



# Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 6

JUNE 2018

## Around The Horn from The President's Desk

### 2018 NALC Food Drive a big success!

**1,150,000 pounds  
of food collected  
for Hillsborough  
County. That's  
right, one million  
one hundred fifty  
thousand pounds!**

The NALC Food Drive, May 12, always the second Saturday in May. This year marked the 26th year that letter carriers have filled food banks to capacity and filled empty tummies throughout the country and our own Hillsborough County.

Our totals this year were the highest in several years, just exceeding what at one time was a norm, for Branch 599, 1 million pounds. This year we had the opportunity to partner with **Metropolitan Ministries**, a giving agency that has helped house the homeless and feed the hungry in Hillsborough County since 1972. **The additional advertising and an agency our customers**

**can identify with in Hillsborough County definitely helped drive the total upward.** From the beginning, all the Metropolitan Ministries staff was so grateful for the opportunity to be the beneficiary of the hundreds of thousands of pounds of food our letter carriers collect in the city of Tampa. I had the privilege to be involved in all the meetings with Metropolitan Ministries and our State Food Drive Coordinator and State President Al Friedman joined me in the initial meetings with our new partner. We developed a plan to remove all the collected food from of the postal facilities the same day as the food drive. While we had a few issues, those issues were noted and will be discussed at our Food Drive recap meeting with our new partners to correct.

*Thank you* to all the Branch 599 carriers who collected food, and those who stayed and assisted the unloading of trucks. Also a *thank you* for those who volunteered their time assisting carriers unload for this great cause. **Special thanks to the rural route carriers in Hillsborough**

**County for their efforts; without the rural routes, our food collection does not reach 1 million pounds.**

### Grievance Investigation Interviews

It is important to know what is required from a union steward in order to be successful with regards to grievance investigations. In grievance investigations, union stewards are like the detectives, there must be interviews, statements, requested documentation, and in certain cases visits to the scene of the alleged concern. Interviewing witnesses is one of the most challenging parts to a successful investigation. It is one of the most important tasks of a grievance investigator. Many grievances are won because the steward conducted thorough interviews of the witnesses; grievances can be lost because a witness was missed or the right questions were not asked. Knowing who to interview and what questions



Tony Diaz  
President

Branch 599  
serving  
Brandon  
Plant City  
Sun City  
Tampa

### Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday  
June 7  
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 5<sup>th</sup> of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

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	Warren Sumlin	813.486.7612	
<b>Presidents Emeritus</b>	Garland Tickle • Orbe Andux Donald Thomas • Michael Anderson James Good • Alan Peacock		

# 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		813.661.1636	
Carrollwood	33618		813.961.2962	
Commerce	33602	Andre Hinton	813.242.4507	931.980.5169
Forest Hills	33612	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
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		813.873.7189	
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	Andre Hinton	813.242.4507	931.980.5169

## Around The Horn from The President's Desk

*(Continued from page 1)*

to ask is not easy to learn, but with training and the practice of filing grievances anyone can improve.

One of the definitions of an interview is a meeting at which information is obtained from a person.

Why are interviews really so important? Why not just get a statement? Interviews are important because for the most part, witnesses may not know what to write. They may not know what's important and what's not. They may not know the difference between direct, circumstantial, and hearsay evidence. Unknowingly, witnesses often write things down that are detrimental to the case or are just plain wrong or inaccurate. Sometimes witnesses have difficulty expressing themselves in writing or may have poor grammar skills, bad handwriting, or have no access to a computer. Should a witness statement be available to place in the file, the steward should review it for accuracy, legibility, and the relevance to the case file. The steward may have to ask the witness to rewrite it several times to get it right, which will not make the witness happy. Even so, while written witness statements may be helpful to a case, they are no substitute for a thorough and probing interview that is documented by detailed note taking. It's not just asking the witness to recall what they saw or heard; stewards have to know what's important and relevant and what's not. However, the importance of a witness' testimony may not be evident right away, so it's crucial the interview be detailed, complete, and documented. Keep in mind that witness descriptions often include error-prone perceptions during the event and (unintentional) selective recall afterwards. Generally, the purpose of the interview is to find out what the witness has experienced, knows or believes, establish a preliminary direction for the investigation or complement other phases of the inves-

