Reasons for FMLA Leave?

What reasons qualify for FMLA protected leave?

Employees can take 12 workweeks of protected leave for the following reasons:

- The birth of a son or daughter and to bond with the newborn child.
- The adoption of a child or the placement of a foster child, and time to bond with the newly placed adopted or foster child.
- The serious health condition of employee.
- The need to care for the employee's parent, spouse, son or daughter with a serious health condition.
- A qualifying exigency arising out of the deployment of a parent, spouse, son or daughter to active military duty to a foreign country.

Employees can also take up to 26 workweeks of protected leave to care for a spouse, parent, son, daughter or next of kin who suffered a serious injury or illness in the line of duty while on active duty and who is a current member of the armed forces, guard or reserves.

Serious Health Conditions

What is a serious health condition (SHC)?

It is an illness, injury, physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a

health care provider. Specifically, a SHC includes the following:

- **Inpatient Care:** a condition involving an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility and any incapacity or treatment associated with the inpatient care.
- **Absence over 3 Days Plus Treatment:** a period of incapacity over three full days of the first day of incapacity, or treatment by a health care provider (HCP) twice within 30 days of the first day of incapacity, or treatment once within 7 days of the first day of incapacity and a regimen of continuing treatment by or under the supervision of the HCP.
- **Chronic Conditions:** any period of incapacity or treatment for a condition that requires at least two treatment visits within a year's time and continues over an extended period of time.
- **Pregnancy and Prenatal Care:** any period of incapacity related to pregnancy and treatment prior to birth.
- **Permanent or Long-term Conditions:** a period of incapacity for permanent or long-term conditions for which treatment may not be effective, such as for Alzheimer's, a severe stroke or the terminal stages of a disease.
- **Conditions Requiring Multiple Treatments:** any period of absence to receive multiple treatments (including recovery from the treatments) for restorative surgery or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity over 3 days without such treatment.

What does not qualify as a SHC?

Ordinarily, unless complications arise, the common cold, flu, ear aches, upset stomach, minor ulcers, headaches other than migraines, routine dental or orthodontia problems and periodontal disease are not serious health conditions. Also, conditions for which cosmetic treatments are given are not

SHCs unless inpatient hospital care is needed or complications develop.

If a medical procedure is voluntary, would FMLA still apply?

Yes, if it meets the criteria of a Serious Health Conditions as defined above. The FMLA does not distinguish between voluntary and involuntary treatments.

If an employee is absent due to alcohol or drug abuses, do they get FMLA?

No, not if the absence is due to incapacitation from their substance abuse. FMLA leave is allowed only for treatment for substance abuse. Also, absences associated with group meetings such as AA are not considered treatment by a health care provider and does not qualify for FMLA leave.

What is a Chronic Serious Health Condition under the FMLA?

A chronic SHC is (1) a condition that continues over an extended period of time; (2) may cause episodic, rather than continuing, period or incapacity; and (3) requires treatment by a health care provider at least twice a year.

Does an employee have to see a doctor while absent for their chronic condition?

No. Incapacity due to a flare up of the chronic condition qualifies for protection and it is not necessary for the employee (or covered family member) to receive treatment from a health care provider during the absence.

Bonding and Placement

Can employees take bonding leave at any time?

No. Leave to bond with a newborn or newly placed child must take place within 12 months after the birth or placement.

Are both parents entitled to bonding leave?

Yes. Both parents, including same-sex parents, are entitled to take up to 12

(Continued on page 4)

Congratulations! Chris Bazinet and Gary Smith



Eric Chavez, Chris Bazinet & Tony Diaz



Eric Chavez, Gary & Karin Smith, and Rich Fermo

Sulphur Springs carrier, **Chris Bazinet**, was presented a *Letter of Thanks and Appreciation* from Postmaster General Megan Brennan and a *Letter of Acknowledgement* from NALC President Fred Rolando as well as a NALC Hero Pin.

In October of 2017, Chris observed a smoking car with occupants. He quickly ran to the car and pulled two children out to a safe location, he then went back to pull the mother out who was still restrained with the seat belt, and shortly after, the car became engulfed in flames.

Chris is shown with District Manager Eric Chavez and Branch 599 President Tony Diaz; it was followed by a small ceremony.

Sulphur Springs carrier, **Gary Smith**, was presented a 40-year pin and certificate from District Manager Eric Chavez, also shown are Postmaster Rich Fermo and Gary's wife Karin; it was followed by a small ceremony.

Congratulations to both!

Branch 599 Members connect here in Facebook: facebook.com/groups/nalc599 Click: [Join Group](#).

Around the Horn from the President's Desk

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workweeks of protected leave so long as it is taken as a block of time. The leave may be taken at the same time, or separately within 12 months of the birth or placement of their child.

