

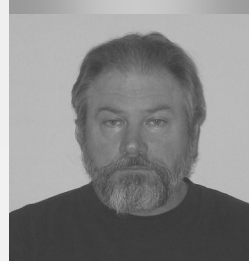


Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

Tampa Letter Carrier

From the Desk of the President

In the summertime when the weather is hot... Mungo Jerry sang in his hit record, but I'm sure his thoughts were about other fun summer activities and not the hard work of the Letter Carrier of today who is out in the heat delivering the mail to all the residents of our nation.



Brian Obst
President
Branch 599

As letter carriers, we have all had to deal with issues of heat in the summer months and it is most important for all carriers to understand the dangers of heat-related illnesses and how to prevent them from affecting you. We all know that there are many in management who fail to realize the importance of taking care while working in the heat, they seem to feel that it is a matter of little to no consequence to letter carriers. While they chastise us about our work ethic and complain about how we do the job, they also act like we are supermen/women that should be able to do our job faster each day and not be affected by other conditions, like the heat.

As letter carriers, it is our job to perform our work duties in a safe manner and in situations dealing with the heat and its effects on individual carriers, only one person knows what needs to be done to be safe and that is the individual carrier.

Yes, management can tell you to be safe out of one side of their mouth and yell at you because you are going too slow for their liking out of the other side, but they are not out on the street with you to see and feel the effects of the heat on the individual carrier. Lacking this knowledge, how does management even think they can push the carrier when they don't know how the individual is reacting to the heat at any given moment? The carrier is supposed to be provided with training by management to ensure they have the knowledge to be able to make safety decisions for their own well-being when on the street making deliveries in the heat. It seems that management is of the opinion that it is not their concern, and they will attempt to insist that the carrier run faster to meet the unreasonable goals they have set.

Understand that as carriers, we have the right to take *Comfort Stops* which are *reasonable and necessary* during the performance of our duties when delivering the mail, particularly when we are delivering in the heat. Now don't misunderstand what the term *reasonable and necessary* means, it is not so you can get on your phone to call friends to chat. The term dictates a situation where you physically need to take a break such as a restroom stop, an opportunity to get out of the heat due to the individual overheating, or stopping to get a cold drink to help rehydrate when you feel dehydrated and overheated. These stops are not thirty-minute breaks, they are just short breaks that you might need to help offset the effects of the oppressive heat so you don't have a heat-related incident.

(Continued on page 3)

Branch 599 Meeting

Tuesday
September 12
7:30 PM

*Until further notice, all
meetings will be held
at*

The American Legion
Post 111
6918 N Florida Avenue
Tampa 33604

Note
Change of Location

Branch 599 Office

315 W Busch Boulevard, Suite C
Tampa FL 33612

813.875.0599

Fax 813.870.0599

www.nalc599.com

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Monday – Friday
7:30 am – 4 pm

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Tampa Letter Carrier

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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@gmail.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.

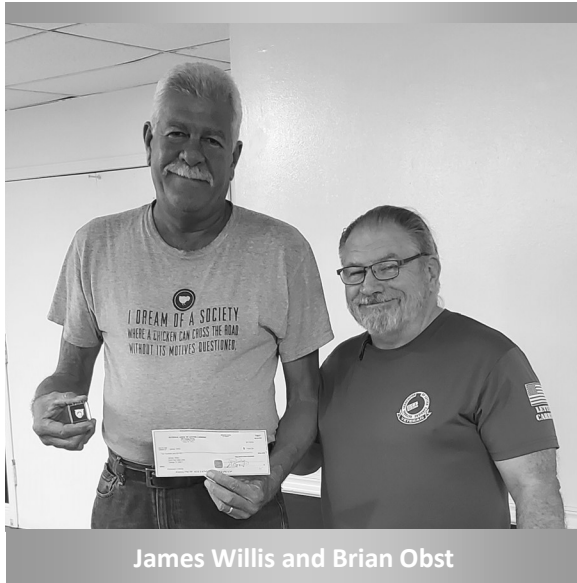
Officers

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Director of Retirees	John Gebo	813.503.1256	
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	Clement Cheung	813.758.5910	
Presidents Emeritus	Garland Tickle · Orbe Andux · Donald Thomas Michael Anderson · James Good · Alan Peacock · Tony Diaz		

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, Mike Smith				
Brandon	33510/11	David Rivadeneira	813.661.1636	813.326.0717
Brandon	33510/11	Osceola Williams Sr.	813.661.1636	813.403.9525
Carrollwood	33618	Tina Bausch	813.961.2963	210.445.1369
Commerce	33602	Cynthia Williams	813.247.2416	813.892.2282
Forest Hills	33612	J.R. Sanchez	813.247.2416	813.778.4373
Forest Hills Annex	33613		813.935.2954	773.849.6229
Hilldale	33614		813.935.2954	
Hilldale Annex	33634		813.879.4309	
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Mike Dennis	813.879.4309	813.879.4309
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Marie Brown	813.831.2034	813.361.9103
Palm River Annex	33619	Dianna Todd	813.831.2034	727.331.9907
Plant City	33564	Todd Soulor	813.663.0048	813.505.5647
Produce	33610	Matt Rodkey	813.754.3590	508.615.6517
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Bert Fristad	813.237.4084	813.562.8744
Seminole Heights	33603	Matt Fernandez	813.634.1642	813.541.8514
Sulphur Springs	33604	J.D. Lewers	813.237.4569	786.247.4185
TCA/Hyde Park	33606	Josh Villa	813.237.4569	813.528.5519
TCA/Peninsula	33609	Rigo Molina	813.873.7189	203.278.6485
TCA/West Tampa	33607		813.873.7189	813.455.4186
Temple Terrace	33617		813.873.7189	
Temple Terrace	33617		813.988.0152	
Town & Country	33615/35	Vic Figueroa	813.884.0973	845.380.6386
Ybor City	33605	Maurice Rice	813.247.2416	813.334.3189

Willis Retired!