tigation (fill in the blanks). Witnesses should be interviewed as soon as possible after you become aware there's a possible grievance. As time passes memories fade; important information may forgotten, or perceptions distorted. The human mind tends to fill in gaps of memory with logic or past experiences so the longer witnesses have to reconsider events, the more they tend to do this. As a general rule, interview witnesses at their convenience, not yours. This is not an interrogation so there's no sense making them hostile. A good interviewer will ask questions in a way that does not feel like an interrogation, but more like a conversation. The steward should develop a game plan for asking the questions. This will keep the interview on course and increase the chances that the steward covers everything. The questions covered will vary depending on the circumstances of the case and the person's involvement.

Tips for a successful interview:

1. Do not interrupt a witness; s/he may forget to return to his/her thought.
2. Ask one question at a time and allow a complete response to the answer.
3. Do not rush, pause between questions in case a late thought is remembered.
4. Ask open ended questions to avoid those that require a yes or no.

Asking open ended questions will assure that the steward gets the most information out of a question and it is in the witness' own words. The answers should be more precise and this often leads to additional questions.

Ask the witness to report all details, no matter how unimportant it may seem. Ask them to recreate the circumstances of the event, not only what happened, but what they thought and how they felt at the time. Encourage witnesses to draw rough diagrams or maps showing where people were,

directions they moved, and any objects in the area.

Taking good notes is vital, you can be the best interviewer around but all will be for naught if you don't document what the witness said. Do not allow writing notes to interfere with your need to listen, so separate the tasks. Ask for clarification or review parts that seem unclear or just do not make sense.

Additional tips:

- Use one side of 8.5x11" paper; makes it easier to copy.
- Write in ink; pencil can be erased. If you make a mistake, line out the error.
- Use wide margins and spaces between lines to leave room for adding details.
- Use highlighters to mark important info.
- Write legibly.

As soon as possible after the interview, write up a report of the interview. These notes become part of the grievance case file. Should the case go to arbitration, a steward may be called upon to testify about what is contained in the notes. This could be many months after the interviews, so complete, thorough, and detailed notes will make the review process much easier.

—NALC Activist

### Quick Hits:

#### Information you should know

- \* **New vehicle news**, there are 220,000 vehicles to be replaced, there are 5 models being tested now, average price \$33,000, **all five models have AC.**

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

# Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

**Our deepest sympathy** and prayerful support is extended to Linda and family at the passing of **Alan Manning** [retiree], April 20; to Marie and family at the passing of **Phil Burnison** [retiree], May 2; and to **Jim Hamilton** [Forest Hills] and family at the passing of his mother, Kathy Freitas, April 24.

## Metropolitan Ministries

### *our new Letter Carriers Food Drive partner*

#### 2017 Facts

##### ***Feeding the Hungry***

- ♦ **1,346,034** meals served in the Tampa Bay area in 2017
- ♦ **2,500 hot meals** are served each day on our campus and through a network of 30 meal site partners in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco & Polk counties.

Imagine what it would feel like to tell your children that there's nothing to eat today. Children in Tampa Bay are going to bed hungry tonight. This is a reality right here in our community: 1 in 4 children live in households that cannot afford to put food on the table. And because so much of the food is donated, Metropolitan Ministries can provide a complete holiday meal for just \$1.96.

