



Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume 6 - Issue 10

A.R. "Tony" Huerta - NALC Branch 599

Tampa, Florida

October 2007

President's Report

OWCP Facts Once Again

I have recently become involved in a number of cases representing Branch 599 letter carriers who have been injured on the job and are having difficulties dealing with the Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP). One of my duties as branch president is to assist and represent branch members in the filing of the proper forms, and appealing OWCP decisions if necessary, to ensure carriers' rights designated by OWCP. These rights are granted and protected under the Federal Employee Compensation Act (FECA). In order for you to be protected however, you must follow certain procedures, rules and time limits.

It has been some time since I have written regarding this subject, and lately a number of carriers have called because their claims have been denied. In some of these cases the claims were denied because more medical evidence was requested by OWCP and either not enough evidence was provided or it did not go into enough detail.

When you are injured on the job, there are a

number of things that you need to do to ensure that you will receive the care and compensation that you are entitled to under the OWCP for federal employees. If you fail to do these things properly, or within the proscribed time limits, you may forfeit some of these entitlements.

First, it is your responsibility to notify your supervisor immediately when you are involved in any type of accident, whether it is a vehicle accident or an industrial accident. Then you must fill out a form *CA-1 "Notice of Traumatic Injury"*. Your supervisor should give you this form to complete; if not then you must ask for it. After completion make sure that your supervisor gives you a receipt of filing that will show the date and location where the injury occurred, as well as the date the form was filed. Although the employee has up to three years to file this form, it should be filed immediately to ensure that you will receive *Continuation of Pay (COP)*. The USPS will continue to pay the wages of an injured employee after the first three days for up to 45 calendar days, *provided medical evidence is submitted within ten days of the filing of the CA-1*. Leave used for the first three days will be restored if you are out of work for fourteen days.

When you are injured on the job, you have the right to go to the doctor of your choice for treatment. If you can not be seen by your doctor immediately, you may go to a hospital emergency room for initial treatment, and then go to your choice of physician for further treatment. Prior to going to either the emergency room, or the doctor of your choice, you will be given a *Form CA-16*, signed by your supervisor. This form authorizes medical treatment for a period of 60 days. Management must give you this form if you file a *CA-1* within seven days of the injury. Once you choose a physician, however, you must remain under his/her care unless referred by him/her to another doctor, or you get approval from OWCP. If you file a claim for traumatic injury and the claim is subsequently denied, any COP that has been paid to you must be paid back in the form of sick leave, annual leave, or money.

These initial procedures are extremely important. I have recently been involved in
(continued on page 4)



by Jim Good

President - Branch 599

Official Notice of Nominations and Election of Officers of Branch 599, Tampa, Florida

Nominations

Nominations for the election of officers of Branch 599 will be held at the regular Branch meetings on October 4, 2007 and November 1, 2007, at 7:30 p.m. at the Union Hall, 3003 West Cypress St, Tampa, FL 33609. Candidates must accept nominations at the time made or, if absent, in writing. Candidates may accept nominations for only one office. Self nominations are acceptable.

Nominations will be held for the following Branch offices: President, Executive Vice-President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms, Three (3) Trustees, MBA/NSBA Representative, Health Benefit Representative, Director of Retirees, and Two (2) Labor/Management Representatives. The terms of office will be for three (3) years beginning January 19, 2008.

Election

The election will be conducted by secret ballot on December 6, 2007 at the Union Hall, 3003 West Cypress St, Tampa, Florida. The polls will be open during the times decided at the regular branch meeting on October 4, 2007. Any member who for any reason will be unable to vote on December 6th may vote by absentee ballot. Requests for absentee ballots should be made by telephoning the Union Hall at (813) 875-0599 (8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) beginning November 2, 2007 through November 21, 2007.