President Obst presented **James Willis** [Interbay] with his retirement pin and gratuity at our August meeting.

From the Desk of the President

(Continued from page 1)

Always remember to take your afternoon break and your lunch break, you do not get paid for your thirty-minute lunch break, so if you are working through it and not taking it you are working for free, as the Postal Service is deducting it daily whether you take it or not. Additionally, it is a violation of the National Agreement for management to allow you to work through your breaks and lunch periods, as that is the same as stealing from you. If any supervisor or manager suggests and/or tells you to work through your breaks and/or lunch, report this immediately to your Union steward so that the issue can be addressed.

For more information on heat safety, go to nalc.org and place the cursor on Workplace Issues, go to highlight safety and health and you can review safety information, and if you go down and click on OSHA citations relating to heat safety, you can read up on the

penalties assessed to the Postal Service for past violations.

Contract Negotiations Update

Contract negotiations have moved past the 60-day deadline for mediation and the Union is now preparing for binding arbitration. While the negotiations will continue in an attempt to

If any supervisor or manager suggests and/or tells you to work through your breaks and/or lunch, report this immediately to your Union steward so that the issue can be addressed.

negotiate a new contract, the preparations for binding arbitration have started. Lining up expert witnesses and putting together all the evidence to present our case to the arbitrator is crucial to being able to put on the best case for the membership in an attempt to obtain the best contract that rewards carriers for the work they do and their importance to the Postal Service in general.

CCA conversions

I am happy to announce that we have, by the time you read this, promoted 6 new CCAs to Regular positions here in

Tampa. *Congratulations* to our new regulars and don't forget to get with your union steward to ensure you look into all the benefits that are now available to you, such as health benefits, as you now have a short period to apply under the life change status due to your conversion to regular.

Vacancies Available

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all members that we are in need of stewards in Hilldale Station (2), Temple Terrace, TCA, and Town & Country, and we also have a vacancy on the Executive Board for the MBA/NSBA position. If you would like to get involved with your local union, please give me a call at our Branch office. Remember, without *U* there is no Union.

Until next month I leave you as always...**Knowledge is the Key.**

Brian Obst
President

Calendar

Meetings are subject to change due to any upsurges of COVID.

**Until further notice,
Branch Meetings
will be held at
American Legion
Post 111
6918 N Florida Avenue
Tampa 33604**

Note Meeting Changes:

**Shop Stewards
Wednesday
September 6 7:00 PM
315 W Busch Blvd, Suite C**

**Executive Board
Thursday
September 7 6:30 PM
315 W Busch Blvd, Suite C**

**Branch 599
Tuesday
September 12 7:30 PM
American Legion
Post 111
6918 N Florida Avenue
Tampa 33604**

**Retirees' Breakfasts
Tampa
Monday
September 11 9:00 AM
Mama's Kitchen
9312 N Florida Avenue 33612**

**Temple Terrace
Tuesday
September 12 10:00 AM
Bob Evans Restaurant
off Fletcher near I-75
12272 Morris Bridge Road**

The Maintenance Guy

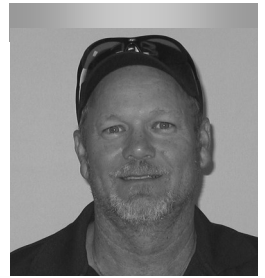
By the time this article is published, hopefully we will have started construction of the new hall to make it our own. The plans are finally done and we are ready to begin. As I have said before, this is a slow tedious process that usually has a lot of bumps in the road. It has taken a while to get here, but we know it will be worth the wait. It is better to take the time now to get things right because this is where we will be for a long time.

According to engineers and contractors, we are looking at a 4-6-week window for completion. That means if everything goes as planned, our October meeting will be in our new home. As a group, we have tried to get everything right in the design and remodel of the hall. If you have ever done a project like this, you will never get it perfect. So as we proceed, we have the ability

to revise minor issues as they arise.

As we proceed, we hope that we have covered all the bases to get it right. We have doubled the size of the men's restroom and added a women's. Both restrooms will be ADA compliant. A new 5-ton AC unit will be installed. We have created a new open meeting place with new floors. All renovations and design have been made with the membership in mind. Remember this is your building, so when it is done, come out, support it, and enjoy our new home.

Until next Time,
Alan



Alan Robinson
Financial Secretary
Building Manager
Branch 599

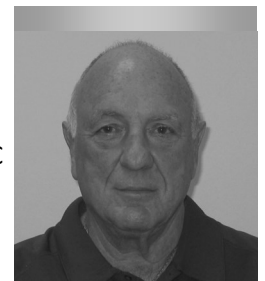
Retired...but not Tired

As I was reading through the July Postal Record, *News from Washington* on page 4 was interesting. It mentions a house bill that is being reintroduced, allowing the Postal Service to ship alcohol. Currently it is against the law for the Postal Service to ship any alcoholic goods. Leaving FedEx and UPS as the only shipping options available to shippers. The article mentions wineries and breweries which are big business throughout the United States. The money involved would be a big boost for the Postal Service; the estimates would be an additional 190 million dollars annually. The fact the Postal Service delivers to every address would give consumers the option to have their favorite alcoholic beverages delivered directly to their homes. If the bill is passed, the Postal Service would need to develop a plan to ensure the alcoholic beverages are delivered to adult customers only. This bill would benefit rural areas as well as small

businesses. The NALC is in support of the USPS Shipping Equity Act (H.R. 3721). Stay tuned.