- ♦ **\$1.96** provides a meal for **1** person
- ♦ **\$19.60** provides a meal for **10** people
- ♦ **\$27.44** provides a meal for **14** people
- ♦ **\$35.28** provides a meal for **18** people
- ♦ **\$47.04** provides a meal for **24** people
- ♦ **\$98.00** provides a meal for **40** people

##### ***Community Impact***

- ♦ **97,108** services were provided through our outreach center
- ♦ **27,616** families helped through outreach and prevention services
- ♦ **17,639** nights of safe shelter were provided for children and their parents
- ♦ **1,010** children were safe and secure in our programs and benefited from our services
- ♦ **319** adults achieved educational goals
- ♦ **224** adult residents are employed
- ♦ **414** families benefited from residential housing and programs with **83%** successful exits
- ♦ **84%** of families were employed and began earning an average wage of \$12.58 at program completion
- ♦ **94%** of families have maintained their housing for at least one year
- ♦ **98%** of families have not returned to homelessness
- ♦ **25,469** volunteers donated **186,923** hours. This is a **savings of \$4.2 million**
- ♦ **Gifts-in-kind** (goods and services donated) equate to a **savings of 6.9 million** dollars a year
- ♦ **37,000 +** individual donors financially support Metropolitan Ministries annually
- ♦ **85%** of donations directly support programs. This outperforms most charities in America.



**Metropolitan Ministries is a remarkable local organization; the partnership with Letter Carriers and being the beneficiary of the Food Drive is a win for both parties!**

**Anyone interested in volunteer work at Metropolitan Ministries, go to their website and sign up online.**

# Unionism...Don't be shocked — it could happen!

## Dateline: Tampa FL

Yesterday the CDC, FBI, and Homeland Security descended on the Ybor Post Office in response to one of the worst Bio-Terror events in American history. The event started at the parcel sorting operation when a parcel broke open and began to leak a liquid substance. Paying no attention to the leak, the workers at the plant loaded the leaking package onto a transport vehicle for delivery. Hours later the CDC representatives say this is where the contagion event began.

It took several hours before the first workers began to show signs of anything being unusual and during this time the leaking package was making its way around the area on a delivery truck.

Within an hour of departing the plant the leaking parcel was delivered to the dock at the Ybor Post Office. Workers at the station paid little heed to the leaking package and moved it into the building for sorting with the day's mail for delivery. Meanwhile the delivery truck departed for other Post Offices in the Tampa area, carrying, along with the remaining mail, the deadly bio-agent that had leaked out of the original package and was now infecting the rest of the mail in the truck. The CDC timeline shows that this was how the event got out of control so fast since the bio-agent had been spread throughout the city before the evidence showed the danger.

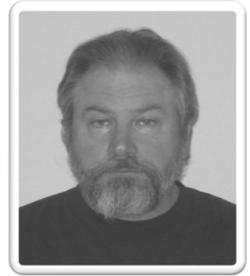
Eight hours later the first workers at the plant were leaving work sick, giving the first indication of a potential problem. While being mildly concerned, management remains blissfully unaware of the catastrophe that had already been set into motion. Back at the Ybor Post Office the carriers are leaving to make their daily rounds, but a minor problem has cropped up. The carrier whose route the leaking parcel was to be delivered on has refused to take the parcel out for delivery claiming it is

unsafe and he should not have to take it. After a heated debate management relents and has the clerk move the package out of the way until it can be addressed properly. The mail delivery in the area continues on without delay and the bio-agent is rapidly spread throughout the area including the Federal Courthouse, the downtown Tampa area, and the cruise terminals just to name a few delivery areas. Speaking of the cruise terminals, the cruise liner going on a trip to Mexico will have departed prior to anyone finding out about the bio-agent. The CDC has given instructions to the U. S. Navy to stop the liner and keep it out at sea in a quarantine zone to hopefully prevent the further spread of the bio-agent.

By early evening, Tampa General Hospital is being overrun with workers from the plant who all seem to have contracted the same mystery illness and doctors are stumped as to what is causing it. The first deaths happen before 10 PM. A call goes out to the CDC, as it has now become obvious that there is an event unfolding throughout the area. People all over the city are beginning to show up at local hospitals with the same symptoms and the medical professionals have no answers. As the night progresses the deaths increase.

