



Tampa Letter Carrier

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 6

JUNE 2019

Around The Horn from The President's Desk

The 27th annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive a **BIG** success!

1,350,000 pounds of food collected for Hillsborough County! Metropolitan Ministries *thanks* all the Letter Carriers that helped make this possible... collections were up from last year!



Tony Diaz
President

Brothers and Sisters, **Hold in Place** is an expression/phrase/term that has been used since the Postal Service instituted a unilateral action for certain carrier technicians (T-6) in 2017. I have received many calls, many, many calls in regards to this issue. I have spoken to many, many members who were affected and/or thought they might be affected. Mainly with the question: how long will the adjustment process take to complete? After contacting our Business Agent's Office, we were told adjustments would/should be completed by the end April; the process has taken longer than expected with the enormous number of cases. The adjustments continued into May, the phone calls have now lessened; carriers have received their adjustments. Several carriers still do not agree with their results from

the *Hold in Place*, but have a better understanding.

Let me try to explain what actually happened. In July 2018, NALC and USPS agreed upon a settlement (M-01893) to a national-level grievance that lifted a so-called *hold in place* rule. The individuals who were converted to career status as Grade 1 Letter Carriers after January 10, 2013, then bid to a Grade 2 job (T-6) and subsequently advanced two steps in the pay scale in accordance with *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)* provisions. The unilateral *hold in place* rule resulted in the USPS creating a PS Form 50 for **8,970** Carrier Technicians who received the two-step promotional pay increase. This effectively froze each of them at their then-current step for an additional 92 weeks.

The NALC filed the national-

level grievance on this action with lengthy time consuming discussions with the USPS. There was finally an agreement and M-01893 was created. The carriers affected by the *hold in place* have now received their step increases as scheduled prior to being held. The carriers also received any retroactive pay owed back to the time they should have received their step increases. Not only were the number of those carriers affected large, the implementation of this settlement was a complicated recalculation of pay and reconstruction of Form 50s from the past. Not many cases were identical, different bid dates and as a result different time spent as a Grade 1. The Postal Service notified NALC that all corrections have now been completed. Each letter carrier

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Branch 599
serving
Brandon
Plant City
Sun City
Tampa

**Branch 599
Meeting**

Thursday
June 6
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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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)

who was affected by the *hold in place* rule should have already received notification of their Form 50s being changed to reflect proper step increases. By now, all of the letter carriers should also have received back pay for the hours they worked during the time they were improperly held at a lower step. Any affected letter carriers who have not yet been made whole should contact the Branch Office. A timeline from the carrier is requested, to include Form 50's, to better explain that particular case. The few cases we have received after the completion of the adjustments have been sent to the Business Agent's Office for review.

—NALC Bulletin

Pay attention to Legislation: Your job depends on it!

House majority rejects postal privatization.

In April, House Resolution 33 reached bipartisan majority support in the House of Representatives. The resolution calls on Congress to take *all appropriate measures to ensure that the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal Government and is not subject to privatization.*

House Resolution 33 had 221 cosponsors, obtaining at least 218 cosponsors in the chamber for a resolution means there is majority support, the House has 435 members.

NALC activists can take pride in the victory, even as they continue to

educate Congress on the importance of the US Postal Service. As letter carriers know, 155 million businesses and households receive mail six, if not seven days a week. Receiving packages, letters, bills and medications at one's door is a service that is highly valued by the public and that is vital to the economic success of the country's small businesses. It also is vital to the Postal Service, the centerpiece of the \$1.4 trillion national mailing industry, which employs 7.5 million Americans.

In the House of Representatives, NALC has three other priority resolutions:

- House Resolution 23 calls on the House to take *all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of door delivery for all business and residential customers. This resolution had 162 cosponsors.*
- House Resolution 54 calls on the House to take *all appropriate measures to ensure the continuation of its 6-day mail delivery service. This resolution had 214 cosponsors.*
- House Resolution 60 calls on the House to take *all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012. This resolution had 138 cosponsors.*

I encourage all letter carriers to contact their members of Congress to educate them on the importance of cosponsoring these resolutions, NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

—NALC Bulletin

Quick Hits:

Information you should know * NALC files national level grievance

NALC has filed a national level grievance regarding the Postal Service's unilateral implementation of the **consolidated casing initiative** scheduled to begin in the Annandale VA Post Office in May. The Postal Service plans to expand the initiative to over 200 additional locations this summer. NALC will provide assistance to branches involved in this test. Branch officers, representatives, and members with questions should contact their national business agent's office. NALC will provide updates on this test as they become available. **At this time no offices within Branch 599 are scheduled for the consolidated casing initiative.** Please see page 6 of this newsletter.