Branch 599 Officers

PRESIDENT	Jim Good	(813) 960-3759, cell 417-8877
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT	Detlev Aeppel	(813) 907-9685, cell 505-7914
VICE-PRESIDENT	Gilbert Cabanas	(813) 855-0516, cell 597-7396
RECORDING SECRETARY	Cindy Perez	(813) 766-1220
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Tony Diaz	(813) 598-9635
TREASURER	Michael Anderson	(813) 681-5688
TRUSTEE (Chairman)	Henry Dupree	(813) 621-6471
TRUSTEE	Jose Oliva	(813) 873-2747
TRUSTEE	Terry Franklin	(813) 657-9690
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS	J.C. Howard	(813) 621-1976
MBA / NSBA	Albert Guice	(813) 621-7931
HEALTH BENEFITS	Lance Jones	(813) 220-1292
DIRECTOR OF RETIREES	John Gebo	(813) 985-5474, cell 503-1256
LABOR - MANAGEMENT	Eric Fleming	(813) 310-8274
LABOR - MANAGEMENT	Brian Obst	(727) 507-0135

Branch 599 Shop Stewards

Brandon	33510	Terry Franklin	(813) 657-9690
Brandon	33511	Phil Chirico	(813) 657-3180
Carrollwood	33618	Freddie Nimphius	(813) 263-7895
Commerce	33602	Rickey Robinson	(727) 409-1911
Forest Hills	33612	Warren Sumlin	(813) 486-7612
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Alan Robinson	(813) 843-9762
Hilldale	33614	Sam Santilli	(813) 215-7595
Hilldale Annex	33634	Bill Mandikas	(813) 263-8636
Hyde Park	33606	John Livingston	(813) 253-3651
Interbay	33611	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
Interbay	33629	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
MacDill	33608	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
Palm River	33619	J.C. Howard	(813) 621-1976
Plant City	33565	Terry Franklin	(813) 657-9690
Port Tampa	33616	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
Produce	33610	Eric Fleming	(813) 310-8274
Ruskin / Sun City Center	33570	Jack Hencoski	(813) 685-9034
Seminole Heights	33603	Tony Diaz	(813) 872-1542
Sulphur Springs	33604	Matt Kokich	(813) 431-3686
Tampa Carrier Annex	33607	Mike Sovan	(813) 872-0709
Tampa Carrier Annex	33609	Dennis Lorenzo	(813) 966-3989
Temple Terrace	33617	Frank Pereira	(813) 610-1801
Town & Country	33615	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
Ybor City	33605	Detlev Aeppel	(813) 505-7914

Presidents Emeritus

Michael Anderson Orbe Andux
James Butler Don Thomas
Garland Tickle

A.R. "Tony" Huerta NALC Branch 599
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The National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 599, 3003 W. Cypress Street, Tampa, FL 33609-1617, 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. All articles are subject to editing and revision at the discretion of the publisher & editor. All articles must be submitted no later than the fifth of the month. Submit articles as .txt, .doc or .wpd documents attached to email sent to newsletter@nalc599.com.

Jim Good - Publisher
Kit Kelley - Editor

RETIREES BREAKFAST
(In Tampa)
First Monday of Every Month
9:00 AM at
The Coffee Cup
4407 N. Hubert
in Drew Park

RETIREES BREAKFAST
(In Brandon)
Second Tuesday of Every Month
8:00 AM at
Buddy Freddy's
134 Gornto Lake Rd S.
in Brandon

Read the *Tampa Letter Carrier* online at
<http://www.nalc599.com/newsletter.htm>

Executive Vice-President's Report

Not As Simple As It Seems

On the surface it would seem that compliance with the overtime provisions of Article 8 as it applies to maximization and forced overtime would be a simple matter. Before management may force a non-ODL carrier to carry overtime on his own assignment all the carriers on the ODL must be maximized to 10 hours. Before a non-ODL carrier or a Work Assignment List carrier may be forced to carry overtime off of his own assignment the ODL must be maximized to 12 hours.

