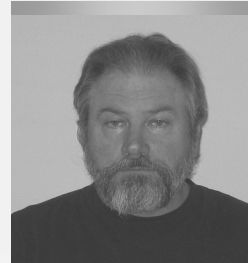




Tampa Letter Carrier

From the Desk of the President

Welcome back, faithful readers, to another edition of *From the Desk of the President*. It has been an eventful month since we last spoke: Contractual Arbitration, *Fight Like Hell* events, and more have to be updated for you. Additionally, we are currently going through 6-Day Route Counts being performed in numerous stations in the city as we speak, and we are preparing for the Annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, so we are going to be busy for the foreseeable future. Let's get started.



Brian Obst
President
Branch 599

Contractual Arbitration

The tentative Agreement that was voted down by the membership went to binding Arbitration and when it was being scheduled the National Executive Council voted unanimously to accept the contractual issues that had been previously agreed to under the terms of the tentative agreement and send to expedited arbitration only for the financial issues. The arbitration hearings were held, and Arbitrator Nolan issued his decision on those issues.

As you are probably already aware, we were awarded a three-year contract from May 2023 through May 2026. The contractual raises will be for November 2023 1.3%, November 2024 1.4%, and November 2025 1.5% respectively. The CCAs will receive an additional 1% on each contractual increase listed above and within 180 days of the decision they will also receive a 50 cent per hour increase in their hourly wage.

Uniform allowances have risen, and unused funds may be carried into the next year.

There were no changes to the Cost of Living, layoff protection, and health care percentages paid provisions currently in the National Agreement.

The negotiation period for the Local Memorandum of Understanding will begin on May 27 and conclude at the end of June. If you have concerns or thoughts about the Local, please write and submit them to us through your steward or bring them directly to our Branch office so they can be reviewed and complied in the event of the Local Agreement being opened for negotiations.

For further information please refer to nalc.org and read the information on the Nolan Award decision and the text of the Tentative Agreement previously published there.

Fight Like Hell!

As many of you were aware, the Union had a National Day of Action on March 23 in support of the Fight Like Hell initiative. This is to help inform the general population of the concerns raised by the current administration and their attempts to privatize the Postal Service. Members of Branch 599, along with members of Branches 2008

Branch 599

serving

Brandon

Plant City

Sun City

Tampa

Branch 599 Meeting

Thursday

May 1

7:30 PM

Tampa Letter Carriers Hall

315 W Busch Blvd

Suite C

Tampa FL 33612

Additional parking is
available in the lot
before our building.

(Continued on page 3)

Branch 599 Office

315 W Busch Boulevard, Suite C
Tampa FL 33612

813.875.0599

www.nalc599.com

Brian Obst
President
erif_lor@hotmail.com

Office Hours
Monday – Friday
7:30 am – 4 pm

Rodna Kimelman Kirk
Office Manager
nalc599@verizon.net

Tampa Letter Carrier

Brian Obst
Publisher

Phyllis R. Thomas
Editor
editor.nalc599@gmail.com

Branch 599 Office
813.875.0599

National Association of Letter Carriers 599, 315 W Busch Boulevard, Suite C Tampa FL 33612, publishes the Tampa Letter Carrier monthly. The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Branch 599, NALC. It is the policy of this publication that all articles submitted for print must be signed by the writer.

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

<i>Position</i>	<i>Officer</i>	<i>Phone</i>	<i>Email</i>
President	Brian Obst	813.875.0599 cell 727.458.0679	erif_lor@hotmail.com
Vice President	Michael Smith	813.326.0717	mosmith46@gmail.com
Recording Secretary	Maria Afful	347.457.7316	
Financial Secretary	Alan Robinson	813.843.9762	
Treasurer	Tony Diaz	813.598.9635	
Sergeant-at-Arms	Luis Cruz	813.431.3223	
MBA/NSBA	Bonita Lattimore	813.756.9676	
Health Benefit Rep	Detlev Aeppel	813.505.7914	
Director of Retirees	John Gebo	813.503.1256	
Trustees	Milly Minsal, Ch.	813.446.2572	
	Andre Hinton	931.980-5169	
	Cynthia Williams	813.778.4373	
Labor Management	J.D. Lewers	813.528.5519	
	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				813.326.0717
Brandon	33510/11	David Rivadeneira	813.661.1636	656.215.2467
Brandon	33510/11	Osceola Williams Sr.	813.661.1636	210.445.1369
Carrollwood	33618	Edward Carrillo	813.961.2963	
Commerce	33602	Deonte Barron	813.247.2416	
Forest Hills	33612	Lord McWilliams	813.935.2954	
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Robert Rosenfeld	813.935.2954	954.991.2672
Hilldale	33614	Jose Gomez	813.879.4309	917.743.6948
Hilldale Annex	33634	Maria Afful	813.879.4309	347.457.7316
Interbay/Port Tampa	33611/16	Mike Dennis	813.831.2034	813.361.9103
Interbay/Peninsula	33629	Brian Obst	813.831.2034	727.458.0679
Palm River Annex	33619	Sheryl Jones	813.663.0048	
Plant City	33563/64		813.754.3590	
Produce	33610		813.237.4084	
Ruskin/Sun City Ctr	33570	Bert Fristad	813.634.1642	813.541.8540
Seminole Heights	33603	Paul Sardinas	813.237.4569	813.650.3504
Sulphur Springs	33604	Sean O'Connell	813.237.4569	
TCA/Hyde Park	33606	Josh Villa	813.873.7189	203.278.6485
TCA/Peninsula	33609	Brian Obst	813.873.7189	727.458.0679
TCA/West Tampa	33607	Brian Obst	813.873.7189	727.458.0679
Temple Terrace	33617		813.988.0152	
Town & Country	33615/35	Brian Obst	813.884.0973	727.458.0679
Ybor City	33605	Leddyon Lewis	813.247.2416	

