



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 7

JULY 2019

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

Budget vs. Safety First

Brothers and Sisters, does safety really come first? We all have heard that phrase, *safety first* thousands of times. Does it really mean what it states? What is the real intent? And is it realistic? I ask these questions as someone who has been involved in safety programs for over 20 years, either while still carrying mail or as a Branch officer. I have been an advocate and promoter for local and district safety, and have spoken at every one of our offices, to the District and to local safety teams. I proudly display my Million Mile lanyard whenever I enter a postal facility. I ask the above questions because I do not believe most of us are convinced safety really comes first. Budget vs. Safety First is like mixing oil and vinegar. Can the intent of safety first really succeed with the potent mixture of Budget vs. Safety? Well our statistics are saying no as accidents continue to rise. With the money the Postal Service spends trying to promote safety awareness, are they really addressing the real issues

that continue to produce a high rate of accidents? Are we spinning our wheels without results?

My passion for safety will never waver; I will never stop preaching safety awareness with a passion and with the goal to get everyone home to their families, safe and alive. I use my experiences to address safety issues, and to promote safety awareness. Trying to break down the safety issue let's start from the beginning. Do you feel morning safety talks are read as a formality just to say the issue was covered in a safety talk? Is management uninspiring with the safety talks? Does management make sure all carriers are really engaged? Are CCAs given the same safety talk when they begin tour later in the morning? Do you feel management in your office is really committed to safety? What has management done in your office to indicate they are all in? There are many questions that will bring many different answers.

I bring this topic to you because until our members

believe management is fully committed to

safety, the buy-in will never reach a point where we will see a drastic improvement in safety. So how do we really change the culture? In the USPS business climate, can we change the culture? How do we truly reduce the accident upswing? Can we reduce the accident upswing? We can blame the CCAs, but regulars are also having many accidents. Veteran carriers who have a good driving record are making careless mistakes, but why?

It is not a coincidence that the upswing in accidents, seemingly year after year is a direct result of unreasonable expectations. It is not a coincidence that with the budget being a driving force with management there is an upswing in accidents (Budget vs. Safety). The constant back and forth with morning estimates, management becoming more and more aggressive with morning



Tony Diaz
President

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.

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Shop Stewards

Station	ZIP	Steward	Station No.	Steward's No.
Tampa Stations/Branches		Chief Steward, Brian Obst		727.458.0679
Brandon	33510/11	David Rivadeneira	813.661.1636	813.403.9525
Carrollwood	33618	Eddie Berroth	813.961.2962	813.493.5224
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	Sam Wantje	813.879.4309	941.979.6485
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	Frank Webb	813.239.4084	813.340.0300
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Bert Fristad	813.634.1403	813.352.0864
Seminole Heights	33603	Walt Rhoads	813.237.4569	813.389.1708
Sulphur Springs	33604	Steve Hall	813.237.4569	813.494.4669
TCA/Hyde Park	33606	Michael Smith	813.873.7189	813.326.0717
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	
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)

estimates, demanding carriers return at a certain time by using the PET and DOIS tools, denying the carrier reporting requirements outlined in Handbooks and Manuals, M-41 where it states:

131.4 Reporting Requirements

131.41 It is **your responsibility to verbally inform management** when you are of the opinion that you will be unable to case all mail distributed to the route, perform other required duties, and leave on schedule or when you will be unable to complete delivery of all mail.

131.42 Inform management of this well in advance of the scheduled leaving time and not later than immediately following the final receipt of mail. Management will instruct you what to do.

131.43 **Complete applicable items on Form 3996, Carrier-Auxiliary Control**, if overtime or auxiliary assistance is authorized in the office or on the street.

131.44 **Report on Form 1571 all mail undelivered—including all mail distributed to the route but not cased and taken out for delivery.** Estimate the number of pieces of mail.

131.45 **Do not curtail or eliminate any scheduled delivery or collection trip unless authorized by a manager, in which case you must record all facts on Form 1571.**

How about management calling carriers over and over during the day, mainly in the afternoon to push a carrier to move faster? Telling carriers they are slow, they should be further along, I expect you back by, and their performance is not acceptable.