Article 8 has remained mostly unchanged since undergoing a major overhaul in 1984 and 1988. That's when V time, a.k.a. penalty overtime pay, and the work assignment list were incorporated into Article 8. If you were a letter carrier in those pre-DPS days you will remember that letter mail was often measured by the "ledge". Most carriers cased between one and two ledges of mail on a typical day. Flats were not cased into a vertical flat case as they are now. Flats were cased into holdouts and then pulled from the

holdout and fanned out on the ledge and placed into delivery sequence. In those days two and a half or three hours of office time were quite common. If a route had to be split ODL carriers were authorized to start early since there was plenty of office work that needed to be done on the vacant route. Six o'clock or earlier starting times were not that uncommon since the majority of the mail was usually distributed to the routes by that time.

Today the workload is configured differently. With DPS approaching 90% and the increased efficiency of the vertical flats case most routes have less than two hours of office time on most days. Although automation provides us with most of our letters in delivery sequence we receive this sequenced mail much later in the morning. Consequently we often see starting times rolled back to seven thirty and sometimes even eight o'clock! With less office work available it is growing more difficulty to convince management to let us start early.

With a seven thirty starting time 10 hour maximization is not reached until six o'clock at night and 12 hour maximization is not reached until 8 o'clock. Less than 2 years ago

by **Detlev Aeppel**

Executive Vice-President - Branch 599

letter carriers out delivering mail until seven and eight at night was common. The union grieved and fought against this practice as unsafe for our members and undesirable for our customers.

It would not make sense and possibly seem hypocritical if we now insist that carriers be required to deliver mail until seven or eight at night so as to be maximized.

This is not to say that each and every instance of forced overtime should not be investigated and possibly grieved. Stewards must still be alert and diligently verify that the ODL was properly maximized to the extent possible. If the ODL was not maximized to the fullest extent then the ODL should be paid for this failure on management's part. If these failures become commonplace then the non-ODL letter carriers should also be compensated an extra 50% rate of pay for the forced overtime.

In Solidarity....



Tampa Letter Carriers Board of Directors Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Obst. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as read. The treasurer's report was given by John Gebo. Building managers report by Mike Anderson. The kick plates are installed on the doors. The plumbers will meet with Mike first week in September to discuss the drain from the men's bathroom to the street. A discussion was had about raising the rental fee for the hall to \$1200.00 per rental. Donation Committee report by Adam Noble. Recommendation to donate \$500.00 to Lifepath Hospice. Discussion. Passed.

Old Business: Motion made that TLC back the bylaw proposed at branch meeting regarding the work stoppage fund. Discussion. Passed. Motion to give Leon back the \$20.00 deducted from his paycheck for damage to door. Discussion. Withdrawn. A motion was made to borrow \$100,000 at the best available rate for a five year period to pay for the remodeling of the bathrooms. Discussion. Passed. Motion to adjourn. Passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Branch 599 Labor Day Picnic 2007



ARSLAN UNIFORMS

Bill & Shirley Moran

Retired Letter Carrier Branch 1477 St. Petersburg

Honorary Member Branch 599 Tampa

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President's Report (from page 1)

cases where proper paperwork was not filled out in a timely manner and, as a result, the carrier forfeited his right to COP. When this happens the carrier may still qualify for compensation for lost work hours and paid medical bills but may have to wait four to six weeks or longer to receive that compensation.

Do not trust your supervisor to inform you of your rights and responsibilities. If you have any questions or concerns when you are injured on the job, ask your shop steward or call the union office for advice. It is always best to play it safe and see a doctor, or go to the emergency room immediately, if you are injured on the job.

I have also received phone calls from carriers who are reluctant to submit medical documentation for sick leave or work restrictions to their supervisors. ***You do not have to submit any medical documentation to your supervisor. Medical documentation for sick leave should be submitted to the Medical Unit, USPS, P.O. Box 39451, Tampa,***

FL 33630-9451. Medical documentation for OWCP cases involving on-the-job injuries, or industrial accidents, should be submitted to Injury Compensation, P. O. Box 39443, Tampa, FL 33630. FMLA documentation should be submitted to the FMLA coordinator at the USPS, 5201 Spruce St, Tampa, FL 33630.

If you follow these procedures from the date of your injury, it will make the entire process of dealing with OWCP go much more smoothly and ensure that you are covered for any future medical bills that may arise resulting from your approved case.