* New Mexico carrier killed on his route

Letter carrier Jose Hernandez, an Albuquerque NM Branch 504 member, was shot and killed on his route Monday, April 22, after trying to defuse a dispute. The Army veteran was a 12-year carrier. *We are deeply saddened at the loss of Jose Hernandez, who was doing what so many carriers do every day on the route: watching out for the well-being of their customers. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jose's family and loved ones,* NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

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



Meetings Date Change to August 8

Our Florida State Convention is August 1-3, therefore, our Branch and Executive Board meetings will be changed to August 8.

#1 Senior Carrier Freddie Nimphius Retired!



The number one senior carrier in Tampa, Freddie Nimphius, Carrollwood Station, retired May 1. Postmaster Richard Fermo presented Freddie his service award for over 43 years of incredible service.

Congratulations and many many years of retirement!

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Our deepest sympathy and prayerful support is extended to Pat and family at the passing of her husband, **Darius Lundy** [retiree], April 24; to the family of **Sidney Buffalow** [retiree] whose passing was May 16; and to **Evelyn Fositt** [Interbay] and family at the passing of her brother-in-law, Milton Rodriguez, May 7.

Mark your Calendar! Branch meetings will be...

June 6 • July 11 • August 8 • September 5
October 3 • November 7 • December 5

Photo on right:

The 27th Annual NALC Food Drive kicked off with a media day at Metropolitan Ministries' warehouse in Tampa on May 8. State President and Southeastern Food Drive Coordinator Al Friedman, Forest Hills Carrier Lori McMillion, and Branch 599 President Tony Diaz attended the event. This is the second year Branch 599 has partnered with Metropolitan Ministries.

Food Drive Kick-off



Unionism – What has the Union done for me?

It is a fact that people have very short memories. Many talk about the good old days with fond recollection of that time gone by yet they fail to remember the struggles and/or problems that occurred in those past times. The same can be said for many members of our fine Union. I can tell you that I hear it said by many members: *What has the Union done for me?*

While things today are much better than they were in the past, there are still ongoing battles that the Union must fight to keep things for the membership on a forward moving direction. Today's greatest problem with the membership is that it is suffering from the successes of the past. Many of the members have not had to suffer from the problems of the past and they have the opinion that things will always be as good as or better than they are right now. They don't see behind the day to day operations to realize just what the Union does for them.

First, one must understand what the Union is before you can understand what it does for you.

Labor Union: An organization of workers formed for the purpose of advancing its members' interests in respect to wages, benefits, and working conditions.

As defined by Webster's we can see that the Union is a collective made up of members of the same group who band together to address their common agenda. The power to bargain with management is increased as it is no longer you, individually attempting to get management to deal with issues; it is everyone together in the Union.

Now back to our original topic. It still mystifies me when someone says to me: *What has the Union done for me?* It seems like these people just assume that management loves them and would be happy to go to the ends of the earth to satisfy them. They just

assume that if the Union was gone that things would be better because there would be less interference with their own personal agenda at work. The sad part with these people is that they have never had to suffer at the hands of management like our previous brothers and sisters did. If history has taught us anything it is that management is not our friend.

Management had to be brought to the bargaining table kicking and screaming and our brothers and sisters went out on strike to gain benefits that carriers enjoy today and they did this at great personal risk to themselves. The members, many of them working more than one job and getting assistance because they were still below the poverty line, forced management to address issues of pay and benefits for the workers. They gained the right to collectively bargain with management instead of what had previously been a system of collectively begging and getting whatever management wanted to give or not give.

