



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 9

SEPTEMBER 2017

New NALC—USPS contract is ratified

The active membership of the National Association of Letter Carriers has overwhelmingly ratified the proposed *2016-2019 National Agreement* with the United States Postal Service. By a margin exceeding 16 to 1, eligible members voted to accept the tentative agreement that was announced on May 12. The vote to ratify was 78,935 to accept the agreement versus 4,732 to reject it, as reported by NALC's Ballot Committee chaired by Joseph DeRossi of Jamaica, New York, Branch 562.

NALC will officially notify USPS of the August 7 ratification date.

Information on back pay and the implementation of the new contract will be released as soon as possible.

The new contract covers a 40-month term from May 16, 2016, to September 20, 2019.

Around The Horn from The President's Desk



Tony Diaz
President

Brothers and Sisters, as we are aware, the workroom floor can be a volatile place. With the seemingly daily changes with work methods, conditions, the huge change in parcel delivery, the focus on scanning every parcel, MSP scans, the lack of clerks to distribute the carriers' mail, case equipment changes, from 3 pieces to 2, from 4 shelves to 5, the PET which has accompanied with it confrontation with estimates, the commands you get out at this time, you will be done by 5, you have under time, you will do this trip and be back in 8 hours. Does this all sound familiar? Is this something you have encountered?

Has it created additional stress in your life? I hear from you and the answer is yes. I have recommended a number of you to EAP, to speak to Eric Siegal, or someone in EAP. With all this going on, plus personal issues and the daily challenges of normal family life, I felt compelled this month to discuss **stress**.

Stress is a normal physical response to events that make you feel threatened or it upsets your balance in some way. Change alone may create stress by being out of a certain comfort zone. The stress response is actually the body's way of protecting you. When working properly, it helps you stay

focused, energetic, and alert. The stress response also helps you rise to meet challenges. Outside of work, hassles, demands, deadlines and frustrations can become stressful. Balancing our jobs while rearing kids and maintaining a marriage can be challenging. Stress with many people is so commonplace that it has become a way of life. Everyone handles stress or a stressful situation differently. You can see it in the workplace, something you think is

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Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

**Branch 599
Meeting**

Thursday
September 7
7:30 PM

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Please submit any and all articles to be published in the *Tampa Letter Carrier* to the Editor via email at editor@nalc599.com and also to the Branch Office at nalc599@verizon.net no later than the 5th of each month in order for us to meet our time limits to the publisher.

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	Warren Sumlin	813.486.7612	
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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	Terry Franklin Luis Cruz	813.661.1636	813.758.3061 813.431.3223
Carrollwood	33618	Freddie Nimphius	813.961.2962	813.263.7895
Commerce	33602	Reuben Perez	813.242.4507	813.508.7094
Forest Hills	33612	Ed Humphries	813.935.2954	813.787.3914
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Nick Cullaro	813.935.2954	813.541.8159
Hilldale	33614	Darrick Smith	813.879.4309	813.446.5555
Hilldale Annex	33634	Varick Reeder	813.879.4309	315.491.6234
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Jackie Allen	813.831.2034	813.508.1440
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	Todd Soular	813.719.6793	508.615.6517
Produce	33610	Elvin Rodriguez	813.239.4084	646.346.3288
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Patrick Wimberly	813.634.1403	813.245.0847
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	Mike Williams	813.873.7189	813.541.3092
TCA/Peninsula	33609	Andre Stafford	813.873.7189	813.600.0638
TCA/West Tampa	33607	Michael Smith	813.873.7189	813.326.0717
Temple Terrace	33617	Warren Sumlin	813.988.0152	813.486.7612
Town 'N Country	33615/35	Brian Obst	813.884.0973	727.458.0679
Ybor City	33605	Andre Hinton	813.242.4507	931.980.5169

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

(Continued from page 1)

minor or not an issue may actually be viewed as stressful by a coworker. The body does not distinguish between physical and psychological threats. When you are stressed over a busy schedule, an argument with a friend or family member, a traffic jam or a mountain of bills, your body reacts just as strongly as a life or death situation. If you have a lot of responsibilities and worries, your emergency stress response may be on most of the time. Long-term exposure to stress can lead to serious health problems.

So how do you handle stress?

Am I in control of stress or stress controlling me?

- When I feel agitated, do I know how to quickly calm and soothe myself?
- Can I easily let go of my anger?
- Can I turn to others at work to help me calm down and feel better?
- When I come home at night, do I walk in the door feeling alert and relaxed?
- Am I seldom distracted or moody?
- Am I able to recognize upsets that others seem to be experiencing?
- Do I easily turn to friends or family members for a calming influence?
- When my energy is low, do I know how to boost it?