I want to say thanks to Terry Franklin for a job well done. Terry was in charge of the Labor Day Picnic again this year and it turned out great. Three hundred and seventy-five members, families and friends signed up and I think they all came. Its great to see this many friends get together and celebrate everything our union stands for: *working together to make our life at work better.*

Branch 599 Labor Day Picnic 2007



Unionism

Grievances & the Dispute Resolution Process - Article 15

You are on the overtime list and you feel that management has violated the National Agreement and caused you not to be worked overtime, when available, but allowed a non-ODL carrier to work trips in overtime instead. What do you do? This is a potential grievance situation and you need to ask to see your steward to file a grievance on the issue.

Most of us at some time or another have been faced with situations like this and have filed grievances with our steward to resolve the issue. The thing most of the carriers wonder about is just what happens to the grievance in the Dispute Resolution Process as laid out in Article 15 of the National Agreement. This article will provide some insight into the workings of the Dispute Resolution Process (DRP) as Article 15 describes. Please feel free to get hold of a copy of the JCAM and review the information held within as it is the main reference for this series of articles.

When the grievant files the grievance with the steward, a written statement should be obtained for the case file. This statement should lay out in as much detail as possible the issue leading to the grievance. Now you have filed your grievance with your steward and he/she is beginning the investigative process. In this case (an overtime issue), the steward might ask for copies of clock ring records for carriers, TACS Overtime alert reports, forced overtime logs for the quarter, curtailed mail reports for days in question, daily and weekly schedules, copies of ODL signup logs for the quarter in question, and other information (each case differs on the type of information needed). The steward will also want to interview any parties to the issue at hand, such as the supervisor, the grievant, the non-ODL carrier, and possibly others, to obtain all the relevant information for the issue at hand.

All of the above work is taking place during the fourteen day time period for a grievance to be processed, starting from the time when the steward knew or reasonably should have known there was a grievance. Simply stated this means if you get a letter of warning on September 1, we have until

September 15 to investigate and have the grievance heard at the *Informal A Hearing*. This means if you got the letter on Sept. 1 but you didn't ask to see your steward until Sept. 10, you have shortened the steward's investigation and preparation window to only five days. *I think this illustrates the importance of requesting to see your steward as soon as you feel you have an issue you want to file a grievance on.*

There are guidelines for extensions of time limits but it is generally best to try to conform to the fourteen day window when possible. However, it is important to remember that *we* are the granting party for extensions, not management. So do not allow management to bully you into an extension simply because they want one. If an extension is to be granted, it should be for good cause, not because management doesn't want to allow you to work on a grievance at that time.

The steward has now completed his/her investigation and is now ready to hear the case at the first step of the *DRP - Informal A*. This hearing takes place with the immediate supervisor and is done off the work-room floor in private. The grievant is entitled to be present at this hearing if they so desire. During the hearing there should be no interruptions. Management should make arrangements for a relief so the hearing can be conducted properly without interruption. During the *Informal A* hearing, if the case is a discipline issue, management has the burden and they must present their case first. Our job is to simply defeat all the arguments presented by management; nothing more nothing less. Management has a failing because they usually come to these hearings unprepared as they fail to read the proper procedure for an *Informal A* hearing. If the case is a contractual question, the burden is on the union and we must present our contentions first and management must attempt to defeat our arguments.

Whatever the issue is, it is important that the steward take good notes of what is said, discussed, offered and presented, so that, in the event of not being able to resolve the grievance, the package can be properly prepared for the next step in the *DRP - Formal A hearing*.

It is very important that all stewards and supervisors understand that both parties have the authority and ability to settle grievances at the *Informal A* level. There is no

prohibition on either side seeking guidance prior to reaching a decision at *Informal A* as long as both parties understand that the final decision lies with each of them.

Should both parties arrive at the decision to settle the grievance, the settlement should be written up and signed off prior to the end of the hearing. Don't let the supervisor leave and get back to it later as many times management use this as a delay tactic and find ways not to be available to sign settlements later, which only delays the resolution for the grievant. After the settlement document is filled out and signed, the form 8190 should be filled out and signed showing the resolved decision and what the resolve was, as management needs this document to pay any monetary settlement.