What has the Union done for me...well let's take a look at some of the things the Union did/does for you:

- **Ensures a living wage for workers with contractual guaranteed raises.**
- **Overtime for hours worked in excess of 40 hours weekly.**
- **An 8-hour workday with the guarantee of overtime if you have to work more than 8 hours.**
- **Sick leave and annual leave earnings so you get paid if you are sick and receive paid vacation time.**
- **Guarantee time so that you have a schedule to work, not at the whim of management.**
- **Cost of living allowance so that our paycheck isn't eaten away by inflation.**

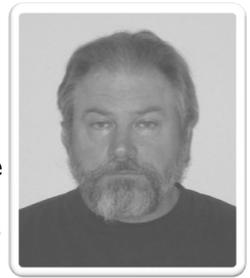
Those are just some of the items negotiated by the Union for the members

that with a stroke of the pen could be taken away, so the Union must stay vigilant in its dealings with management to

protect what has been gained in the past. Additionally, the Union has also provided the following:

- **The NALC Health Benefit Plan;** my personal favorite.
- **The Mutual Benefit Association** that has insurance plans for disability and retirement planning.
- **NALCREST,** the NALC Retirement Community in Central Florida providing housing accommodations in a planned development community so members have a place they can retire to if they want at a reasonable cost.

The Union has been providing for its members for numerous years and shall continue to do so, but for the Union to maintain its strength moving forward, it does require something from its members. It requires action, support, and volunteers. Branch Shop Stewards are the backbone of the Union working on the front lines in support of the mission of the Union. Contract compliance is their responsibility in representing the membership. The job is a volunteer position and requires the individual to work to serve the membership as someone else has worked to serve you previously. With members retiring it is imperative that others step up to replace the retiring members. The time to act is before the current members retire, while the knowledge they have acquired over the years is available to be passed on. This process keeps the Union strong, as we are constantly learning new information, but we never want to lose the information learned previously. I implore newer members to consider



Brian Obst
Vice President
Branch 599

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Consolidated casing test Grieved by NALC

Tony Diaz
President

The postal service sent out letters to the areas that will be in the consolidated casing test initiative. According to the *Postal Times*, over 230 post offices nationwide will be test sites for this process. Phase 1 will be in May, Phase 2 in June, and Phase 3 in August. Under this test, carriers will either be *casing multiple routes* or *delivering on the street for 7 hours and 45 minutes*.

We are not in that test area, but I want you to know what it's about. The USPS, in that letter says, *this initiative separates the traditional city letter carrier assignment into two separate components: Office Caser/Carrier and Street Carrier. All routes in the unit will reduce cell sizes for all deliveries. Routes are then combined into casing groups which minimizes equipment and increases available floor space.*

Then it lists responsibilities of the two types of carriers as follows:

Office Caser/Carrier Responsibilities

- Casing and withdrawal of manual mail* including small parcels and rolls (SPRs) and Hot Case mail
- Sequencing mail for park and loop deliveries, according to local policy
- Scanning the MSP Hot Case bar code*
- Loading cased mail into the conveyance used for parcel distribution
- Processing undeliverable and return mail, with input from supervisors and Street Carriers
- Placing COA labels on PS Form 3982 for all routes within an assigned casing group, per the unit's SOP
- Preparing Hold mail requests, per the unit's SOP
- Maintaining Edit/Redbooks, DSMART, WebEES and eUARS information with communication/input from Street Carriers, as per management instructions*

*For all routes assigned within a casing group

Street Carrier Responsibilities

- Delivery: 7 hours and 45 minutes, including two street breaks (office tasks will be significantly reduced)

AM Office responsibilities:

- Retrieving accountable/special service items, keys/Voyager card and Mobile Delivery Device (MDD) per office SOP, from cage or accountable cart
- Retrieving conveyance equipment for assigned route and clocking to the appropriate street operation
- Retrieving DPS, FSS and committed sequenced sets
- Loading vehicle/return conveyance equipment (such as hamper) to designated location

See more in my article under *Quick Hits* on page 3.

Tony



at nalc.org

Get involved! Your future depends on it!

Unionism — What has the Union done for me?

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stepping up as you are the future of this Union and its ongoing strength will be determined by how willing you are to take on the mantle of leadership.

It seems to me that the Union goes far above when providing for its members. It took some very forward thinking members to fund the items listed

above and through proper management the benefits have only strengthened through the years.

I guess the best way to sum this up is with a rephrasing of one of the quotes of former President John F. Kennedy: **Ask not what your Union can do for you; ask what you can do for your Union.**

Remember you are the U in Union. Until next month I leave you... **Knowledge is the Key.**

Brian Obst
Vice President
Stations/Branches Chief Steward

Shop Stewards will Meet

Tuesday 7 PM

June 4
July 9

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday 7:30 PM

June 6
July 11

Executive Board Meets

Thursday 6:30 PM

June 6
July 11

Sunday Work Party

at our Hall 9-11 AM

June 9
July 14

Retirees Breakfasts

Monday June 3 9 AM

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

Tuesday June 11 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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