Positive events such as getting married, buying a house, going to college or receiving a promotion can cause stress just as negative events do. Both put high demands on you and force you to adjust.

The following is a list of the top ten stressful life events:

1. Spouse's death
2. Divorce
3. Marriage separation
4. Jail term
5. Death of a close relative
6. Injury or illness
7. Marriage
8. Fired from job

9. Marriage reconciliation
10. Retirement

Do you agree? How many of these does your top ten include?

Here are some Postal terms I thought of that may cause you stress, not found on the list:

1. Arguing with supervisor/manager
2. Morning Estimates
3. Being asked or told for under time
4. Supervisors using DOIS/PET tool
5. Non ODL carriers being forced to work overtime
6. Investigative Interviews/Discipline
7. Being questioned on your productivity
8. 1700/1800 window of operation (whichever is being used at the time)
9. Unfamiliar trips/pieces
10. Route Adjustments, CDRAAP
11. Case changes, reducing pieces and adding shelves
12. Working Amazon Sunday (CCAs)
13. Contract negotiations (just completed)
14. Having an LLV that constantly breaks down

Can you add more?

Not all stress is caused by external factors. Stress can be self-generated. The following are common causes:

- Inability to accept uncertainty
- Pessimism
- Negative self-talk
- Unrealistic expectations
- Perfectionism and lack of assertiveness
- Inability to accept change

One question you must ask yourself is how much stress is too much? Because of the widespread damage stress can cause, it is important to know your own limit. This differs from person to person. Some people roll with the punches while others crumble with the slightest hint of frustration. Some people seem to thrive on the excitement and challenge of the high

stress lifestyle.

Where do you fit in? It is important for you to know this.

Stress can wear down and tear apart your body leaving you feeling tired, drained, and empty inside. Stress can damage your relationships, hurt family and friends, and make it tough to succeed. It's hard to feel better when your mood is constantly bringing you down. Every day can be a struggle.

Exercise and diet can help manage stress, and a good laugh is very healthy. Do not allow stress to reach an unmanageable stage. Reach out to your family and friends; motivate yourself to fight off stress. If these steps are unsuccessful and you find no escape from your stress, seek a professional. Do not allow stress to ruin your life.

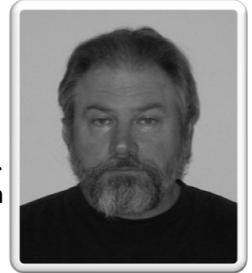
Sources:

The Language of Emotional Intelligence by
Jeanne Segal, Ph.D.
helpguide.org
Holmes-Rahe Life Stress Inventory

With the pressures and stress that accompany working for the United States Postal Service, EAP is a great avenue to receive assistance with personal and family issues. The USPS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to any postal employee or to family members living in the employee's household, to help with life's challenges. It's a free, voluntary and confidential program that offers assessment, counseling, consultation, life coaching, critical response, and training to postal employees and their families. Any contact with EAP or counselors is confidential. The confidentiality of conversations with EAP counselors is protected by federal and state laws as well as by professional ethical standards. EAP may not release information without the prior written consent of the client.

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Unionism...Documentation: 1571 & 3996



Brian Obst
Vice President
Branch 599

When you came to the Postal Service to become a Letter Carrier, many of you probably thought that it was an easy job. I mean how hard can it be to put mail in a box all day, right? Well as you now know there is much more to the job than just putting mail in a box.

Today we are going to examine a couple forms used to document what is happening on your route assignment. With upcoming route inspections at several of our offices, it is important that you know how to use these documents and what they do for you when dealing with your route.

Form 1571 is also known as the Curtailment Mail Slip, but its actual title is Undelivered Mail Report. This form is used to notify management of what mail you received each day that was undelivered and the reason for it not being delivered. This is why it became known as the curtailed mail slip because management used to give you one anytime they instructed you to curtail mail that you had received at your case. While this is indeed part of the reason for the 1571, it is not the only reason. If you look at the form you will notice at the top in bold print the following: **The following mail distributed to me for delivery was left in the office or returned undelivered.**

This is important because if you look at your mail disposition daily, you will see that there are many types of mail left undelivered daily for many reasons. Some of these are: mis-sorted mail from the plant, mis-sorted mail from the hot cases, review mail for people who have moved, and UBBM [Undeliverable Bulk Business Mail] just to name a few of the reasons for mail in the office being undeliverable that was distributed to you. Some of the reasons that mail you take to the street was undeliverable could be: review mail, mis-cased mail, DPS errors, and