The CDC, utilizing the resources of the FBI and Homeland Security attempt to quarantine the Tampa area. Roadblocks spring up everywhere and martial law is instituted along with a 5 PM curfew in a futile attempt to halt the spread of the bio-agent. What the CDC hasn't yet figured out is that the bio-agent has already left the area in the cars of visitors returning home to other states, business people flying to other areas of the country for their jobs, and tourists simply exploring the state. By the time the CDC can identify what has happened, the event has spread throughout the country. People are dying in large numbers now and modern medicine is

scrambling to find out what makes this bio-agent tick so they can attempt to synthesize an antidote/vaccine...



**Brian Obst**  
Vice President  
Branch 599

This may seem like a script for a horror movie but I can assure you that this could happen. One need only look at the incident that occurred at the Ybor Station recently. The facts are similar, the package was broken open at the plant, but was loaded on a truck and sent for delivery to the station. The broken, leaking package was delivered inside the Ybor Station and yes, management attempted to have the carrier deliver this leaking damaged package. When carriers and other employees began to complain that it was affecting them adversely they were pooh-poohed as being overly sensitive. Management refused to properly isolate the package and evacuate the area or to call a hazmat team immediately. Finally the news media got wind of the situation and the fire department was brought in to set up decontamination areas so ill individuals could be evacuated to the hospital for treatment. Even after all this, management still failed to follow protocol and was instructing individuals that they could go to the Burger King next door to get something to drink when they might be contaminated with the danger of spreading the contamination to others unknowingly!

Now the hard questions are being asked about the incident and it remains to be seen how the cards will fall. The spill was reported to be concentrated eucalyptus oil and its strength was the reason so many were affected. Remember that safety rules can only help protect you if all parties follow them.

*(Continued on page 10)*





**“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 )*

# A Point of Personal Privilege

## Beat the Heat

The summer heat is upon us. I, for one, have had two (2) separate battles with the heat of the summer months while delivering mail in Hillsborough County/Tampa. I was 0 wins and 2 losses or 0 for 2. I spent as much as eight (8) hours in the emergency room being administered intravenous fluids for what was determined by the attending physicians as *heat exhaustion*! In each case my inner body core had exceeded its temperature to a point that no amount of fluid ingested by mouth would cool me down. (When I came back to work the supervisor said I was faking it even though I presented medical documentation.)

I constantly had in my cooler while delivering my route, 2 quarts of frozen water and 2 quarts of frozen Gatorade that were also in ice packs. Included in this I had a gallon jug of ice water and a wet cloth in the cooler. Also, I had a neck bandana-type cooling device of which I use even now when I am outside for any length of time. (The USPS never furnished me any of this.) I would set the Gatorade in-between the windshield and dash and sip it as it melted while in the LLV.

What has been neglected in any definition of heat exhaustion concerning letter carriers is the temperature inside your LLV. The vehicle has no insulation (which is SOP in almost all vehicles I've used to deliver) that would deflect the heat from the engine that will boil water. Then there is the added temperature outside the vehicle which isn't taken into consideration by management when the humidity and dew point levels are both about the same level then the (heat index) *feels like temperature* dramatically increases for the letter carrier even though you are inside the vehicle. One time I placed a temperature gauge on the floor of the LLV and it read a temperature of 117°;

so much for trying to stay cool in the vehicle!

The following definition of *heat exhaustion* is from the Mayo Clinic: *Heat exhaustion is a condition whose symptoms may include heavy sweating and rapid pulse, a result of your body overheating. It's one of three heat-related syndromes, with heat cramps being the mildest and heatstroke being the most severe. The causes of heat exhaustion include exposure to high temperatures, particularly when combined with high humidity, and strenuous physical activity. Without prompt treatment, heat exhaustion can lead to heatstroke (which in my definition is) a life-threatening condition. Fortunately, heat exhaustion is preventable. Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion may develop suddenly or over time, especially with prolonged periods of exercise.*

*Possible heat exhaustion signs and symptoms include: Cool, moist skin with goose bumps when in the heat. Heavy sweating. Faintness. Dizziness. Fatigue. Weak, rapid pulse. Low blood pressure upon standing. Muscle cramps. Nausea. Headaches.*