In the event that the parties are unable to reach a settlement on the issue, the 8190 should be filled out in blocks 1-13b and initialed by both the supervisor and the steward, showing that there was a hearing on the date in block 11, and then the file needs to be forwarded to the next step in the process, the *Formal A hearing*. Many stewards hear both informal and formal hearings. However, if you do not, you need to contact your *Formal A* representative as soon as possible to deliver the files for the case to allow him/her to begin preparations for the appeal to *Formal A* hearing and the *Formal A* hearing itself.

This has been a general overview of the *Informal A* portion of the *DRP* and it is not all inclusive so please review the *JCAM* Article 15 and contact your steward or branch office for more information. You may also contact me through the union office, or via my phone numbers listed in this publication.

Next month, we'll look at the *Formal A* appeal and hearing process. Remember, knowledge is the key.

Until next month,
Brian Obst - Chief Steward



by Brian Obst

Chief Steward - Branch 599

**Branch Meeting
Thursday, October 4
7:30 PM
at the Union Hall**

A Point of Personal Privilege

by Leslie Ray Garcia

Inconsistencies

During the 2000 Presidential campaign the true bias of the media raised its ugly head. Many of Democratic Vice President Al Gore's mis-statements portrayed him as a liar. However, Republican Governor George W. Bush's partial truths were deemed as verbal gaffes and described him as dumb but honest. In 2004 the media allowed an organization called the "Swift Boat Veterans" to spread lies and innuendoes about Democratic Senator John F. Kerry's Vietnam service record even though the Department of Defense records validated Kerry's decorations of three purple hearts, one bronze star and one silver star. Incumbent Republican President George W. Bush's military record wasn't even investigated.

On April 26, 1999, former President George H.W. Bush stated, "I have nothing but contempt and anger for those who betray the trust by exposing the name of our sources. They are, in my view, the most insidious of traitors."

In 2003 the media reported that former Ambassador Joseph Wilson's wife, Valerie Plame, was a covert CIA agent. Scooter Libby, Chief of Staff for Vice President Dick Cheney, told New York Times reporter Judith Miller about Plame's CIA status. Richard Armitage, Deputy Secretary of State, informed Robert Novak, as of July 8, 2003. Former Time magazine reporter

Matthew Cooper, when asked, "Did Rove say she worked at the agency on WMD?", replied "Yes." The media has seemingly ignored these facts and have attempted to rewrite history by removing Rove's and Libby's culpability in this breach of national security. September 30, 2003, President George W. Bush stated, "If there's a leak in my administration, I want to know who it is. If the person has violated law, that person will be taken care of." The President did not lie on this issue because he *did take care* of the person who violated law, Scooter Libby, by commuting his 30 month sentence. What happened to bringing back to politics honesty, integrity, and moral & family values?

The 2004 Presidential election ballots for the state of Ohio have finally been made available. What seems to be a coincidence is that only about one third could be found. According to Ohio county election officials, the other two thirds have been destroyed, without regard to Ohio state law forbidding the destruction of ballots until 22 months after Presidential or Congressional elections. Most of the destruction was done in spite of a United States District Court order to preserve all ballots until after a civil rights lawsuit was finalized. Cliff Arnebeck, a Columbus attorney stated, "On the one hand, people will now say you can't prove the fraud, but the rule of law says that when evidence is destroyed it creates a presumption that people who destroyed evidence did so because it would have proved the contention of the other side." The White House apparently considers this a minor incident but the finger prints of fraud seem to

indicate a repeat of the 2000 Florida debacle. Could this be why Bush won again? Documents are being disclosed that contain details describing how the Bush-Cheney 2004 campaign officials planned to stop minorities from voting on election day. E-mails show Bush-Cheney campaign and RNC staffers compiled voter challenge lists for battleground states of probable Democratic voters in a minimum of five states: New Mexico, Ohio, Florida, Nevada and Pennsylvania. One Republican operative wrote, "We can do this in NV, FL, PA, and NM because we have a list to run against the Absentee Ballot requests and should." This is called "*voter caging*" which is against federal law but it has not been enforced. I wonder why?