Wait a Minute

Perks Plus Galore

Hey, download the Union Plus App, where postal employees can find great deals and discounts... movie tickets, park tickets, sport events, rentals, flowers, and more.

By phone, go to your app store and search Union Plus, download and create your account, add in your Branch to create account. Once logged in, search and find deals and discounts in your ZIP Code area.

Maria



Maria Afful
Recording Secretary
Shop Steward
Branch 599

From the Desk of the President

(Continued from page 1)

(Clearwater) and 1477 (St. Petersburg/West Coast FL) joined in an informational picket at the intersection of Tyrone Boulevard and 66th Street N. for several hours to inform the public about what is happening and urge all to contact their congresspersons about the issue. We had over 470 members of the branches as well as people from the AFL-CIO, Veterans Administration, and several people who wished to join us to get the word out, as they wanted to support our cause. All in all, it was a successful day and while we did not have the media coverage that we expected, we did have some local coverage in the area. *Thanks* to all who came out to help! Remember to contact your congressperson to let them know your position on Postal Privatization.

6-Day Route Counts

Currently we are having 6-Day Route Counts and Inspections in several stations within the city. All carriers should familiarize themselves with the guidelines of Chapter 2 of the M-39 handbook covering these counts. Also, if you do not already have a copy, you should get the NALC Route Inspection Pocket Handbook. The information contained within will help you through the process. If management is doing things incorrectly, ask for a steward and inform them of any violations so timely grievances may be filed. If you are doing things the same way as you always do and follow the

guidelines you should have no issues.

Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

The Annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is being held on May 10 this year and preparations are well under way for the drive. Last year we were the Number One Branch in the country for food collection and we were able to *Do some good for the neighborhood* throughout our Branch's area. On April 27, we will be meeting to do the breakdown and pack-out for shipping the bags and cards for the branches in the tri-county area. We do this each year, and we get volunteers from Clearwater, St. Petersburg, and Lakeland to help our Tampa volunteers so we can accomplish this in a minimum amount of time to help branches prepare for the drive. If you can volunteer to come out to help, call our Branch office at 813-875-0599 to let Rodna know. When we have volunteers, it typically only takes about an hour to one- and one-half hours to complete the job...all assistance is appreciated. Let's see if we can hold our position as Number One for another year and help our community's food banks!

Executive Board Positions

In keeping with the information on Executive Board positions for the coming elections in December, I am going to address the position of Sergeant-at-Arms. The **Sergeant-at-Arms** has the duty to preserve order in the meetings of the Branch under

instructions of the President. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall see that none but members are present at the meetings unless directed by the President or a vote by the Branch. He/She shall verify the eligibility of all delegates from the regular meeting attendance records according to Article V, Section 15. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall also perform other duties as assigned by the President.

CCA Town Hall

Just as a reminder to all CCAs, we have scheduled a Town Hall meeting at 7 PM on April 24 for all CCAs to provide information, training, and guidance to new members to help you in dealing with the day-to-day issues of the job. We will provide food, and we have a store of donated uniforms so you can try to get some uniforms to tide you over until your uniform allowance comes in. Please come armed with any and all questions you have so that we can try to get you answers to help you out; remember, you are the future of the Postal Service.

Life is never easy. There is work to be done and obligations to be met – obligations to truth, to justice, and to liberty.

—John F. Kennedy

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

Brian Obst
President

Calendar

Shop Stewards

Tuesday

April 29 7:00 PM
315 W Busch Blvd, Suite C

Executive Board

Thursday

May 1 6:30 PM
315 W Busch Blvd, Suite C

Branch 599

Thursday

May 1 7:30 PM
315 W Busch Blvd, Suite C

Retirees' Breakfasts

Tampa

Monday

May 5 9:30 AM
The Cuban Sandwich Shop
10434 N Florida Avenue 33612

Temple Terrace

Tuesday

May 13 10:00 AM
Bob Evans Restaurant
off Fletcher near I-75
12272 Morris Bridge Road

Note:

Any carrier, active or retired, is welcome to attend the retirees' breakfasts, and on your birthday, the Branch will pick up the tab for your breakfast; simply provide the receipt to the Branch office for processing.