I also enjoyed the article on page 53, the NALCREST page. Branch 599 President Emeritus, and new NALCREST Trustee, Tony Diaz has written his first article as Trustee. It is good to see Branch 599 represented at the National level. Tony explains the process of becoming a Trustee and how honored he is for this opportunity. He speaks highly of the other Trustees, past and present, and gives some history behind how NALCREST began. Good job, Tony!

So, as Roy Rogers and Dale Evans said,
Happy Trails to you until we meet again.



John Gebo
Director of Retirees
Branch 599

From the Vice President's Desk

Know Your Rights

Representation after an alleged offense is vital to the rights of carriers. Over the past few weeks, it has been brought to the attention of the Branch office that some carriers are not being afforded their legal rights through union representation. The ultimate responsibility falls upon the individual carrier to know and fully understand their rights. Management only wants to get the discipline issued at whatever cost, but the National Agreement states that representation is not to be bypassed.

The local agreement provides that all delivery units in the Tampa installation are assigned a steward. If a delivery unit does not have a steward, management must contact the Branch president to request representation. Stewards are not to cross delivery units without the approval of the Branch president. Management may attempt to dodge the local agreement, but this is a violation of the carrier's rights.

The Supreme Court decision in 1975 set the grounds for what actions management can and cannot do to employees during an investigatory interview. In *NLRB v. J. Weingarten*, the Supreme Court ruled that an employee has the right to representation during any investigatory interview which he or she reasonably believes may lead to discipline. The decision brought about a federal labor law known as the Weingarten rule which gives certain rights to the employee.

The union will always caution carriers to ask for representation when dealing with management, but there are times when union representation *does not* apply:

1. **Discussions.** Article 16 of the National Agreement provides guidance on private discussions between management and carriers. Discussions of this nature are not considered discipline and are not

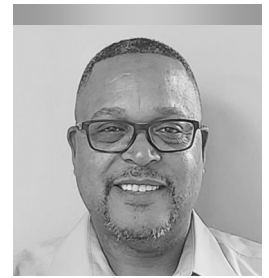
grievable, therefore union representation is not needed.

2. **Fitness-for-Duty.** Examinations for fitness-for-duty do not qualify for union representation.
3. **Issuance of Discipline.** Union representation is not needed when management is issuing discipline. The carrier should sign and date the letter and immediately notify their steward. The acceptance of the letter is not an admission of guilt but notification of when it was received by the carrier.

Just as situations do not qualify for union representation, there are times when union representation *is* needed, but carriers tend to not request representation:

1. **Investigative Interview (Management).** Union representation should always be involved during an investigative interview. Management understands and will, at times, speak with the steward and inform them of the investigative interview, but the responsibility to ensure a steward is present falls on the carrier to know and their rights. It is very important that carriers do not conduct an investigative interview without union involvement.
2. **Postal Investigations/OIG Agents.** The Employee and Labor Relations Manual requires all postal employees to cooperate with postal investigations. The Weingarten rule applies to such investigations. If a carrier is directed to speak with Postal Inspector/OIC Agent, the carrier can request to have a steward present prior to answering any questions. Please understand that answering questions without union representation may/can result in further negative actions against the carrier.

Your steward also has certain rights



Mike Smith
Vice President
Branch 599

under Weingarten. All stewards are trained and are fully aware of the procedures prior to and during investigative interviews. A pre-interview counseling by the steward and the carrier is authorized. Management should give the steward a briefing on what the investigative interview consists of. The steward then is allowed time to consult with the carrier before the investigative interview takes place.

During the interview, the steward is not just a silent partner. The steward should be a very active participant in the interview. Management cannot refuse the steward's participation or restrict the steward in any way. This is a violation of the carrier's Weingarten rights. If management attempts to disallow the steward from participating, the steward has the right to end the interview or annotate on the investigative interview documents that management would not allow the steward to be an active participant during the process.

A significant piece of information is to remember that management is not required to inform the carrier of the Weingarten right to representation. On the same token, a steward cannot invoke Weingarten rights on a carrier's behalf. If a carrier voluntarily answers questions that may lead to discipline without requesting representation, management is in the clear. **It is the carrier's responsibility to request union representation when warranted.**

Weingarten rights are not Miranda rights. If a carrier is read their Miranda rights, the carrier must contact a

(Continued on page 8)

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to the family and friends of **Barry Griffiths** [retiree] whose passing was July 23; to Regenia & **Michael Smith** [Vice President] at the passing of her mother, Hattie J. Helms, July 26; and to **Duane Dosal** and family at the passing of his mother, Virginia, August 8.

Employee Assistance Program
info is at nalc.org

Choose Workplace Issues, hover over Safety & Health, and choose Employee Assistance Program.

It's confidential for you and your loved ones.