UBBM again just to name a few. Here is the rub: this form should be filled out by every carrier two times a day since there are two separate times where you are going to have to document undelivered mail that was distributed to you. If you are not doing this you are missing time on your assignment and more importantly you are missing the built-in protections afforded you when you have undelivered mail. The form has an area for the reasons for the mail being undelivered and management has to address what action was taken by them and they must sign all submitted forms. If you request a copy, management is required by contract to provide you one after they take their actions and sign the form. This documentation will also show what is happening with the volume of mail you receive daily so it will help you when providing management a daily estimate of your workload.

The second form is one we are all familiar with and that is the Form 3996, referred to as the help slip but officially known as Carrier – Auxiliary Control Form. This form is the one you get after providing your daily estimate, saying you need overtime to complete your assignment or if Management is providing you a trip on another route. While the form looks complicated it is actually very simple and easy to fill out. It is so easy to fill out that management has printed the directions on the back of the form. All one need do is read and follow the directions to successfully complete this form.

I cannot overemphasize the importance of this form, as it is an important document that is used in a wide variety of grievances. This is the form that will protect you if you fill it out properly, as it provides all the information needed to show how much time it took to deliver a trip, how you justify your time estimates (block J), what management authorized and what you requested, to name just a few issues where this

document is used.

The problem with this form is that carriers become lazy and fail to fill it out completely so when there is a need for it in a grievance it ends up being worthless simply because someone failed to do their job properly. Remember that this is your job and you get paid to do this; it is *on the clock* and no one can tell you not to fill it out in its entirety.

If you are unfamiliar with these forms or are having trouble using them, please contact your steward or call the Branch office and we will ensure that you get help. It is important because some day the difference between you having a job or being terminated may come down to these forms and if they were properly used by you. I have seen carriers terminated when they should not have been based simply on the arbitrator seeing stacks of these forms that were not filled out properly and management was able to make it look like the carrier was doing something improper. Protect yourself and your job and fill out these forms as you should and *always* request your copy from management.

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

Brian Obst
Vice President
Stations/Branches Chief Steward



Celebrate
the work of our hands
Labor Day

Nick's News

Just attended the Florida State Association of Letter Carriers Convention and I must say, attending these different gatherings of large groups of union members is definitely rewarding. Being in the same room with national officers as well as all the state officers and hundreds of peers with the same struggles will certainly remind you that we do not fight alone. I'd like to thank the members of our branch for sending me and all of the delegates and stewards that attended the training sessions. Just a little reminder, if you attend a certain number of meetings for consecutive years you can become a paid delegate to state and national conventions. A quick shout out to Brother Detlev Aeppel for giving an excellent class at the training on grievances.

There have been many issues in the city lately that our Branch has been dealing with. These training sessions help stewards to listen and learn from other issues in the state and nationally. When we learn and put the informa-

tion and knowledge to use we are usually successful. For instance, we recently received 2 Step B decisions paying multiple CCAs for management's decision to not follow the contract on hold-downs or opts.

As a part of the Labor Management Team, I am asking for your input as to what we should discuss and bring up at our monthly meeting. President Diaz is aware of most things going on in the city and stewards hear a lot, but if you have something that you would like brought up, positive or negative, let me know. This team exists to bring forth issues and ideas to a closed door meeting between management and the union.

One of the things at the conventions and training sessions that is so appealing is that we all know that we are all on the same team. Let's try to keep this in mind at our post offices as well; when we stick together we are a much greater force. On that note, a little from everyone goes a long way. The



Nick Cullaro
Labor Management
Branch 599

Letter Carrier's Political Action Fund has been established to aid in our fights in the political spectrum of things.

This is not a fund that solely gives money to one party or the other. This fund is used to gain important sponsorships on legislation that is important to letter carriers, Democrat and Republican. You can sign up to donate just \$5 a paycheck. If you haven't already, download the NALC app, you can sign up there. Within the app, go to Government Affairs, then scroll to More Government Affairs, then click Legislative Updates, then scroll down to Contribute to our PAC. Every little bit counts, especially with some of these proposals in government now.

You know you're getting old when you're comparing accessories and options on your CPAP with your roommate, lol.

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to the family of **Earnest Polite** [retiree] whose passing was July 31; to **Jay Batton** [Temple Terrace] and family at the passing of his father, James, July 25; to **Sheryl Jones** [Sulphur Springs] and family at the passing of her father, August 1; and to **David Briones** [TCA] at the passing of his father, August 8.