Retired...but Not Tired

With all the talk in the news about the Postal Service, and the uncertainty of the future, I found myself interested in refreshing myself on some history of the United States Postal Service. I began browsing the internet (I believe that is now called *googling*) and found some interesting facts. I have decided to share these facts with you in my article this month:

- The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) traces its roots to 1775, established by the Second Continental Congress with Benjamin Franklin as the first Postmaster General, evolving from a colonial postal system to a key function of the new government.
- The term *mail carrier* came to be used as a gender-neutral substitute for *mailman* soon after women began performing the job. In the Royal Mail, the official name changed from *letter carrier* to *postman* in 1883, and *postwoman* has also been used for many years.
- In the late 19th century, free home delivery of mail was introduced – first in cities, then in rural areas – and letter carriers became familiar, trusted visitors to homes and businesses across the country.
- The five-digit ZIP code system, introduced by the U.S. Postal Service on July 1, 1963, aimed to improve mail sorting and delivery efficiency.
- President Richard Nixon signed the Postal Reorganization Act into law on August 12, 1970. On July 1, 1971, the law became fully effective, transforming the Post Office Department into the United States Postal Service.
- The 40-hour work week began in 1935. Carriers walked as many as 22 miles a day,

carrying up to 50 pounds of mail at a time. They were instructed to deliver letters frequently and promptly, generally twice a day to homes and up to four times a day to businesses. In 2004, the second daily delivery was scrapped in an effort to reduce costs and improve efficiency, meaning a later single delivery would be made.

▪ Did the Post Office use to mail children? Children were never stuffed into mailbags, however, they were sent via trains with stamps affixed to their clothing and were typically accompanied by postal workers whom the parents trusted. The practice of mailing children, while economically appealing to some, was officially banned by the Post Office in 1915.

The next Retirees' Breakfast will be on May 5 at 9:30 AM. Location: The Cuban Sandwich Shop at 10434 N Florida Avenue. This group meets on the first Monday of the month.

We have another retiree group that meets on the second Tuesday of the month, May 13 at 10 AM. Location: Bob Evans, 12272 Morris Bridge Road, in Temple Terrace.

Remember retirees, if it is your birthday month and you attend a monthly breakfast, your breakfast is paid by Branch 599.

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

John



John Gebo
Director of Retirees
Branch 599

If retirees from your station gather,
please let us know when and where so that we can post it.
Contact John Gebo if you want to start a gathering for your station!

From the Vice President's Desk

Spring is in the air and just about everything may not be going as planned. On the horizon there are several items of interest to most if not all of us. I would like to say please take the time to educate yourself on matters that affect your means of employment.

Threat of Privatization

One topic is the privatization of the Postal Service. The current administration has spoken openly about privatizing the Postal Service. Doing so will affect a large number of families throughout the states, hitting hard in rural areas, and the employment of carriers. In response to this outward thought, several members of Congress have introduced resolutions to prevent privatization from happening.

A bipartisan Senate resolution (S.Res 147) was introduced that calls Congress to take measures to ensure that the Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the federal government. S.Res 147 is identical to the House resolution (H.Res 70) which currently has 180 co-sponsors. These resolutions, if passed, will ensure the Postal Service will remain, as it was intended to be, an independent part of the federal government and not under the control of any department.

These resolutions are critical to the Postal Service. Independence of the Postal Service is important to maintaining the quality of service to our customers each and every day, no matter how far we may have to travel.

Privatization cuts deeply into any independence.

Please contact our Branch's Legislative Representative, Detlev Aeppel, if you have any questions or would like more information. Take the time to contact your representative and voice your opinion on privatization. If the administration is successful in doing so, we all may be looking for something else to do.

Our Contract

Now on to the good stuff. The contract has been finalized. Of course, the main question is back pay. As Arbitrator Nolan awarded, everything should be finalized within 180 days. Your Steward will be kept in the loop of any changes or if anything is completed prior to the 180-day mark.

The new contract also includes a few areas of importance:

New Employee Experience, Retention, and Mentoring

This program allows new employees an opportunity to adjust to being a carrier beginning at the Career Academy. The focus is onboarding, retention, and mentoring of new employees.

- Limited daily and weekly work hours for CCAs and PTFs during their first eleven weeks following completion of the Carrier Academy.
- CCAs and PTFs will now have a defined work schedule each week to include their scheduled day off, beginning and end times, and route

assignment.

- CCAs and PTFs will now have a scheduled day off each week with the only exception during penalty overtime exclusion period.

- A mentoring program that pairs new employees with a mentor in their office to help employees adapt to the workplace.