In November 2007 this country will have approximately one year till the 2008 presidential and congressional elections. What kind of chicanery will the media allow to take place in 2008? The media continues to berate the Democratic majority because of the inability to pass legislation by the 2006 elected Democrats. The silence of the media with regard to the Republican minority's stone walling and filibustering tactics is deafening. The minority refuses to allow an up and down vote on issues concerning the economy, health care, education, election reform and the war in Iraq. Once again I ask, "*What legislation that benefits the poor and working class have the Republicans passed over the objections of Democrats?*"

"The job of a citizen is to keep his mouth open."
Gunter Grass



Donations Committee Report

by Adam Noble

Each month the Donations Committee of the Tampa Letter Carriers, Inc., recommends to the Board of Directors that a donation to be given to a local (Tampa, Brandon, Ruskin, or Sun City Center) charity. The donation will be used by that charity to help in the local community.

We all know of local charities that are working hard to give a hand up to those who needs help from time to time. The Donations Committee would like to know of these charities.

If you wish for them to know that we may be able to help them, have them

write to:

T.L.C. Donations Committee
3003 W. Cypress St.
Tampa, FL 33609-1617

Please include a contact person and a phone number. Thank you.

Personal Side Bar:

Anyone who clings to the historically untrue - and thoroughly immoral - doctrine that violence never settles anything I would advise to conjure up the ghosts of Napoleon Bonaparte and the duke of Wellington and let them debate it. The ghost of Hitler would

referee. Violence, naked force, has settled more issues in history than any other factor, and the contrary opinion is wishful thinking at its worst. Breeds that forgot this basic truth have always paid for it with their lives and their freedoms.

Robert A. Heinlein



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Branch 599 Labor Day Picnic 2007



TAMPA LETTER CARRIERS PRESENT BINGO

COME JOIN THE FUN

EVERY WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY

DOORS OPEN AT 5:30
GAMES START AT 6:30

AT THE TAMPA LETTER CARRIERS HALL

3003 W. CYPRESS ST.

TAMPA, FL. 33609

813-877-4785

Around The Horn

Secretary-Treasurer Training

I wanted to thank my Brothers and Sisters in Branch 599 for allowing me to attend a very informative Secretary-Treasurer Training in the Nation's Capitol, Washington D.C. on August 20 & 21 with Mike Anderson. Class subjects included taxes, Dept of Labor Reporting, payroll systems, fiduciary duties, accounting controls, explanation of forms, reporting to IRS, Bonding and Branch Record keeping. We also had a lengthy question and answer session concerning Branch dues and the problems Financial Secretary's are encountering throughout the country. NALC Officers and the top CPA on Union Law conducted the classes. Classes were filled to capacity and included Branch Presidents, V.P.'s, Financial Secretaries, Treasurers and Trustees. The training was very detailed and was designed to combat the scrutiny the Dept. of Labor has imposed on Labor Unions across the Nation. These pressures are a direct result of the Bush Administration and their anger over the NALC's failure to support the Republican Party during the elections. The Dept. of Labor's additional forms and guidelines are simply an attempt to keep

the NALC and all Labor Unions buried in paper work, thus preoccupied from performing union duties. Two very important topics covered were fiduciary duties and accounting controls; both are aimed at eliminating fraud and embezzlement within an organization or institution. Fiduciary duties included holding Branch monies and property solely for the benefit of the organization and its members. To manage, invest and expand Branch money and property in accordance with the union constitution and bylaws. To refrain, in any manner from dealing with the union as an adverse party. Accounting or Internal Controls maintain the effective and efficient accounting processes designed to safeguard the assets of an organization. To ultimately ensure the quality of the financial information our members can rely on. Combining the board of directors (executive board), trustees and the flow of information through open lines of communication, Branch 599 has a solid Controlled Environment in place to insure the integrity and ethical values are upheld. Finally, I had a few hours before my flight and was fortunate enough to tour both the Postal Museum and our NALC Headquarters. The two are must see if you ever visit the D.C. area. NALC Headquarters, located