Around the Horn from the President's Desk

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Quick Hits:

Information you should know

* The NALC Member App is available for download, iPhone App Store and the Google Play Store for Android. As technology increases our ability to communicate, NALC must stay ahead of the curve. From websites to email to social media, this union has continu-

ally developed the tools to put the most up-to-date information and resources into the hands of our stewards and members. The app contains links to workplace resources, including the National Agreement, the JCAM, the MRS, CCA resources and more. It also includes legislative tools, such as a bill tracker, an individualized list of your congressional representatives and PAC information. And one of the

coolest features: an Interactive Non-Scheduled Days calendar. When you install the app, it'll ask you for your home ZIP code, so it can give you the correct legislative information. You then sign up for notifications based on your interests. -nalc.org

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



*4th Annual MDA
Charity Golf Tournament
@
Heritage Harbor
Golf & Country Club
Sponsored By
NALC Branch 599*

*Hole Sponsor \$100
Includes a Sign at
tee box!*

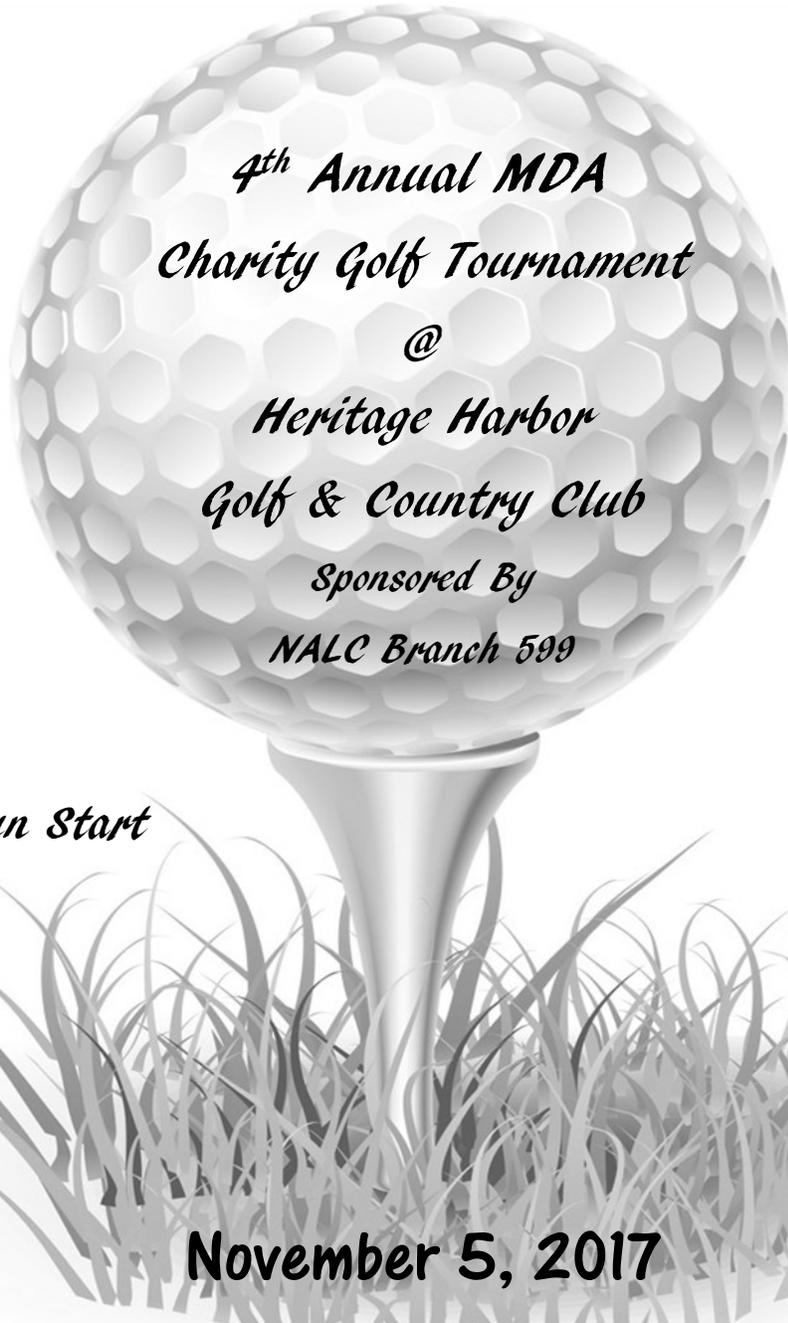
*Putting or Chipping
\$150 includes
Sign at Contest*