Article 10

Career employees can sell back 40 hours of annual leave if they are at the carryover maximum and they have used fewer than 75 sick leave hours in the year immediately preceding the year for which the leave is being exchanged.

CCAs and PTFs will be advanced annual leave.

These are just a few items that are included in the new contract that affect all carriers. Stewards should ensure that the contract is being enforced. But the final enforcement isn't always up to the stewards. Each carrier holds the responsibility of reading and understanding the new contract. Please don't hesitate to contact one of your Branch officers if you have any questions about the contract.

To get there, we must work together!

Mike



Mike Smith
Vice President
Chief Steward
Branch 599



**NALC
Disaster
Relief
Foundation**



Make a donation by

- credit card
- check
- money order
- cash

Full information is on nalc.org. Choose the Member Benefits tab, then NALC Disaster Relief Foundation. You can make a donation on that page.

Sharing Our Members' Joys and Sorrows

Healing prayers and get well wishes are extended to **Annette** [Financial Secretary Alan Robinson's wife] as she continues to recover from a serious automobile accident; and to **Bill Mandikas** [retiree] as he continues with cardio rehab.

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.

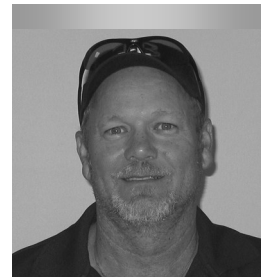
You and Your Dues

I would like to take this time to give everyone an explanation of their union dues. As most everyone knows, when you join the union, you fill out form 1187. This form is to give the Postal Service permission to deduct your union dues from your paycheck. The post office then transfers \$33.40 per union member to NALC headquarters. When NALC receives this deposit, they distribute the funds as follows: National receives \$10.31, State receives 20¢, and \$22.89 is transferred into Branch 599's account. All the money that is received at Branch 599 is used for the operating cost of the Branch, representation for the members, and all training for stewards and board members. At the present time, we have 637 members and 412

retired members. If someone in your office is not a union member, please talk to them or have them call our Branch office so we can speak to them about joining.

Remember, without the union we would not have the benefits that we have or the pay scale that we have. Just imagine how much worse it could be to work at the USPS if there was no union to protect you and your rights.

Until Next Time,
Alan



Alan Robinson
Financial Secretary
Branch 599

Veterans Buzz



I would like to change this column a bit. It's time to highlight

the veterans who are amongst us daily. For the remainder of the year, I would like to highlight some of our own veterans. If any member would like to be in our newsletter, please contact me through the Branch's email: nalc599@verizon.net. Please include your name, (picture – optional), station, and biography while in the military.

Semper Fi,
Mike
Vice President

I am a Marine. I served in the military from 1981-1996 as a reservist and then active duty in the Marine Corps. Begin-

ning in Parris Island SC and ending in Parris Island SC. I served in the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Marine Divisions and the Marine Wing Support Squadron. Several highlights during my career were hiking Mount Fuji in Japan and a steel beach picnic in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea.

I worked at Sulphur Springs station before being elected as your vice president.

Michael Smith



Crisis Center of Tampa Bay ♦ crisiscenter.com

Call 211 ♦ Community Resources and Emotional Support
Call 988 ♦ Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Veterans Crisis Line ♦ veteranscrisisline.net or dial 988 & press 1,
24/7 confidential crisis support for Veterans and their loved ones.

From the Treasurer's Desk – 28th Edition

Brothers and Sisters,

As I was working in the office several weeks ago, Vice President Mike Smith received a phone call from a member who had recently been injured on the job. The member suffered a severe injury and was unable to work due to his condition. The member was frustrated because he was not being paid Continuation of Pay (COP). As Mike received more information from the member, it was determined that the member had not filled out any paperwork. So, the member had nothing in the system to even suggest there is an on-the-job injury. Mike invited the member to come to our Branch office so that together they could begin the process.

I happened to be in the office again when the member visited; I know the member and he is a veteran carrier. Come to find out, management was aware of the injury, it was a severe dog bite and our member was bleeding from the dog's bite the day it occurred. To make matters worse, management told the member (bleeding from the dog bite) to finish the route that day because there was no help available—you can't make this up. In addition, Mike found that management had filled out a CA-1 for the member, with no signature and checked annual leave for the method of pay instead of COP. These claims are time sensitive, they must be filled out correctly, the longer you wait to process your CA-1, the more the case is scrutinized. This was very frustrating to hear, and this scenario happens more than it should. Management takes advantage of the members who do not know their rights.

Over the years, articles have been written in our newsletter, stand up talks have been provided, and there is a page printed every month in our newsletter dedicated to educate and prevent these exact issues. Call our

Branch office, call your steward, or you can still call me for questions and direction. This prompted me to go into my archives to *again* write on this subject, to *again* attempt to prevent these situations.

What should Federal Employee/Postal Worker Do When Injured At Work (Traumatic Injury)?