Mail Call

Brothers and Sisters, last month I discussed the importance of taking care of your mental and physical health. This month I would like to stress the importance of taking care of your equipment, i.e., your LLV, ProMaster, and/or Two Ton.

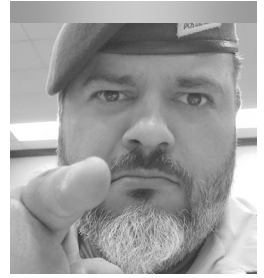
I don't care about the vehicles, that's USPS' problem. If they don't provide me with a vehicle, then I can sit in the breakroom and collect my pay.

Well, I'm here to tell you, you should care. Every morning you should use *Notice 76*, The Expanded Vehicle Safety Check List Card, to conduct your vehicle check and ensure your vehicle meets the safety requirements for operation. If there is an issue, fill out a P.S. Form 4565 *Vehicle Repair Tag* and hand it over to your supervisor, so they may schedule a repair, and

issue you another vehicle if necessary. If an issue occurs once you're out on the street, and after you have notified Management of the issue, you will still need to fill out a P.S. Form 4565 *Vehicle Repair Tag* upon your return to the office.

Most of these vehicles are ancient and constant vigilance of their maintenance needs will help to mitigate breakdowns and/or accidents. None of us wish to have a preventable accident due to our negligence. We also don't wish to be waiting hours in this summer's heat for VMF or a tow truck.

Sarge



Luis Cruz
Sergeant-at-Arms
Branch 599

Veterans Buzz



Happy 233rd Birthday, US Coast Guard!

As a veteran of the armed forces, I didn't know enough about the U.S. Coast Guard. So, a little searching and here we go. President Washington signed the Tariff Act on August 4, 1790, which brought about the U.S. Coast Guard. The main purpose at that time was to enforce federal tariff and trade laws and to prevent smuggling and piracy.

Fast forward to today. The Guard works with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and serves as a law enforcement organization, a regulatory agency, and is part of the U.S. Intelligence Community. The Guard is also very active as a first responder in the waterways surrounding the States.

In my research, I found that the Guard has also participated in major conflicts throughout history. From the beginning dealing with tariffs to Iwo Jima, Vietnam through Kuwait and Afghanistan, the Guard was present, fighting alongside their counterparts. Additionally, I must mention that the Guard is known for heroic rescues, but don't stop the credit there. The Guard has a profound history of doing just about anything involving our waterways. We often think of the U.S. Navy, but the Guard is just as active. The tragedy of a plane crash, earthquakes, or a missing vessel at sea will sound the alarm for the Guard. The Guard may not be as large as the other branches of our military, but their work is insurmountable.

Semper Fi!



Mike Smith
Vice President
Branch 599

Matt Speaks: Last Stand at Danzig

Postal Workers fight the Nazis!

September 1, 1939

Just one week before Adolf Hitler, Fuhrer of Germany, would launch the invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, he stated in a speech, *Our strength consists of our speed and our brutality... accordingly, I have placed my death-head formation in readiness – for the present only in the East – with orders to them to send to death mercilessly and without compassion, men, women, and children of Polish derivation and language. Only thus shall we gain the living space which we need.*

He was also alleged to have said: *Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?*

With his invasion of Poland, Hitler shattered the peace in Europe, and Earth itself plunged once again into a bloody conflict, but one which would far exceed the devastation and chaos resulting from the First World War, which ironically had been called *the war to end all wars*.

First on Hitler's target list in his *Plan White* was the Free City of Danzig.

Colin Shindler in an article for the Jewish Chronicle called it *the city where hell began and ended*. In describing the city he writes: *Throughout the centuries, the port—Danzig to the Germans, Gdansk to the Poles—had been fought over. It is the point at which the Vistula, a crucial trading waterway, issues into the Baltic Sea. Until 1793, Gdansk was ruled by Poland and after the Napoleonic wars integrated into Prussia as Danzig. It was, however, lost to Germany after its defeat in the First World War—it became instead a “free city”, but allowed Poland access to the sea.*

Hitler for these reasons, was determined to seize the city at all costs. Albert Forster, a violent antisemite who believed that Poles were not

human and leader of the city's Nazi party, eagerly awaited the invasion.

At 4:45 in the morning on September 1, 1939, the German battleship Scheleswig-Holstein opened fire at the city.

All the while a certain building with its 56 occupants, including 11-year-old Erwina Barzychowska, in Danzig was waiting for its rendezvous with destiny. This was going to be a bloody war that would change the course of human history and everything up to now would be affected, and thus it would come to pass that the Post Office would once again serve its citizens, its residents, and its customers, but in a fundamental way that could only come about through the Spirit.

It would fight for freedom.

Stuart Donell writing for *The First News* writes: *From the post office on Hevelius Square it was possible to send letters to Poland without incurring additional costs for international mail, as well as to make phone calls directly to Poland or send a telegram. Ten Polish post-boxes were installed in the center of Gdansk bearing the Polish white eagle intended exclusively for correspondence sent to Poland. They were serviced by Polish postmen who walked around the city in distinctive green uniforms. After Hitler came to power in Germany, local German militias set themselves the goal of destroying the Polish symbols.*

This included the very building itself which the Nazis would deliberately target, including anyone inside.