November 5, 2017

Contact Info: Alan Robinson 813-843-9762 / Tony Diaz 813-598-9635 or 813-875-0599

<i>Business Name or</i>	
<i>Individual Name:</i>	
<i>Address:</i>	
<i>Phone:</i>	<i>Email:</i>
<i>Message on Sign:</i>	
MDA Federal ID#13-1665552	

Make Checks payable to: NALC Branch 599; For MDA; 3003 W. Cypress Street, Tampa FL 33609



*4th Annual MDA
Charity Golf Tournament
@
Heritage Harbor
Golf & Country Club
Sponsored By
NALC Branch 599*

*8:00 AM Shotgun Start
\$60 per person
Range Balls
Round of Golf
Lunch*

*Longest Drive
Closest to Pin
Optional:
Chipping/Putting
Contest*

November 5, 2017

Contact Info: Alan Robinson 813-843-9762 / Tony Diaz 813-598-9635 or 813-875-0599

Golfer 1 _____	Golfer 3 _____
Golfer 2 _____	Golfer 4 _____
All Money Due by October 28, 2017	

Make Checks payable to: NALC Branch 599; For MDA; 3003 W. Cypress Street, Tampa FL 33609

2017 Florida State Association of Letter Carriers Convention

August 3-5, 2017

Report

The 74th Biennial Florida State Association of Letter Carriers (FSALC) Convention was held August 3-5, in Orlando, Florida. The Double Tree Hotel hosted the three day event. Branch 599 was well represented with 16 delegates to the Convention and another 9 stewards and alternates participated in the 2-day training which followed the Convention, totaling 25.

The classes covered a variety of topics, from Building a Grievance File to a Formal Step A Class taught by our own Detlev Aepfel, other classes, CCA Issues, Acts of God, Steward Rights and OWCP.

In all 26 Branches from around Florida attended. There were 300 delegates, officers, stewards and retirees.

National President Fred Rolando, from the state of Florida, attended the convention and addressed the delegates.

There was a very moving ceremony at the Convention to honor those letter carriers from across the state branches that have passed since the last Convention. The ceremony began with a single bagpipe player; there was silence throughout the delegation out of respect to our deceased brothers and sisters.

A little history of the FSALC:

- ♦ The Florida State Association was chartered in 1913
- ♦ The first State Convention on record was held in 1923, in Tampa
- ♦ State Conventions from 1923-1972 were held yearly. In 1972, the bylaws were changed and beginning in 1973 the conventions moved to each odd year.
- ♦ Tampa has hosted 9 State Conventions, the last in 2001.
- ♦ Six members of Branch 599 have served as State Presidents: John Coram 1930-31, CM Kickliter 1934-36, Lon Almand 1945-46, JR Mills 1954-56, Albert Arnold 1970-73, and Howard Carter 1973-77. Three of the six members that served as State President also served as Branch 599 President: CM Kickliter, JR Mills, and Howard Carter.

–Information received at the Convention by O.D. Elliott



Our convention delegates above.

Bagpipers played during the memorial ceremony for those deceased since our last State Convention.



Retired Since My First Day of Work

I was reading the April 2017 *Postal Record*, in specific, *Branch Items*. It seems that in each article written there has been one constant similarity in each scribe's summation, the lack of training for CCAs, continual violations of equalizing overtime, the rise in discipline and the different methodologies used by management to formulate your daily delivery times. This manifestation, of poor training (used to be the PTFs), forced working of OT (overtime) by non-OTDL personnel, discipline for poor attendance (calling in sick or abusing your guaranteed sick leave), not using the scanner properly, not making the 5 o'clock window (which I hear no longer exists), safety violations (driving without doors closed, driving without seat belts fastened, too many on-the-job injuries), according to your mail volume today you have under-time as per DOIS or PET or whatever management has dreamed up to justify their poor mathematics, is nothing new. The USPS managers have always tried to draw blood out of a turnip by getting you to work longer in less time and management has always been critical of all letter carriers in that they think the carrier is a screw-off, slacker or goof-off! Remember the USPS supervisors are not your friend and they only care about making their numbers dreamed up by some faulty computerized program.