When is an employee entitled to leave to care for a family member?

An employee can take leave to care for the physical needs of a family member, such as when the family member cannot care for their own medical, hygienic or nutritional needs or safety, or cannot transport themselves to the doctor's. Leave is also available to provide psychological comfort but only when the family member is receiving inpatient or home care. Leave on an

intermittent or reduced leave schedule must be medically necessary.

Are employees entitled to FMLA protection when they come in late on account of their condition?

Only if provided for in their certification.

—FMLA FAQ's USPS

**Quick Hits:
Information you should know**

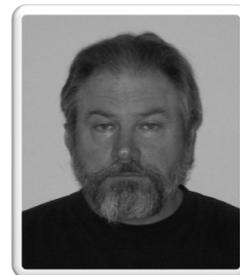
* **Here's a stat for you to process:** John Ambrose, the #1 senior carrier in Tampa began his carrier January 15, 1966. He continues to carry mail in the 02 zone at Ybor City Station. He has carried mail for 52 years, and has been the #1 senior carrier since 2000.

For 18 years as the #1 senior carrier is an amazing statistic that may never be broken. He is building on his own record every day he remains a letter carrier.

* The Retention rate for CCAs in the Suncoast District is 45%. In Tampa, the rate is higher at 54%. District level management is working to raise the rate. Proper training, expectations, quality evaluations, and additional street observations were suggested at the Union Leadership Meeting held in February.

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

Unionism...CCAs are the future of the Postal Service



Brian Obst
Vice President
Branch 599

The CCA – City Carrier Assistant position was created during the 2011 Contract negotiations for the purpose of replacing the previous TE – Transitional Employee designation. The CCA is a non career, bargaining unit employee designed to augment the City Carrier workforce with flexible work schedules for the changing work environment of the Post Office of today moving into the future.

The CCA is the Future of the Letter Carrier Craft in the Postal Service – even if they don't know it yet. The CCA will be hired for a 360 day contract and can be rehired at the expiration of that contract after a 5 day time off period. All CCAs are trained in all the duties and responsibilities of the City Letter Carrier and the ultimate goal is for the CCAs to be converted to City Letter Carriers to replace the current carriers departing the Postal Service as time moves forward.

The CCA hired today is in a unique position as almost an apprentice City Letter Carrier, learning on the job with the opportunity to be fully prepared to take over as a City Letter Carrier when their conversion time arrives. As a CCA one should endeavor to learn all that one can about their job as a letter carrier as well as becoming active in the NALC, your union. I have spoken to many CCAs and asked them about becoming more active as a union member, but it seems like they think there will always be someone else there to do the job. I have to tell you that thought process couldn't be farther from the truth. Remember that

you are the union, City Letter Carrier or CCA, you are both union members and if you do not get involved, the union becomes weaker with each departing union member.

It is the responsibility of your current branch officers and stewards to seek out new members and help to train them to be active union members and advocates. It is important to prepare the current crop of CCAs to be ready to accept the reins of leadership so the union remains strong into the future. I speak to all City Letter Carriers when I say that you have a responsibility to nurture and develop our newest members so they are ready to replace us when the time comes. Remember back to when you first became involved in the union and remember how easy it was due to the help of your brothers and sisters in the union or remember how hard it was if you didn't have anyone there to answer your questions and help you along as you were getting your feet as a new member/steward/officer. I want it to be much easier for all that come along after me as it wasn't real easy for me 19 years ago.

I speak to all the CCAs when I say that it is your responsibility to become involved in your union. Ask questions, come to meetings, consider becoming a shop steward or branch officer and most importantly, **Read Your Contract.** If you don't know what your contract says about your duties and responsibilities, how can you become proficient at your job? It is no accident that your stewards and branch officers are knowledgeable about the

contract because they all go to monthly training meetings, statewide training seminars, and state and national conventions where they get some of the best training available from our national officers. The contract and lots of other information that is available to you can be found online at our website, **NALC.org**. I recommend that everyone goes to the site to continue to learn about your job and your union. Additionally your Union Hall is located at 3003 W. Cypress Street in Tampa and our monthly meeting is on the first Thursday of each month, starting at 7:30 PM. I know that all of your branch officers would love to see you on meeting nights. Come out and meet others in your branch and enjoy some time off the job while learning about the operation of your union.

To all reading this article, I say do what you can to be helpful and assist in the development of the CCAs of today because they are the stewards and branch officers of tomorrow for your union and they are the City Letter Carriers of tomorrow for the Postal Service; in other words: **They Are The Future.**

As always I leave you with...
Knowledge is the Key.