Teolia Lebieź-Gruda of the Regional Branch of the National Heritage Board of Poland in Gdańsk, writes: *The Polish Post in the Free City of Danzig commenced its operations pursuant to the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles in 1920. The third branch of the Polish Post in Hevelius Square (currently known as the Polish Post Office Defenders' Square) was opened in January 1925. The new post office (officially*

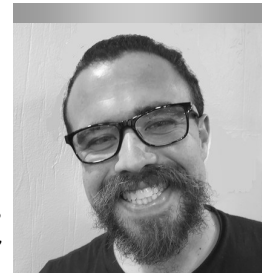
referred to as “Polish Post and Telegraph Office no. 1 in Gdańsk” from August 1926) operated in the north wing of the former garrison hospital erected in the years 1838-1844. Before that time, the building was used as a borsal (from 1630 onwards); in 1643, it was surrounded with a tall wall, a fragment of which has survived until this day on the eastern side of the post office courtyard. The western wing of the hospital building, built on an L-shaped floor plan, was used by the labor office (Staedtisches Arbeitsamt) and police station no. 2. The corridors connecting the two wings of the building together have been bricked up.

The Postal staff were given military training in preparation for what was then and now a realized fear of a war with Germany breaking out after very tense relations in recent years. Their training was conducted by one Konrad Guderski, the only non-postal employee and his soon to be second in command, Alfons Flisykowski who worked for the Post Office.

Polish military plans called for the Post Office to be able to defend itself for up to six hours before reinforcements from the greater Polish Armed Forces could arrive. At 4:00 in the morning, electricity was cut off from the building.

At around the same time as the first battle of World War II began at Westerplatte, the Nazis began their assault on the Post Office. With 150 soldiers, the plan was to quickly storm the building in line with the German strategy of blitzkrieg currently underway through sea and air attacks on the city. But upon breaching the front of the building itself, the Postal workers inside began

(Continued on page 8)



Matt Fernandez
Recording Secretary
Branch 599

From the Vice President's Desk – Know Your Rights

(Continued from page 5)

certified lawyer immediately. The union cannot represent a carrier during criminal proceedings.

Weingarten Rights

If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union

representative, officer, or steward be present at this meeting. Without my Union representation present, I respectfully choose not to answer any questions or participate in this discussion.

To Get There We Must Work Together!

Mike Smith

Vice President

Matt Speaks: What If?

(Continued from page 7)

their resistance. Two Nazis were killed instantly.

The Germans regrouped, with the frontal assault being a diversionary tactic anyway, for their real plan was to assault the building from the side and catch the resistance fighters off guard. The Nazis had no idea at this time that they were not fighting the Polish army but the Postal Service who were armed with a few machine guns, pistols, and three crates of hand grenades.

As the city burned with fire, Albert Forster who was appointed by Hitler himself just days before the invasion as the Head of State of the soon to be annexed city, arrived at the grounds of the Post Office to watch the assault with relish. He was a man who called the Jews a *slippery and dirty race* and who also believed that Poland would soon be just a *dream*.

As six hours of battle came and went with no sign of reinforcements from the Polish Armed forces, Konrad Guderski who commanded the postal workers, blew himself up with a hand grenade to buy them more time, taking more Nazis with him. When the smoke cleared, it seemed that the assault was finally over. But the Nazis quickly took cover again when the Postal workers now rallied by Alfons Flisykowski, showed no signs of surrendering when they shot at the Germans with another barrage of bullets. The Post Office continued to valiantly fight into the seventh, the eighth, and the ninth hours...

Where was the army? At this point historians debate. Some have written that the invasion caused the Polish Armed Forces to pull out of the coast and concentrate their resistance elsewhere. Others have said that the Post Office was abandoned on purpose in order to give the people a symbol of determined struggle. Whatever the reasons, the Polish Postal employees were not going to let gunfire and explosions stay them *from the swift completion of their appointed round* (Herodotus) fighting the fascist invaders.

And so it appeared that for perhaps the first time in history, the Postal Service was all that stood in the way of the conquest of the world by evil.

Finally after fifteen hours, and dangerously low on ammunition and grenades, and with the Germans growing more in number, the Postal employees surrendered. Two Postal employees walked out with a white flag including the postmaster, Jan Michon. They were shot to death on sight by the Danzig Nazi Schutzstaffel who, following this outrage, stormed the building again and this time took over thirty prisoners including 11-year-old Erwina Barzychowska, who was the daughter of the caretaker of the building but who died soon from her wounds during the assault. Some had managed to escape capture. The Postal workers who were rounded up were sent to a prison that held 400 Danzig citizens. They were subsequently tortured and finally on October 5, 1939, they were executed by firing squad under the command of Standartenführer Max Pauly.

The fall of the Post Office coincided with the Nazi conquest of the city of Danzig. The swastika was raised with the ascendancy of the sun, and eerily, cheers of *Heil Hitler* went on throughout the day. At the same time, construction began 21 miles east of Danzig of Stutthof Concentration camp, a prelude to the horror that was to come and where over 60,000 people would perish in it alone, working along with a network that would barbarically slaughter 12 million people.

Years after the battle for the Danzig (now Gdansk) Post Office, the end of the Second World War, and the collapse of Nazi Germany, Albert Forster who oversaw the operation that stormed the Post Office was captured and extradited to the newly communist aligned Peoples' Republic of Poland and found guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to death. His execution was carried out by hanging on February 28, 1952, six years after the capture and subsequent execution of Max Pauly. The Postal workers, including that of Erwina Barzychowska, were avenged.

From the Treasurer's Desk – 8th Edition

Brothers and Sisters, **Defensive Driving**

This month I want to touch on driving safety and becoming a better defensive driver.