Three forms are vital to the process: CA-1, CA-16.CA-17.

A *Traumatic Injury* is an injury you can pinpoint where, and when, and what time the injury occurred. A good narrative with all the details about the accident goes a long way.

Example: Carrier Fred was injured (Where) at 1702 W. Denver St., Tampa FL 33699, (When) on March 20, 2025; (Time) it occurred at 2:35 PM. (Narrative) As I was delivering my route, I stepped up onto the porch at 1702 W. Denver, the porch gave way, my right foot and right leg crashed through the floor, my right knee twisted, and I heard a popping sound. I pulled myself out of the rubble and my knee had already begun to swell. I limped away from the porch and immediately called my office and spoke to my supervisor. I was asked if I could continue delivering and I said absolutely not. Then I was instructed to drive back to the office, but I told my supervisor I could not drive or walk because of my knee. The supervisor and manager drove out to my route to pick me up and to drive my postal vehicle back to the office.

Let's break it down further into steps:

- **Report to Supervisor:** Every job-related injury should be reported as soon as possible to your supervisor, *and* also notify your steward and/or our Branch office.
- **Obtain Medical Care:** Before you obtain medical treatment (unless it is an emergency situation), you will need

from your supervisor, authorization to the medical treatment by use of a CA-16. **It is essential that the CA-16 is signed by management.**

Emergency medical treatment may not be obtained without prior authorization. You may initially select the physician to provide necessary treatment. This may be your private physician or an emergency room at a local hospital.

▪ **File Written Notice:** In traumatic injuries, complete the employee's portion of Form CA-1. Obtain the form from your employing agency or go online, complete and upload into your ecomp account, or turn it in to your supervisor as soon as possible, **and always make copies.** The longer you wait the less it could be viewed as traumatic.

If disabled due to traumatic injury (you are not able to work at all), you should be paid COP for up to 45 calendar days.

These questions are asked a lot when a carrier is injured on-the-job and the medical treatment runs past the carrier's end tour: Does the carrier get paid? Can the carrier be paid overtime while at the doctor?

ELM 519.542 addresses that situation —Employee in Overtime Status: When an employee is directed by management to an on or off-site medical unit due to illness or injury, all time spent waiting for and/or receiving medical attention on the service day on which the illness or injury occurs, is credited as work time even though overtime hours may be involved. This if the member would have been worked but for the need for medical treatment they are not able.



Tony Diaz
Treasurer
President Emeritus
Branch 599
NALCREST Trustee

(Continued on page 8)



The Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) 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.

Each year, NALC fights to fend off attacks in Congress that threaten letter carriers' collective-bargaining rights, retirement benefits and livelihood. We've been successful so far, and we want to continue helping to elect House and Senate candidates who will protect us, promote our issues and deliver our message to Washington.

Since **union dues cannot be used to support candidates for political office, NALC relies 100% on member contributions to the LCPF**, which in turn helps us support those on Capitol Hill who defend the issues that matter most to us. Our PAC brings together in Washington strong letter carrier advocates—from all political parties—who are dedicated to helping to defend a strong USPS that provides universal, innovative and affordable service.

—*nalc.org under Government Affairs*

Contact our Branch office with questions about how you can contribute.

From the Treasurer's Desk – 28th Edition

(Continued from page 7)

Example: Carrier John is injured on the job at 2:30 PM. He immediately calls to notify his supervisor that he is unable to continue and needs medical attention. Upon arriving at the station, he is able to fill out the CA-1, then obtained a signed CA-16 for treatment and a CA-17. John was able to drive himself and went directly to an emergency room for treatment. John arrived at 3:30 PM and was taken back to the examination area to begin tests. John begins tour at 7:30 AM and ends tour at 4 PM. John is on the Overtime Desired List (ODL) and was given a one-hour trip/piece in the morning. His end tour this day then would have been 5 PM. Back at the emergency room, John is being treated and gets released (with restrictions) at 6:30 PM.

- 1) Does John get paid until 6:30 PM?
- 2) Does John get paid only his 8 hours for the day (7:30 AM-4 PM)?
- 3) Should John get paid until 5 PM since that is the time he would have worked till, had he not received medical attention?
- 4) Is John entitled to any overtime?

Answers: 1) No, 2) No, 3) Yes, and 4) Yes.

John should be paid what he would have worked had he not been injured on-the-job: eight hours at the regular rate and one hour at the overtime rate.

Quick Hits: Information you should know

We must pay attention to what is happening...

Senate introduced anti-privatization resolution

March 27, Sens. Gary Peters (D-MI) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK) introduced a Senate resolution (S.Res. 147) that calls on Congress to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the federal government and is not subject to privatization.

Four senators joined the bipartisan leads as original co-sponsors:

Sens. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Susan Collins (R-ME), Thom Tillis (R-NC) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH).

The Senate version is identical to the House version (H.Res. 70), which was introduced by Reps. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and Nick LaLota (R-NY) in January and currently has 180 co-sponsors.