just across from the Capitol Building, offers tours that include stops to the offices of our National Officers. While touring we were able to visit with Executive V.P. Fred Rolando, V.P. Gary Mullins and Asst. Secretary-Treasurer George Mignosi. It gave me great pride to sit and speak with these gentlemen, they all appeared very proud of the new tentative contract and all acknowledged the impact the Membership had on changing the course of the negotiations. There is a huge remodeling/ renovation project currently underway throughout the building that is about 75% complete. All of you would be proud of our building, make it a point to visit. The Postal Museum, located a few blocks away inside the D.C. Main Postal Facility, was an awesome historical experience. You are able to travel back in time with exhibits, artifacts and narrations and get a real sense of how mail delivery began and its progressions through time. It is truly amazing the foresight of the pioneers in the late 1800's and early 1900's that commenced the development of the Postal Service as we know it today. Thanks again! Look forward to talking to you again on the next Around The Horn



Financial Secretary - Branch 599
by Tony Diaz



Letter Carriers you work hard for your money!

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And The Beat Goes On

by Ray Wallace

The Way It Was

Well, here we are again, another summer gone. 2007 and where did the time go? I feel sorry for our brother and sister letter carriers out there in this record breaking heat. We have all gone through it but it is still better than working in the cold and snow up north.

I remember when I was a carrier in New York, getting dressed in long johns, heavy material pants, long sleeve shirt. It was mandatory to wear a tie, too. I also wore the Ike jacket, a scarf for my neck and a heavy cap. You would get to the Post Office, put your clothes in your locker and start throwing your mail. The heat was on in the building and all you took off was your jacket and tie. You would be standing throwing mail and sweating like hell. When you were ready to go out, it took ten minutes to put all your clothes on and, for most it's impossible to wear gloves, so your face and hands were exposed to the cold freezing weather. Many times, with a heavy mail bag on your shoulder, you would have to walk across a long patch of ice, all the time praying you didn't fall. Another problem, if you lived away from where you worked and it was snowing all day, you would wonder if you were going to make the drive home okay through all that snow.

I remember, one time, walking in a blizzard and there was blowing snow all over and I had my head down and I walked right into a car. Let me explain that statement. Because of all the snow, this was a dead end street and the only safe place to walk was on the road. The

car was parked and there was no injury to me but I was really surprised.

At a loss of what to write about, I will tell you about my first experience with the Post Office and postal management. I was a Temporary Indefinite. This was in 1966. You took the Civil Service test and passed and were hired but you were lower than low. You had no rights at all and if postal management didn't like you, you could be fired at their whim and you had no rights at all. Even the union could not do anything for you. I stayed in that position for two years. Then I transferred to another office & became a PTF. In those days, there were no coffee breaks and no overtime and not much money to speak of. I was a clerk-carrier and did the work of both crafts. I worked a split shift from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and then 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. If a carrier called in sick, I then carried that route also. On a regular basis, I would sort the mail to the carriers in the a.m. then deliver to some businesses and make a collection run, then sort this collection into an outgoing case for the U.S.A., then cancel the mail in a machine where each stamp was cancelled with the name of the city I was working in. I would then pull down the bundle of mail for each city, tie it out with string and throw it into a #3, #2, or #1 size bag. Then I would lock the bag and all of it would be ready for a truck to pick it up. I also did the same for registered mail that was kept separate. I did everything but work the front counter. I delivered the parcels (carriers carried nothing over 2 lbs).