During your normal daily travels, you witness stupidity, impatience, ignorance, disrespect, bad decisions, and a total disregard for human life. It seems to be getting worse, and the amount of traffic in our Tampa Bay area does not help.

A defensive driver is a driver who recognizes in advance the need for an action to prevent an accident. Again, with our roadways filled with overcrowding, impatience and inattention, defensive driving is necessary for your safety as well as your families. This applies to both our active members delivering mail, as well as our retired members. The days of drivers *giving way* to the USPS delivery vehicles are over. I found a great definition in Wikipedia, where it says, Defensive driving describes the practice of anticipating dangerous situations, despite adverse conditions or the mistakes of others when operating a motor vehicle.

I have always used the thinking that if you find yourself in what is becoming an unsafe situation, get away from it as soon as you can safely do so. This could be by speeding up, pausing and falling back, or changing lanes. Three key elements to consider, allowing a vehicle operator to navigate safely through a potentially hazardous environment—you prepare, you anticipate, and you defend. Other ideas for defensive driving are: look ahead for possible dangers, maintain a proper following distance, have a plan to avoid a danger, and reduce your own distractions.

One element of defensive driving that was an interesting read was space management. The need to manage space around your vehicle is paramount. This includes the sides, the back, and the front. Safety is still a

passion of mine, being involved in safety and health for over 35 years.

Hopefully these tips are helpful, and you will become a better defensive driver.

Quick Hits: Information you should know Contract Negotiation update

As previously reported, NALC continued to negotiate for a new collective-bargaining agreement with the U.S. Postal Service during the statutorily required 60-day mediation period. That period, which began with the formal expiration of the 2019-2023 agreement on May 20, expired on July 19. While discussions on the pay, benefits, and working conditions of the country's city letter carriers continued to be productive, the parties had yet to reach tentative agreement.

NALC President Brian L. Renfroe and Executive Vice President Paul Barner are working closely together along with the union's lawyers and a team of national officers and staff to reach an agreement with postal management that is worthy of the dedication and hard work of our active membership. While reaching a voluntary settlement that properly rewards city letter carriers for the work they do delivering the nation's mail remained NALC's goal, preparation has been ongoing for binding interest arbitration, should that become necessary.

The meticulous work of marshaling evidence and recruiting expert witnesses to make our case in interest arbitration proceedings has been going on for months. Under the law, such an impasse would trigger the appointment of a three-member arbitration board comprised of a union advocate, a management advocate, and a neutral chair to conduct a binding arbitration to set the terms of a new national agreement. With the deadline of the expiration of the statutorily mandated 60-day mediation pe-



Tony Diaz
Treasurer
President Emeritus
Branch 599
Nalcrest Trustee

riod looming, NALC planned to continue, as has been the case in the past, negotiating with the USPS as the next phase of the process begins. *As we have in recent rounds of collective bargaining, we will remain at the table with postal management as long as the prospects remain for reaching a tentative agreement that meets our goals*, Renfroe said on July 14. *But we will move expeditiously to invoke the procedures required by law to resolve an impasse in bargaining, should that prove necessary.* —NALC Bulletin

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



The Letter Carrier Political Fund is a non-partisan political action committee (PAC) established for the purpose of electing qualified candidates who support letter carriers and who are committed to maintaining a strong and innovative U.S. Postal Service. Learn more at nalc.org.



What You Should Know but Probably Don't

Observed the first Monday in September, Labor Day is an annual celebration of the social and economic achievements of American workers. The holiday is rooted in the late nineteenth century, when labor activists pushed for a federal holiday to recognize the many contributions workers have made to America's strength, prosperity, and well-being.

On June 28, 1894, Congress passed an act making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday, and it was signed into law by President Grover Cleveland, making the first Monday in September of each year a national holiday.

Many Americans celebrate Labor Day with parades, picnics, and parties – festivities very similar to those outlined by the first proposal for a holiday, which suggested that the day should be observed with – a street parade to exhibit *the strength and 'esprit de corps' of the trade and labor organizations* of the community, followed by a festival for the recreation and amusement of the workers and their families.

American labor has raised the nation's standard of living and contributed to the greatest production the world has ever known and the labor movement has brought us closer to the realization of our traditional ideals of economic and political democracy. It is appropriate, therefore, that the nation pays tribute on Labor Day to the creator of so much of the nation's strength, freedom, and leadership – the American worker.

So, remember whenever you hear anyone talking down organized labor, saying it is bad for America, saying you don't need unions, the history of our country tells a different story. Without the workers in this country, big business would be lost. If big business had its way, unions would be abolished and workers would be at the mercy of the business owners. Do any of you believe that the owners

(management) would provide substantial benefits to the workers? Remember, throughout history it took organized labor to force management to the bargaining table to get the hard-earned benefits that American Workers have today. Just look back to the Great Postal Strike of 1970. Without it, where do you think the postal letter carriers would be today? I shudder to think of what it would have been like, knowing the history before the strike.

So let us remember the importance of what the Labor Day Holiday stands for and recognize the sacrifices of those who came before us. When you watch that parade or attend that picnic/party/BBQ, thank the members of the labor movement that are still on the front lines looking out for American Workers.

As a little aside, these are also some of the things that Labor Day is said to signify:

- The unofficial end of summer.

- The official end of hot dog season.

- The second most dangerous holiday weekend to drive on the nation's highways.