Letter carriers take great pride in the work they do, providing universal service to every address in the nation, NALC President Brian L. Renfroe said. Every member of Congress represents constituents who depend on the Postal Service. I urge every representative to sign on to this resolution.

For more than 250 years, the Postal Service has been a cornerstone of our nation, connecting every household and business across the country, Sen. Peters said. Any efforts to undermine the Postal Service's independence or privatize it would jeopardize affordable, universal mail service and harm the millions of Americans—especially veterans, small business owners, and rural communities—who rely on the Postal Service every day. This resolution reaffirms our commitment to keeping the Postal Service independent and self-sustaining, ensuring it continues to serve as a vital lifeline for all Americans.

In a state as vast as Alaska, with many remote communities only accessible by air or water, the USPS serves as an essential government agency, that keeps postal services affordable for Alaskans, Sen. Sullivan said. I am glad to work with my colleagues from other rural states on this resolution to oppose the privatization of the USPS and ensure that this critical agency remains focused on its statutory requirement to reliably deliver mail to every household, no matter how remote.

—March 27, 2025, *nalc.org*

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

We all had to start sometime



This article submission comes by way of Carrier **Mark Lash** in Interbay. It seems that Carrier Lash has a prospective letter carrier on his route that has

befriended him and gave him a letter which we are re-printing here:

*My name is **Santiago Ramirez-Norris**, and I am five years old.*

I love to wear my costumes. Right now, my favorite thing is to dress up as a mailman and deliver mail in my jeep.

My mailman is awesome because he is so nice, and he always says Hi to me and my parents. He made my day when he took a picture with me, and he let me see his mail car from up close.

I also love painting pictures and mailing them to my family. When I grow up, I want to be many things, like a mailman and a construction worker. My parents tell me I could be

whatever I want to be as long as I work hard at it, and it makes me happy.

Thank you to all the mailmans in the world.

Santiago

As you can see there is a bond between this young man and his letter carrier, and that bond is strengthened by kindness and being friendly. Who knows, this may lead to a future letter carrier who does great things for the Postal Service in the future.

Remember...

We all had to start sometime.

Keep up the good work and we look forward to seeing you, **Santiago**, carrying mail for the Postal Service in the future!

Brian Obst
President

Just for the Health of It

Letter carriers spend a lot of time on their feet. Standing and casing is one factor. As the duties and expectations of letter carriers' work changes, we find that walking is becoming an even greater part of the job. Whether doing walkup deliveries or park and loops, carriers are spending more time on their feet. At the end of the day our feet hurt and we assume it's just part of the job. There is one thing we can do to reduce foot discomfort. A visit to a podiatrist (foot doctor) can get you a custom functional orthotic insert that will greatly relieve foot pain and make walking much easier.

The NALC-HBP has excellent benefits

with letter carrier's foot health in mind. The plan allows **two** pairs of custom functional orthotics annually and will pay 85% of the plan allowance without a maximum plan payment amount (after calendar year deductible). For CDHP members, the plan will pay 80% of the plan allowance without a maximum plan payment amount (after calendar year deductible).

Your podiatrist will examine your feet and create either a plaster mold or a virtual digital map of your feet. These will be sent off to a lab which will produce custom foot orthotics designed to support the contours of your feet. Once you have your custom foot

orthotics you will quickly notice the benefits they provide by distributing your weight evenly and properly: improved balance, improved movement, reduced back and knee pain, relieved heel pain and arch pressure, reduced muscle fatigue, and better motion control. You will be surprised how much better your feet will feel at the end of the day.

Here's to your health.....

Detlev



Detlev Aeppel
Health Benefit Rep.
Branch 599

Rally to Save USPS—NALC Branches 2008, 599, and 1477





March 23 in St. Petersburg

Don't stop! Take Action today! It's easy to contact your representatives at nalc.org/action