*If you think you're experiencing heat exhaustion: Stop all activity and rest. Move to a cooler place. Drink cool water or sports drinks. Contact your doctor if your signs or symptoms worsen or if they don't improve within one hour. If you are with someone showing signs of heat exhaustion, seek immediate medical attention if he or she becomes confused or agitated, loses consciousness, or is unable to drink. You will need immediate cooling and urgent medical attention if your core body temperature (measured by a rectal thermometer) reaches 104° Fahrenheit or 40° Celsius or higher. Your body's heat combined with environmental heat results in what's called your core temperature—your body's internal temperature. Your body needs to regulate the heat gain (and, in cold weather, heat loss) from the environment to maintain a core*

*temperature that's normal, approximately 98.6° F or 37° C.*



**Ray Garcia**  
Member  
Branch 599

Dehydration is a prime factor in denying your body the ability to sweat and maintain a normal temperature. The human body is a wonderful machine in which your body cools itself by sweating. However, should you work in hot humid weather without replenishing fluids your body sends out warning signs. The signs may start out as heat cramps that include heavy sweating, fatigue, and thirst. If this is not attended to promptly it will progress to heat exhaustion, then possible to heat stroke or death. Heat cramps can be treated by drinking fluids or sports drinks containing electrolytes (Gatorade, Powerade or other non-carbonated drinks). You should attempt to get to a cooler temperature such as an air-conditioned facility or shaded place and resting. To me, I found it virtually impossible to find a shady spot that was cool because it seemed to be hotter in the shade, especially with no breezes! In the May 2018 issue of *The Postal Record* on pages 47-48, Contract Talk by the Contract Administration Unit, it discusses *Heat-related safety* in depth with the proper procedures to follow. Every local officer, steward and letter carrier should read this portion of the magazine as it lays out five important steps to be taken. I found the entire article extremely informative even though I have been retired since 2009.

Take care of yourself and remember your family cares more about your health than the USPS.

Think about it!

# Three say good-bye

In April, Sulphur Springs 33603 lost a trifecta of carriers to retirement...

Se Kim retired April 2, 14 years      Sandor Sam Price retired April 28, 18 years      Brenda Parry retired April 30, 24 years

There was a big retirement party at Sulphur Springs to send them off into their retirement years. Good luck to all three!

**Please note that July meetings have been changed due to the Independence holiday.**

Steward Training will be July 10.      The Branch meeting and Executive Board will meet on July 12.

## Unionism...Don't be shocked — it could happen!

*(Continued from page 5)*

### In the Event of a Leak/Spill:

- Contain the leak/spill,
- Isolate the area,
- Evacuate personnel, and
- Call a Hazmat team.

The delays to movement of the mail are acceptable because as seen in the

example above...moving the mail could have deadly consequences for all.

The above story is fictional, but the Ybor incident was real and could have just as easily been the same or worse than the story itself. Safety is everyone's responsibility, so pay attention and follow safety guidelines for the life

you save will probably be your own.

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

*Brian Obst*  
Vice President  
Stations/Branches Chief Steward



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  
June 5  
July 10

### **Branch 599 Meeting**

Thursday 7:30 PM  
June 7  
July 12

### **Executive Board Meets**

Thursday 6:30 PM  
June 7  
July 12

### **Sunday Work Party**

at our Hall 9-11 AM  
June 10  
July 15

### **Retirees Breakfasts**

Monday June 4 9 AM  
Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce  
2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday June 12 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

**NEED UNIFORMS IN A HURRY?  
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FAX 727.585.9367  
bilmor11@gmail.com



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\*This program does not apply to existing loans financed with Tampa Postal FCU. First payment is due 60 days from loan closing and no interest for 30 days. Valid for vehicles financed with the credit union between May 1, 2018 - July 31, 2018. Some restrictions apply. Contact the credit union for complete details.