Let's address unreasonable expectations. A new CCA reports later in the morning, a route is ready for them, they are told this is an easy route, you should be done by, in addition there is an hour trip for you to com-

plete the day, and if you do a good job, you will get more hours. Sound like Safety First? I think not. Sound unnerving? Overwhelming? You bet. (Budget vs. Safety) Can it work? CCA accidents are way above projections, are these the causes? With unreasonable expectations, this produces short-cuts, finding a way to get the route delivered, expeditiously. I can save a minute if I do not use my seatbelt, I can save time by not closing my door, no one is watching. Is there time for safety? In the mind of someone hurried, to go, go, go, the answer is NO.

Based on having been involved in safety, having studied accident charts, trends, daily accident times, who is having accidents by years of service, and by non-career and career, having filed safety reports, having spoken to committees, and knowing the challenges on the workroom floor, the budget-driven business model will not allow safety to be successful. We currently deal with it and go through the motions, but we are losing ground.

Solution to Safety:

Accident cases on average cost \$16,000 and this is without the cost of a litigated injury settlement. Management must see the big picture instead of nickel and diming the carriers every morning with their tool driven figures and expectations, it is time for an innovative and different approach to estimates. A plan to produce a less stressful workplace with less demands, to help create less pressure, less anxiety, lessen the constant worry about making it back at an unrealistic time. Management must eliminate the abrasive morning confrontations and the mindset that all carriers are dishonest with their estimates, that all carriers are trying to get over. Management has the technology to track anyone should they question an estimate, should they question or not believe a carrier. So why argue, why have the arguments?

This would lead to an environment

conducive to a safer work place, guaranteed. This would be a big step in helping to eliminate those distractions and the unsafe practices. Accidents would diminish and the millions and millions spent on accidents would substantially decrease.

The blueprint is ready, take it and run with it. At this point the Postal Service is in a lose lose situation, **let's really make Safety First!**

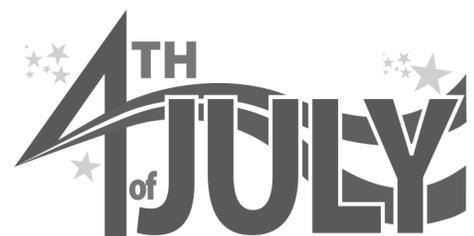
Quick Hits:

Information you should know

* **Metropolitan Ministries** wants to again thank all Letter Carriers that *helped make* the 27th Annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive a huge success! The warehouse is completely full; they continue to distribute the food to their partners that provide meals and groceries to the hungry throughout Hillsborough County.

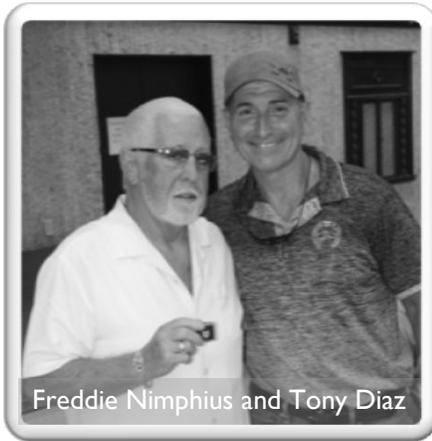
* The 6th Annual Letter Carriers/MDA Golf Tournament will be held November 3, at Heritage Harbor Golf and Country Club. **Mark your calendars** for this special event!

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

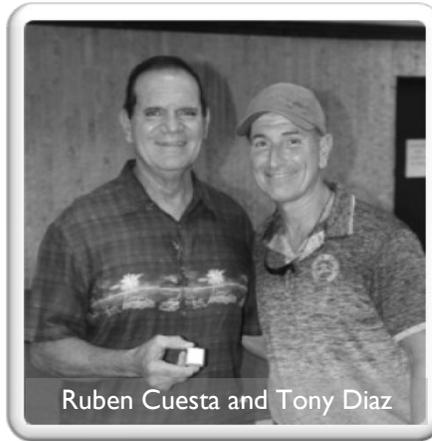


**Relax and Enjoy
your holiday
and Be Safe!**

Nimphius, Cuesta, Lipton, Sampson & Dosal Retired!