I will never forget, one Saturday going into the Post Office and there were Postal Inspectors all over. During the night someone had broken in the back door and there was a burned spot on

the floor in front of the safe where I'm sure they used a torch trying to open the safe. At that time, no one knew if they got in as it was jammed up and they had to get a safe expert in from New York City (we were 30 miles north of the city). The postmaster was sweating as he had not made the deposit to the bank. Well, the thieves did not get into the safe and all was intact. After that, the postmaster told me I had to make the deposit at 5:30 every night. I then started to think, what if someone is watching me every night, I could get killed making the Post Office deposit. I asked the postmaster to ask the local police to pick me up and take me. Then, every night at 5:30 p.m., the police car would take me to the bank. Well, guess what. Somehow upper postal management found out and said local police will not take a postal employee to the bank. Then I refused and someone else had to do it.

There is one story I will never forget. I had a two hour auxiliary to deliver, all walking. I would bring the mail out in my car, drop off one relay, park my car and start walking with the mail bag on my shoulder. Almost to the end, I was walking back to my car and the postmaster, on his way home, saw me and waved. This was fifteen minutes to noon. I was off at noon. I got in my car and drove home. At 2 p.m. I went back to the Post Office and the postmaster called me to his desk and told me that he asked the clerk if Wallace came back to the Post Office before noon. The clerk said no. The postmaster told me, "You are on the clock until noon. You don't go home, you come



(continued on page 10)

Things You Should Know

Union Team Work

First, allow me to congratulate you on a well deserved five year contract. This one is special and very different from all the other contracts that have been signed since 1971. The other contracts were achieved through tough negotiations with final decisions from arbitrators. This one was accomplished by great leadership, backed by great team work.

Since formal negotiations began August 6th, all meetings seemed doomed because of the Postal Service's blatant efforts to outsource our jobs. Then President Young began his plan to inform Congress and the public on this new way of delivering their mail. The E-activists began their job by phoning, writing, and finally hundreds of picketers spreading this information across the country.

Then a wonderful coincidence occurred on July the 12th when the Postal Service wanted to begin negotiations again. Do you think the Postal Service might have been influenced by Congress? This was the greatest display of team work that I have ever witnessed.

Union and team work means working

towards one common goal. Not only did this action force the Postal Service back to the bargaining table, it also cancelled Postal Service plans for other CDS routes.

Your general raises with the COLA adjustments should amount to over \$8,000 during the life of this contract. Since 1971, our general raises amounted to about \$19,000, with over \$20,000 in COLA adjustments. So the COLAs are a large part of our total wages.

There will be no more casuals in our craft. They will be replaced with TE workers. The TEs will be employed for 359 days at a time, with the same starting pay as the PTF. The Postal Service can also employ TE workers in areas affected by the FSS machines. These flat sorting devices are not scheduled in Tampa until 2011.

This new contract protects against any outsourcing in city carrier delivery units and will return CDS routes in all city carrier units. There is a 6 month moratorium on CDS routes where city and rural carriers exist.

Now, for the first time, a three day bereavement leave is written into the contract. Also, mutual exchanges will be permitted between a regular carrier and a T6 carrier.

The DOIS settlement clarifies that DOIS is only to be used as a tool for estimating work

load; it does not change a carrier's reporting requirements. It cannot be used as a sole determiner of a carrier's leaving or returning times.

The wage increase will apply retroactively for total hours worked since November by active and retired carriers. Only city carriers in a pay status immediately prior to the effective date of the cash payment will be eligible for the \$686.

Many thanks to our national union leaders who share equal credit with our union team members. Remember, much good can happen when we stand together, alongside our union rural carriers.

Because our open shop is 92% organized nationally, there is room for new members. So, if you want to thank all these hard-working union members, why not join this great union?

Remember it does not cost to belong to this great union. It pays.

by **Gilbert Cabanas**

Vice-President - Branch 599



Beat Goes On *(from page 9)*

back here." This was from a postmaster who I knew spent at least five work hours every day at home. I couldn't believe that this was said to me, an excellent worker.

That taught me a valuable lesson. Unlike the private sector where they will say, "thanks" the more you do, the Post Office will just give you more to do.

The Postmaster never saw me again on his way home as I just walked slower.

Branch 599 Labor Day Picnic 2007



Branch 599 Labor Day Picnic 2007



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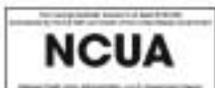
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