- The official start of the NFL football season.

I hope this article provided you with some insight, and maybe some humor while teaching you about an important holiday gained for you by organized labor on behalf of the American Worker.

Enjoy your holiday with a new perspective on how it came to be.

Brian Obst
President

–Information contained in this article came from the U. S. Department of Labor website.

Let's Talk about the Heat

Letter carriers across the nation are dealing with some of the most intense weather we have ever seen and the one that we are experiencing now, worse than ever, is the heat. Every day is a battle from swelteringly hot routes to intensely hot vehicles and it seems to me that whoever the engineer was that thought putting a fan directly under the front windshield was a good idea should have looked for another profession. Veteran carriers and new carriers are constantly being met with heat wave after heat wave in these incredibly hot vehicles, so I have come up with a list of things that I recommend when trying to beat the heat, if possible:

1. Frozen bottles of water are very important as they will melt during the day to give you a cold drink of water. I usually pack at least 4 or more frozen bottles of water in

my cooler.

2. A chill towel is great because you can leave it with the frozen bottles of water to stay cool then bring it out to put it around your neck and head to cool yourself down, even pour some water on to it for added chill.
3. Neck fans are a nice addition, especially the ones with cooling pads that add more cooling to the back of your neck.
4. Electrolytes are a must-have out on the route from Pedialyte, Gatorade, Powerade, you name it, just make sure you have something to help you replenish electrolytes.
5. Mistors that add a bit of watery mist to your face and neck. I recommend keeping them in your

cooler for added chill factor.

6. Steel containers that are properly insulated for carrying water are awesome. I have a gallon container for mine that can keep ice for 3 days without melting entirely.

These are just a few things that I keep as my essentials to overcome this heat which I am sure there are many things that can be added, but I thought this list covers some of the basics needed to tackle this incredibly horrible heat. Stay cool.

J.D.



J.D. Lewers
Labor Management Rep.
Branch 599
NALC Safety Task Force
Representative

Just for the Health of It

In most circumstances, getting healthcare providers paid for their services is very easy. You show the card. You receive the healthcare service. The provider gets paid.

But sometimes you may be required to file the claim yourself. You will be required to file the claim if you receive services outside of the United States, if some other health plan is the primary, or if you use a provider that is out of our network.

The first thing you will need to do is go to the NALC Health Benefit Plan web page. There is an easy link on nalc.org. On the NALC-HBP web page you will find a search engine in the upper right-hand corner of the page. Type in *member claim* and it will call up a complete menu of medical claim forms. Select the one that addresses your circumstance (probably form CMS1500) and print it out. Any of these forms will require the same information:

1. Patient's name, date of birth, address, phone number, relationship to enrollee
2. Member identification number as shown on your identification card
3. Name, address, and tax identification number of person or facility providing service or supplies

4. Signature of physician or supplier including degrees or credentials
5. Dates that services or supplies were furnished
6. Diagnosis
7. Type of each service or supply
8. Charge for each service or supply
9. If another group health plan is primary, send a copy of their explanation of benefits

These forms should be submitted to:

NALC Health Benefit Plan
Cigna Payor 62308
P.O. Box 188004
Chattanooga TN 37433-8004

Retirees, please note that if Medicare is primary, you must send claims to:

NALC Health Benefit Plan
20547 Waverly Court
Ashburn VA 20149

Here's to your health.....
Detlev



Detlev Aeppel
Health Benefit Rep.
Branch 599

NEVER FORGET

9/11 Memorial & Museum

lower Manhattan NY

The 9/11 Memorial is a tribute of remembrance, honoring the 2,977 people killed in the terror attacks of September 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center site, near Shanksville PA, and at the Pentagon, as well as the six people killed in the World Trade Center bombing on February 26, 1993.



National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial

Arlington VA

A hijacker flew American Airlines Flight 77 into the southwest corner of the Pentagon that day, killing 184 people — all on board the plane and many more inside the building, which was heavily damaged.

Flight 93 National Memorial

6424 Lincoln Highway, Stoystown PA 15563

This address is the only entrance to the park.

A common field one day. A field of honor forever.

On Tuesday morning, September 11, 2001, the U.S. came under attack when four commercial airliners were hijacked and used to strike targets on the ground. Nearly 3,000 people tragically lost their lives. Because of the actions of the 40 passengers and crew aboard one of the planes, Flight 93, the attack on the U.S. Capitol was thwarted.



—Excerpts on these 2 pages are from websites: 9/11 Memorial & Museum, National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial, Flight 93 National Memorial, History Channel, NationalDayCalendar, and Centers for Disease Control & Prevention.

Patriot Day and National Day of Service & Remembrance

September 11

If we learn nothing else from this tragedy, we learn that life is short and there is no time for hate.

–Sandy Dahl, wife of United Flight 93 pilot Jason Dahl

A total of 2,996 people were killed in the 9/11 attacks, including the 19 terrorist hijackers aboard the four airplanes. Citizens of 78 countries died in New York, Washington DC, and Pennsylvania.

At the World Trade Center, 2,763 died after the two planes slammed into the twin towers. That figure includes 343 firefighters and paramedics, 23 New York City police officers and 37 Port Authority police officers who were struggling to complete an evacuation of the buildings and save the office workers trapped on higher floors.

At the Pentagon, 189 people were killed, including 64 on American Airlines Flight 77, the airliner that struck the building. On Flight 93, 44 people died when the plane crash-landed in Pennsylvania.