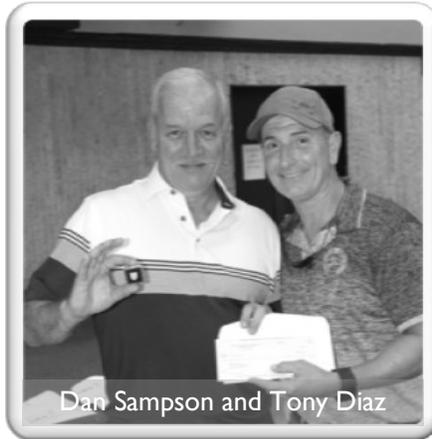
Freddie Nimphius and Tony Diaz



Ruben Cuesta and Tony Diaz



Michelle Lipton and Tony Diaz



Dan Sampson and Tony Diaz



Duane Dosal and Tony Diaz

*Congratulations to **Freddie Nimphius** [Carrollwood], #1 Senior Carrier in Tampa; to **Ruben Cuesta** [TCA]; to **Michelle Lipton** [Carrollwood]; to **Dan Sampson** [Hilldale]; and to **Duane Dosal** [Carrollwood] who received their retirement pin and gratuity from President Tony Diaz during our June Branch meeting!*

50-year Member!



Lomax McIntyre and Tony Diaz

Lomax McIntyre was presented a 50-year Membership Gold Card by President Diaz. The presentation included a congratulatory letter from National President Fred Rolando.

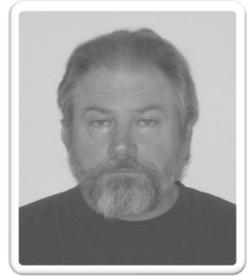
Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to the family and friends of **Charles Roberts** [retiree] whose passing was in May; to the friends of **Richard Barnabei** [retiree] whose passing was in May; and to **Robert Bobby Cooper** [retiree] and family at the passing of his wife, Cheryl, May 24.


NALC *Activist* at nalc.org
Get involved!
Your future depends on it!

Unionism – The Dispute Resolution Process

Article 15 of the National Agreement



Brian Obst
Vice President
Branch 599

One of the main jobs of a union steward is to protect the membership by ensuring contract compliance from management. This is the most important job of stewards and it is where they will spend most of their union time when defending members from unwarranted disciplinary actions from management.

That said, it falls on the steward as well as the individual member to become familiar with the complexities of the Dispute Resolution Process as detailed in Article 15 of the National Agreement.

Article 15 details the various steps in the Dispute Resolution Process as well as the time limits for grievance actions to be taken by the union. It is important for all Branch members to be aware of the time limits for grievance actions as they are not suggestions, they are iron clad rules. Failure to abide by the time limits detailed in the Dispute Resolution Process shall be cause for the defeat of any filed grievance issue. Each step of the process has its own time limit, so one must be aware of the time limit for the particular step of the process where their grievance may be at that particular time.

The steps of the process are as follows:

Step 1

Informal A – the grievance is filed at this step when an issue is known or reasonably should have been known about. (Example: A carrier is given a Letter of Discipline, the time limit starts the next day after it is issued.)

The time limit for this step of the process is 14 days from when one knew or reasonably should have known about the issue. In discipline issues this is why it is important to notify your steward as soon as you receive any discipline

action. While I am aware that you are not required to sign any discipline letter, it is in your best interests to sign and date the discipline letter when it has been issued to you, as it sets the start of the time limits for your grievance and it locks management into the time they issued the letter thus preventing them from attempting to state a different date of issue which could affect your time limits. Remember, signing the issued discipline is not an admission of guilt, it is simply an acknowledgement of receipt of the issued discipline and nothing else.

After the Informal A hearing on the grievance is held there are two ways the grievance can go:

1 – Settlement where the parties agree to settle the issue at this level and the settlement shall be committed to written form and signed by both parties thus resolving the grievance issue.

2 – Impasse where the parties disagree on the issue and cannot find any middle ground so they will agree to disagree and impasse the case to the next step of the process. At this point the time limits for the Branch to appeal the case forward to the next step of the process is 7 days; day one being the day after the decision to impasse is agreed upon. The Branch will provide copies of the entire case file with an appeal request to the Installation Head or their designated representative within the 7 day period. Once the appeal has been received by management they have 7 days to respond to the union and schedule the hearing at the next step of the process.

Step 2

Formal A is the second step of the process where the grievance is heard by the Installation Head or the designated representative and the Union Formal A representative. The parties will address the issues and contractual

guidelines and attempt to come to a resolution of the issue. One change happens

to the grievance at this step and that is the grievance, which belonged to the individual at the Informal A hearing now becomes the Branch's grievance at Formal A. The parties are free to bring in additional information to help make their respective cases and if the parties are in agreement they may jointly interview witnesses and in removal cases they may present 2 witnesses in addition to any agreed upon witnesses that they interview jointly.