Brian Obst
Vice President
Stations/Branches Chief Steward

Mark your Calendar! Branch meetings in 2018 will be...

March 1 • April 5 • May 3 • June 7 • July 12 • August 2 • September 6 • October 4 • November 1 • December 6



NALCe-Activist *at nalc.org*
Network

Get involved! Your future depends on it!

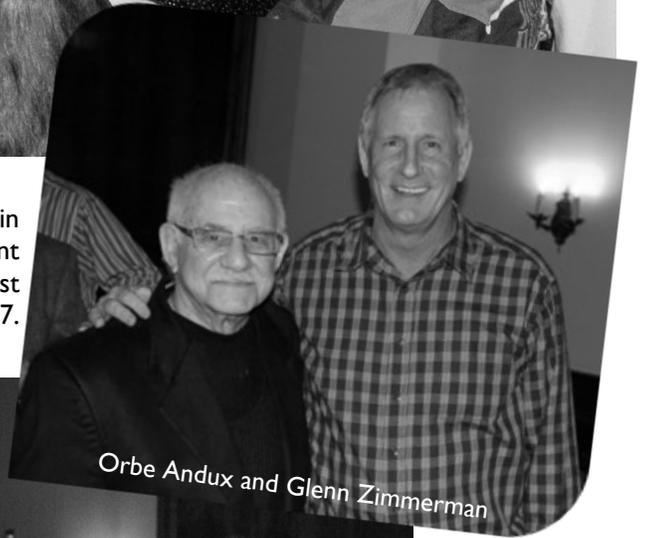
Retirees Dinner

The 2018 Retirees Appreciation Dinner held on January 21, at Maggiano's Little Italy at Westshore Plaza was a huge success. Great company, great food, great venue, great service, great stories, and raffle prizes and handouts for all.

Thanks to the 80 who attended, members and their guest. Special thanks to the Director of Retirees, Alan Robinson, for coordinating the event.

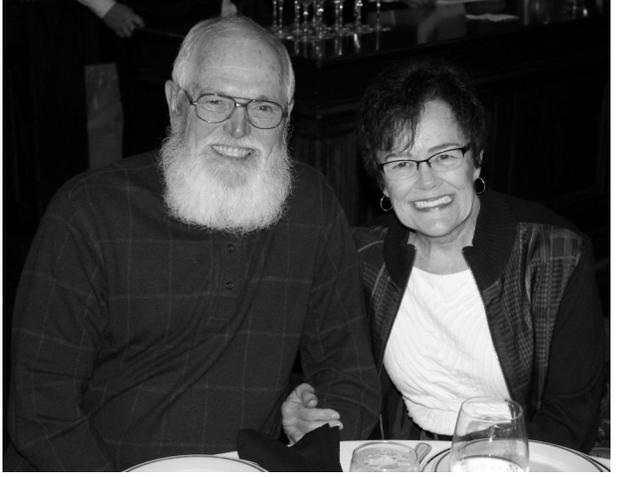


Longest retired member in attendance and the newest retired member in attendance. President Emeritus Orbe Andux served as Branch President from 1980-81, retired in 1985; Glenn Zimmerman retired from Forest Hills Station in September 2017.



Orbe Andux and Glenn Zimmerman





“Mary Lou Jackman-William Corbeau”
Scholarship Application

(Please do not reduce the size of this application)

Name of Student: _____

Male Female

Address: (print legibly) _____

City, State , Zip: _____

Contact Phone Number: Cell _____ Home _____

NALC Branch Name/Number: _____

Branch Contact Phone Number: _____

NALC Member's Name :(print legibly) _____

I certify the above named member of the FSALC is in good standing .

Date: _____

Signature of Local Branch President or Secretary

Return all applications to:
Joseph A. Henschen, FSALC Director of Education
C/O Branch 1477
5369 Park Blvd.
Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

To Qualify, the following requirements must be met:

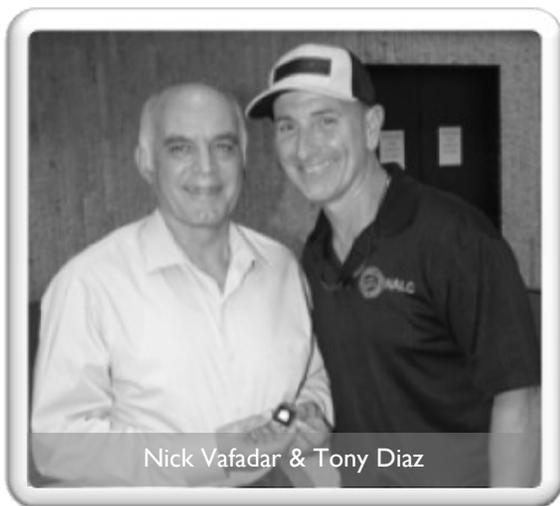
- 1. The Student must have graduated from an accredited high school or have a GED.*
- 2. The Student must be a dependent of a member or the spouse of a deceased member of the FSALC who has not remarried.*
- 3. Applicant must enroll as a full-time student in an accredited college or university, and submit proof of enrollment to receive the funds if awarded (DO NOT SUBMIT PROOF OF ENROLLMENT AT THIS TIME)*
- 4. Applications must be postmarked on or before July 1, 2018*