The best way to avoid confrontations with the supervisor is to **do your job by the book every day**. (Have a pocket notebook that you log in every day's activity.) What I mean by this is to know how much time it will take you to case and deliver your assignment every day! The USPS has manuals for delivery of letter carrier routes. If memory serves me correctly, these manuals are the M-39 and M-41. Your concern should be to learn what is contained in the M-41, which should explain what your duties are, starting at your begin tour and ending with your end tour. After your begin tour and your daily

vehicle safety inspection, you should be able to estimate your total time needed, taking into consideration your cased mails, any third bundles, plugs, your accountables (which include any insured, certified, registered, signature required mailings, CODs, postage due, Express Mail), and especially your parcel post. Letter Carriers today must scan everything and that takes time. The practice of scanning had not gotten to the level it is now with the GPS system within the scanner. (I wrote about the GPS scanners when I was carrying mail, as I had a friend at UPS that told me about the drivers having to use them.) Practice delivering your route the same way every day and be consistent with your MSP scan points...variations bring attention. Make notes of how long it takes you to drive to your first delivery daily and how long it takes you to return to the office prior to your end tour. You should know how many minutes it takes to deliver the route with 100% coverage or with as little as 1% coverage, or inclement weather and especially in the heat of summer. Every day should be treated as a route inspection day/week. I was lucky, I had an all mounted route my last 5 years; I knew it took me a minimum of one minute and a half to deliver one curbside delivery or as much as 3 minutes. There is a safety ritual (which is in the book) that you go through at every curbside delivery you make and to every delivery you have to dismount. (The individuals on my route used to tell me I was within 15 to 30 minutes delivering mail to them every day and if I wasn't there within that time limit I was delivering part of another route or I was off or on vacation.) This ritual is for your benefit, do it the same way every day as it will then become automatic and when you get that much-dreaded route (evaluation) inspection you'll have no problem. Remember, one thing, the route/case does not belong to you or to any letter carrier! It belongs to management and you are just the caretaker and as a

caretaker you need to make sure that all mail receptacles/boxes such as curb-line/door delivery/apartment complexes are properly maintained and that all deliveries have their street numbers correctly posted on the curbside box or visible from the street. If you have businesses, make sure they have their addresses visible from the street. Know the right way to do your job and always deliver your assigned route in a professional manner. In doing this, you will be alive to enjoy your well-deserved retirement.

I was standing and waiting in a ten-deep line at the Post Office with only two window clerks, and a customer was complaining about mail being delivered to his mail receptacle for people who do not live there. A supervisor told the customer that the mailman does not have time to distinguish names on the mail or if there are names in the mail receptacle. The supervisor told the customer to just put the mail back in the receptacle and write *does not live here* on it. The customer was further told that the supervisor would make sure the letter carrier would be told of this. After the supervisor left I told the clerk that was not good customer service and that, as a letter carrier of 36 years, I always made time to make sure that the mail delivered was for the proper address and the current occupant. (I always felt badly if I brought back one letter that I mis-sorted.) Supposing the letter was a mis-sort, delivered to the wrong street address and like some customers, not all, deface the letter with the suggested return info of *Does Not Live Here* or for some *No Livey Here?* What then? Often times, I would tell the customer please do not write on the mis-delivered mails, but to just put the piece back in the mailbox with



Ray Garcia
Member
Branch 599

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Retired Since My First Day of Work

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the flag up and I'd take care of it the next day. How often is your DPS out of sequence or how many letters are inserted in your line of delivery incorrectly for other routes or even your route? I used to count them every day and denote the total in my daily notes.

I do miss the letter carriers at the station and I do miss the great chats I used to have with the floor supervisor when

requesting P.S. Form 3996. Most of all, I miss the people on the route I delivered to.

One machine can do the work of 50 ordinary men. No machine can do the work of one extraordinary man. —Anonymous



US Representative Kathy Castor addressed the media and supporters on July 24, 2017, the **52nd Anniversary of Medicare**. Branch 599 was represented by Financial Secretary Alan Peacock and President Tony Diaz.



Congratulations to Interbay carrier, **John Rickerson**, on being selected as the **Joseph M. Kaplan USPS Safe Driver of the Year** for the Southern Area! The National Safety Council was proud to present recognition to John for his commitment to safe driving practices.

John was also presented a 40-year Service Certificate and pin at a ceremony on July 19.



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

Note date change: Wednesday, September 6
October 3

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM

September 7
October 5

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM

September 7
October 5

Sunday Work Party

at our Hall 9-11 AM

September 10
October 8

Note Date Change!

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday September 11 9 AM

Denny's Restaurant at Dale Mabry & Spruce
2004 N Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Tuesday September 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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