At the conclusion of the Formal A hearing the parties will reach one of 3 positions:

1 – Settlement as previously discussed it will be annotated in written form.

2 – Remand is a position where the parties agree that the case file has not been fully developed and the parties agree that it is in the best interest of the parties and the process as a whole if the case is sent back to the Informal A level for further development and possible resolve at that level of the process.

3 – Impasse as previously discussed above, the parties will write letters of contentions for their own positions and sign the associated paperwork (Form 8190).

At this time the Branch, being the moving party, has time limits of 7 days to process the case package for appeal to the next step of the process. Many managers will try to tell you that you must mail it out together with them after the hearing, but this is not so. The steward will prepare the case file for appeal by gathering all the documents used in the hearing process and assembling them in a logical order, number

(Continued on page 6)

Update on Arden Fischer, MDA

Last year at the 5th Annual Letter Carriers/MDA Golf Tournament we hosted a special Muscular Dystrophy guest and his family for the entire golfing day. Arden was great, and was able to tell all the golfers individually, *thank you* for their support of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. At the awards ceremony, Arden assisted with the raffle prizes and the individual and team awards.

It was awesome to hear that Arden and his family were selected by Make-A-Wish Foundation this year. The Fishers set sail on a cruise in June; we certainly hope his wish cruise is a memorable experience for him and his family.

Arden and his family will again be our special guests at the 6th Annual Letter Carriers/MDA Golf Tournament, November 3.

Rescheduled Future Meeting Dates Due to holidays, conventions, and RAP sessions...

Shop Stewards: July 9 • August 6 • September 4 (Wednesday) • October 8

Branch Meetings: July 11 • August 8 • September 5 • October 10

Next Generation Delivery Vehicle update

Next Generation Delivery Vehicle (NGDV)—Four manufacturers— Oshkosh, Mahindra, Karsan, and VT Hackney— currently have prototypes under consideration for the NGDV. All testing has been completed on these prototypes and USPS is meeting with the suppliers to finalize the specifications. Article 41.3.L of the National Agreement allows NALC to examine, and to comment and submit recommendations on, new vehicle specifications. Since 2014, NALC has been closely involved in the NGDV project. NALC has observed and assessed each of the prototypes and provided USPS with recommendations. USPS has stated that the NGDV will be equipped with air conditioning as well as additional safety features; a vast improvement over the current Long Life Vehicle (LLV) and Flex-Fuel Vehicle (FFV). USPS anticipates selecting a manufacturer and awarding a contract for 180,000 vehicles in calendar year 2019. The first NGDVs should be ready approximately 18 months after the contract is awarded.

—June Postal Record

Unionism — The Dispute Resolution Process

(Continued from page 5)

all the pages and prepare a table of contents to go along with the package. Prior to sending the appeal to the next step the Branch has the option of writing a letter of additions and corrections to address any new information that they are adding to the package or to address any information management may have added or brought up at Formal A that had not been previously addressed. The letter must be sent to the next step with the entire case package and management has the opportunity to respond by letter, with a copy being sent to the Branch prior to a decision being reached at the next step of the process. If management delays respond-

ing and the case has been decided at the next step before they respond, they lose the right to respond.

This article has covered the first two steps of the Dispute Resolution Process which most members will access at some time during their postal careers. Next month I will address the next two steps of the process: Step B Hearing and Arbitration Hearing. The information referenced in this article can be found in the JCAM (Joint Contract Administration Manual) which is the agreed upon interpretation of the National Agreement. The JCAM can be found in every station because both the national parties agreed to each pay one half of

the cost to provide every office with a copy and it is for all craft employees to be able to reference as well as all management members to review in an attempt to help resolve disputes prior to them becoming grievances. Additionally, NALC members can also find the JCAM at www.nalc.org so they can review it at their leisure. I highly recommend that you take the time to start reading through this manual as it is what sets the guidelines for your employment and the more you know the better it is for you. Like I always say.....Knowledge is the Key!

Until next month,
Brian Obst, Vice President

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM
July 9
August 6

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM
July 11
August 8

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM
July 11
August 8

Sunday Work Party

at our Hall 9-11 AM
July 14
August 11

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday July 1 9 AM
Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce
2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday July 9 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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bilmor11@gmail.com



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