This scholarship award is based on a random drawing, not on academic records or qualifications. There will be four scholarships awarded—two for female and two for male—each in the amount of \$2000. This drawing will be held during the NALC 71st Biennial Convention July 14-21, 2018

(Please do not reduce the size of this application)

Nick Vafadar Retired!

Our Sign updated



Nick Vafadar & Tony Diaz

Congratulations to **Nick Vafadar** [Carrollwood] who received his retirement pin and gratuity from President Tony Diaz during our January Branch meeting!



The NALC logo on the Union Hall sign has been replaced. The old logo lasted many years but had become sun damaged and illegible. The sign is illuminated at night.

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to **Theresa Ramirez** [retiree] at the passing of her mother; to **Pat Ferrante** [retiree] at the passing of her mother, Annette Ferrante, January 12; to **Sidney Richardson** [Forest Hills] at the passing of his father, Sidney T. Richardson IV, February 10; and to **Phyllis R. Thomas** [our Newsletter Editor] and **Don Thomas** [President Emeritus] at the homegoing of her mother, Lila Mae Risinger, February 13.

Happy 93rd Birthday, to longtime retiree, **Wilbur Dinning**. Wilbur carried mail for many years at Sulphur Springs Station.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

Stamp Out Hunger

FOOD DRIVE

May 12



Take your truck keys with you, to avoid runaway, rollaway.

Safety Moment

Ergonomics Plus, Inc.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), more than one million workers experience back injuries each year. One fourth of all workers' compensation indemnity claims are a result of back injuries. Low back pain is one of the most common reason that people miss work, second only to the common cold. In America, we spend more than \$100 billion annually in medical bills, disability and lost productivity at work from back injuries and illnesses. More importantly, this problem causes unnecessary discomfort and pain to workers which can have a devastating effect on their lifestyle and ability to work. A BLS survey shows that 75% of back injuries occurred while performing lifting tasks, which underscores the importance of

reducing back injuries caused by lifting.

Lifting

Delivering mail can be strenuous labor. If you must lift a heavy or large object, ask someone to help and use proper lifting techniques. Place one foot beside the box and one behind it, bend your knees and pick up the box while keeping your back straight. Keep your elbows close to your body when carrying an object and, if it slips, let it fall instead of trying to save it.

Whether at home or at work, before you lift

PLAN AHEAD

Know what you are lifting and how you will lift it.

Be aware of the weight of the object.

Determine whether or not it's safe to lift on your own.

Make sure the work area is flat, dry and clear.

CHECK YOUR PATHWAY

Make sure the lift pathway is clear. Remove any tripping hazards or debris. Check for any wet or slick surfaces.

Additional Tips:

Don't hold your breath.

Don't bend or twist at the waist.

Don't use a partial grip (1-2 fingers).

Don't obstruct your vision when carrying.

Don't jerk or lift quickly.

Don't pinch you fingers or toes.

Don't pull a load if you can push it.

Don't forget to wear proper footwear.



Job Related Injuries
Government Workers' Comp Provider

4150 N Armenia Avenue, Suite 102, Tampa FL 33607

Phone: 813.877.6900

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM
February 27
April 3

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM
March 1
April 5

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM
March 1
April 5

Sunday Work Party

at our Hall 9-11 AM
March 4
April 8

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday March 5 9 AM
Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce
2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday March 13 8:30 AM
Bob Evans Restaurant off Fletcher
12272 Morris Bridge Road, Temple Terrace 33637

ARSLAN UNIFORMS

Bill & Shirley Moran

Gold Card Member Branch 1477 St. Petersburg
Honorary Member Branch 599 Tampa

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* This is not an offer to extend consumer credit as defined by Section 1026.2 of Regulation Z. Not valid with any other offer. Tampa Postal FCU will pay up to \$2,000 on closing costs of the approved Conventional 1st Mortgage loan financed with the Credit Union between February 1 – April 30, 2018. Tampa Postal FCU NMLS 411052 offers home loans by partnership with CU Members Mortgage a division of Colonial Savings, F.A. NMLS 401285. Restrictions apply. Contact Credit Union for complete details.

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 Housing
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