The 9/11 attacks killed 2,977 people.

This was the single largest loss of life resulting from a foreign attack on American soil.

The attacks caused the deaths of 441 first responders, the greatest loss of emergency responders on a single day in American history.

An estimated 400,000 people were exposed to toxic contaminants, risk of physical injury, and physically and emotionally stressful conditions in the days, weeks, and months following the attacks. Exposure to some of the hazards (over 350 hazards may have been present at the disaster areas and related sites) has been linked to aggravating, contributing to, or causing various short- and long-term health conditions covered by the WTC Health Program, such as:

Acute traumatic injuries (like burns, sprains, and fractures);

Aerodigestive (airway and digestive) disorders (like asthma, GERD, and sleep apnea);

Many types of cancers;

Mental and behavioral health conditions (like PTSD, depression, and substance abuse); and

Musculoskeletal disorders (like carpal tunnel syndrome and low back pain).

Symptoms continue to surface, as do deaths.

Patriot Day History

- September 13, 2001 – In the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attacks, President George W. Bush proclaimed Friday, September 14, 2001, as a National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for the Victims of the Terrorist Attacks on September 11, 2001.
- August 31, 2002 – President George W. Bush proclaimed Friday, September 6, through Sunday, September 8, 2002, as National Days of Prayer and Remembrance.
- September 4, 2002 – President Bush proclaimed September 11, 2002, as the first Patriot Day.
- September 9, 2016 – President Barack Obama proclaimed September 11 as Patriot Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance,

In 2017 and 2018, President Donald Trump declared September 8–10 as National Days of Prayer and Remembrance and proclaimed September 11 as Patriot Day. *During the National Days of Prayer and Remembrance, we pause to honor the memory of the nearly 3,000 innocent people who were murdered by radical Islamist terrorists in the brutal attacks of September 11, 2001. We come together to pray for those whose lives were forever changed by the loss of a loved one. We strengthen our resolve to stand together as one Nation.*



FED-HURT

(833) 433-3487

Injury Care For ALL Federal Workers

What Do I Do If I Get Hurt On The Job?

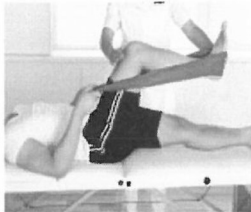
If you are injured, here are some very simple steps to follow.

1. Notify Your Supervisor Immediately. (The Supervisor has up to 10 days to file your claim with OWCP).
2. File a CA-1 and CA-16 for a Traumatic Injury.
3. File a CA-2 for an Occupational Disease.
4. Write your Personal Statement describing the injury. Be specific.
5. Call 833-433-3487 to speak with a FED-HURT OWCP Specialist.



Our Doctors Specialize in:

- Physical Medicine
- Physical Therapy
- Chiropractic Care
- Interventional Pain Management
- Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE)



Services Include:

- ✓ Expert Claims Assistance
- ✓ Medical Exams Detailing Causation of Injury



Our team of Physicians and Physical Therapists work for you, not OWCP. We will see you without an approved claim and provide OWCP with all the necessary documentation to get your claim approved the first time.

Locations Throughout Florida

North Florida

- 📍 Pensacola
- 📍 Daytona / Ormond Beach

Central Florida

- 📍 Orlando / Airport
- 📍 Orlando / Sanford
- 📍 Orlando / Altamonte Springs
- 📍 Tampa / Palm Harbor
- 📍 Tampa / Temple Terrace Bush Gardens

South Florida

- 📍 Fort Meyers / Cape Coral
- 📍 Fort Meyers / Cape Coral
- 📍 Port Saint Lucie
- 📍 Lake Worth / Palm Springs
- 📍 Fort Lauderdale / Davie
- 📍 Miami / Hialeah

Are you a federal employee
injured while on the job?

Call our office (833) 433-3487



WWW.4FEDHURT.COM

Addressing OWCP issues...let's get it right

There have been many articles in our newsletter over the years regarding on-the-job injuries. These are regularly asked questions you need to know:

1. What do I do first?
2. Who do I notify?
3. What paperwork do I need?
4. Who will help me through this?

Correcting OWCP issues are time consuming, frustrating, and if not corrected can delay medical treatment that could cause more severe prolonged injuries. So how do you avoid these issues? How do you get it right?

The **answers** to the above questions should help the process.

1. Report the accident immediately, explain exactly what happened, with a time and place (address).
2. Your supervisor or manager, and if you cannot reach anyone, your steward or our Branch office. It is important to notify someone.
3. Register an account on ECOMP at ecomp.dol.gov. The forms needed are, CA-1, CA-16, and CA-17, know your forms, ask questions, and do not rely on management to submit your forms without verification.
4. Your supervisor and/or manager should assist you, however, this is not always the case. Do not allow management to delay you going to ecomp.dol.gov; this is critical to your case.

Other tips:

1. Your online account at ecomp.dol.gov will be available to download should you need a paper copy of any of your forms.
2. Write a detailed, thorough, complete, and legible statement. Some important information to consider, if applicable: the time, the place, the conditions, the surface(s), any contributing factors, possible witnesses, and any hazards.

On the Job Injury – Forms needed, simple math,

$$CA-1 + CA-16 = CA-17$$

CA-16 must be signed by management,

Authorization for Examination and/or treatment.

Any questions...call the Branch office; ask for Brian Obst, 813.875.0599.



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