Oppose postal privatization and co-sponsor H. Res.70/S. Res. 147

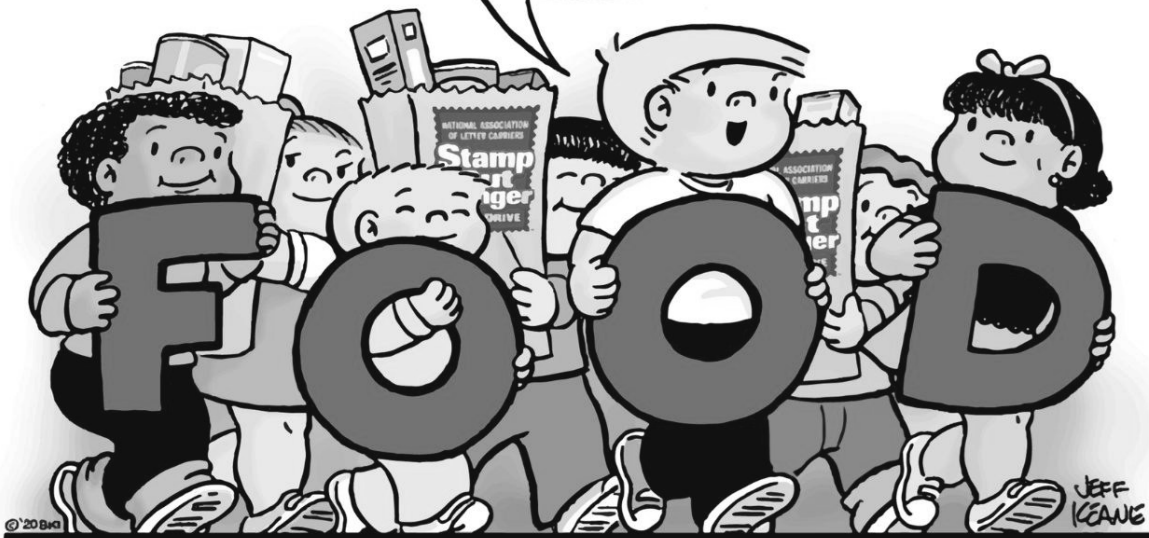
Privatizing the Postal Service would have far-reaching negative consequences nationwide, including:

- Jeopardizing the jobs of 640,000 postal employees, over 73,000 of whom are military veterans, and impacting the 7.9 million Americans in the mailing industry.
- Endangering the security of the nation's mail system, threatening the safe delivery of prescription drugs, money, and election mail.
- Slashing service quality and hiking prices beyond affordability.
- Potentially ceasing delivery for America's rural and low-income communities, negatively impacting nearly all 50 states in some form, but especially large, less-populous regions.

Reps. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and Nick LaLota (R-NY) introduced H. Res.70 and Sens. Gary Peters (D-MI) and Dan Sullivan (R-AK) introduced S.Res. 147, which calls on Congress to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the federal government and not subject to privatization.



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FAMILIES THIS
YEAR!



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National Partners



Let's Talk about Safety and seatbelts

There have been many stand up talks about seatbelt safety over the years but now there is a report that has come out, specifically showing when a seatbelt is *not* engaged in the Pro-Master vans and the Mercedes Metris vans while the vehicles are in motion. The device that is being used for this data is most likely the telematics installed in all the vehicles. Now when the Union was given notice about this device being installed, the explanation was that this device was for maintenance purposes only, but now it is apparent that it is being used to monitor other things as well, so let's talk about seatbelt safety.

First off, understand that it is still the responsibility of management to verify if a seatbelt is indeed being worn or not with a visual conformation and that nothing has changed in the handbooks and manuals. **If any corrective action comes from the monitoring of these devices, it will be addressed through the grievance process, but it is pertinent that you are wearing your seatbelts.** Seatbelts have saved countless lives over the years, and

nothing is more important than your life. I have heard arguments with carriers saying, *It takes me more time* and *it is so uncomfortable*, well I can tell you this, I highly doubt anyone would trade their life to be more comfortable or take less time on the route they are carrying. Carriers are paid by the hour, remember that, and to be clear, there are no real arguments for not wearing your seatbelt. So please, just make sure to wear your seatbelt.

Secondly, please keep in mind that **not only is this telematics device monitoring when the seatbelt is engaged, but also when it has been disengaged.** One of the things that have been noticed is that when a seatbelt has gone all day while a carrier has been delivering mail and the seatbelt has not been disengaged once, which could mean that the carrier is potentially riding on top of the seatbelt. If you get into an accident and you are not in the seat and the seatbelt is still engaged, that is going to be a hard argument to say that you were wearing the seatbelt properly.

Lastly, just because the telematics device is saying that your seatbelt is engaged or disengaged does not mean that these devices cannot give faulty readings. They are electronic devices like your scanner and your cell phone, so they are not always right, but you best believe that management is getting emails to go and observe the carriers on the report. That's just a little something to keep in mind.

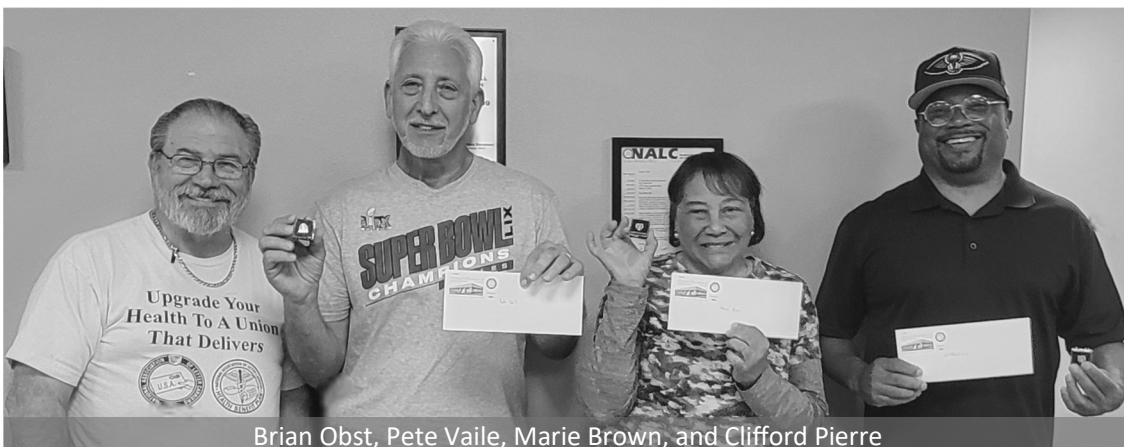
In closing, I cannot stress enough the importance of wearing your seatbelt. I have worked in the Postal Service for going on 26 years now and in my 20th year as a carrier I have seen many things which have involved seatbelts not being worn. Please, carriers, keep in mind what the cost is from not wearing your seatbelt, not only to you but the ones that depend on you coming home.

JD



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

Vaile, Brown, and Pierre Retired!



Brian Obst, Pete Vaile, Marie Brown, and Clifford Pierre

President Obst presented **Pete Vaile** [Hilldale], **Marie Brown** [Interbay], and **Clifford Pierre** [TCA] with their retirement pin and gratuity at our April meeting. **Congratulations!**

NALC

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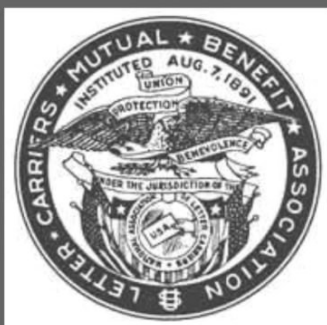
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BONITA LATTIMORE

MBA/NSBA
Representative

(813)-756-9676



Memorial Day



Memorial Day is an American holiday honoring those who have died in the nation's wars. It originated during the American Civil War when citizens placed flowers on the graves of those who had been killed in battle.

After World War I, as the day came to be observed in honor of those who had died in all U.S. wars, its name changed from Decoration Day to Memorial Day. Since 1971, Memorial

Day has been observed on the last Monday in May.

Memorial Day is observed with the laying of a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, and by religious services, parades, and speeches nationwide. Flags, insignia, and flowers are placed on the graves of veterans in local cemeteries.

As a veteran from a military family, I feel somber for the loss of all those who perished while serving their country and always take time to remember those who passed on Memorial Day each year. I feel it is important not to forget the sacrifice made by so many to help preserve the freedoms we enjoy in this country.

I saw a political cartoon that really hit home for me, and I contacted the artist for permission to reprint his art in our newsletter and he obliged stating, *I'd be honored for you guys to reprint the cartoon.* So please view and **Remember as deeply as those who can't forget!**

(some information taken from Encyclopedia Britannica)

Brian Obst
President

Attention Federal Workers!

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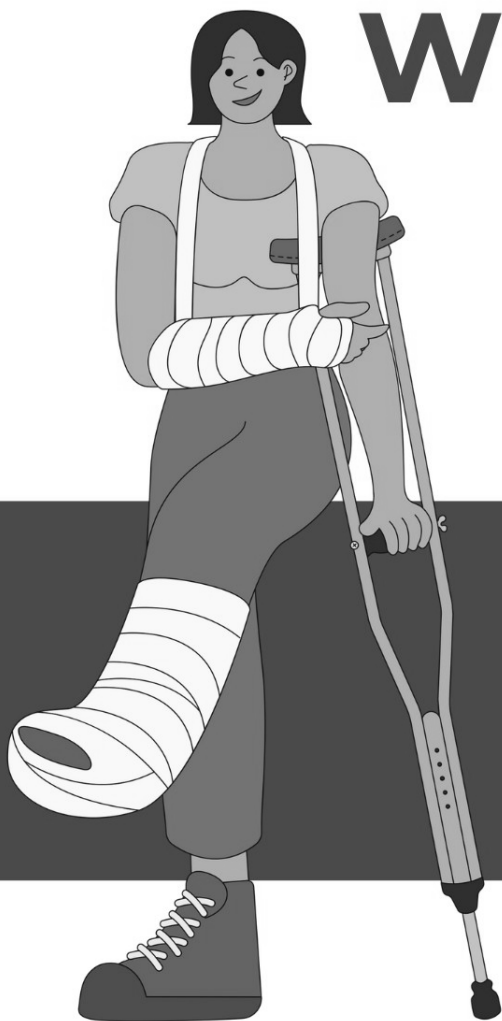
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The Villages, Tampa, Lady Lake, Wildwood & Ocala

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,

$$\text{CA-1} + \text{CA-16} = \text{CA-17}$$

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.



National Association of Letter Carriers
599 Tampa Florida Inc.
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