



Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume 8 - Issue 10

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

Tampa, Florida

October 2009

President's Report

by Jim Good

Retirement: Yes or No?

With the state of the economy nowadays, and the recent changes in the method of adjusting routes, more and more letter carriers are considering retirement. We all know that mail volume has dropped dramatically, resulting in the loss of a large number of routes. Management is trying to squeeze every minute out of the carriers, making the job much less attractive than in the past. Add to the mix the offer of early retirements and you have many carriers taking a hard look at the possibility of retiring.

When the NALC negotiated the IARAP process with the Postal Service, back in the beginning of 2009, the other choices were no raises, no COLA's and/or possible layoffs. With declining mail volume the postal service had to find a way to adjust routes quickly and efficiently. Six-day mail counts and adjustments were expensive and time consuming, not to mention stressful. So our new National President, Fred Rolando, (who was National Executive Vice-President at the time) introduced the process he had been working on for a long time; adjusting routes based on the carrier's own (proven) clock rings. He added to the formula the carrier's comments and a current 3999 (ride along). The results were promising, but I believe the process was rushed through with not enough time given for thought and

review.

Consequently, the MIARAP process was born. Similar to IARAP, this process had a scripted carrier consultation with the regular carrier and more time and thought given to the carrier's comments. We are just now seeing the results of this process, and although it looks like it is working in most cases, as far as the time goes, many carriers are dissatisfied with the territorial changes. And believe me, I understand. I delivered to the same people on my route for the twelve years prior to my being elected as your president. I know how I would have felt and reacted if these patrons were taken off of my route and I was assigned to other territory instead. But we also need to understand that when one or two routes are abolished at a station the results are up to sixteen hours of casing and delivery time added to the remaining routes. This, of course, will change the entire territorial alignment of the station. Not all carriers are happy with the results.

These new adjustment processes, and the resulting routes and working conditions caused by them, have some carriers starting to think; should I retire, or should I wait a little longer until the economy picks up. There are a few things that you need to inquire about and look into prior to making that decision. Number one; can I afford to live on about one-half of

what I am currently earning. I say one-half because even though you may not want to work overtime, I know that unless you have medical documentation on file you are working some overtime. You also have to look into health and life insurance. In order to carry these benefits into your retirement you must have had some kind of coverage for the five years immediately prior to your retirement. If you are a FERS employee you must also look into Social Security, and the possibility of receiving the FERS annuity supplement. What about the possibility of being penalized for retiring under age 62 without completing 30 years of service? As you can see, there are a number of things that you must consider before you apply for retirement. The union has a "Question & Answer booklet for CSRS and FERS employees, just give the union office a call and we'll mail one out to you. I have heard of a large number of recent retirees who have had to find a part-time job to supplement their annuity after retirement. Some have taken work for eight or nine dollars an hour, after giving up twenty-five dollars an hour working for the USPS. So think hard before filling out your paperwork, because once



President - Branch 599

(continued on page 5)

IN THIS ISSUE	
RUNNING WITH YOU.....	3
POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE.....	5
ARE WE HAVING FUN YET?.....	6
AROUND THE HORN.....	10

Official Notice of Nomination and Election of Delegates to the 2010 National Convention

Nominations will be held at the regular branch meetings on October 1st and November 5th, 2009, at the union hall at 3003 West Cypress St, Tampa, FL 33609, for delegates to the 2010 National Convention to be held in Anaheim, CA the week of August 9th through August 13th, 2010. Any member, in good standing, is eligible to be nominated. Elections, if necessary because of the number of nominees, will be held at the December 3rd branch meeting. In order to be a paid delegate the member must meet the qualifications in Article 5, Section 15 of the Branch By-laws.

Branch 599 Officers

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TRUSTEE	Terry Franklin	(813) 657-9690
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LABOR - MANAGEMENT	A. Sam Santilli	(813) 215-7595

Presidents Emeritus

Michael Anderson	Orbe Andux
Don Thomas	Garland Tickle

Branch 599 Shop Stewards

Brandon	33510	Terry Franklin	(813) 758-3061
Brandon	33511	Phil Chirico	(813) 657-3180
Carrollwood	33618	Eddie Berroth	(813) 493-5224
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Seminole Heights	33603	Tony Diaz	(813) 598-9635
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Tampa Carrier Annex	33607	Union Office	(813) 875-0599
Tampa Carrier Annex	33609	Dennis Lorenzo	(813) 966-3989
Temple Terrace	33617	Warren Sumlin	(813) 486-7612
Town & Country	33615	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
Town & Country	33635	Brain Obst	(727) 458-0679
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RETIREES BREAKFAST
(In Tampa)
First Monday of Every Month
9:00 AM at
The Coffee Cup
4407 N. Hubert
in Drew Park

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.

Articles must be submitted no later than the fifth of the month. Submit articles as .txt, .rtf, .doc or .wpd documents attached to email sent to newsletter@nalc599.com.

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>

Running With You

Changing Rules

We all probably heard the saying "Give someone an inch and they will take a yard." Well this is what I believe is going on with the new agreement with the NALC and the USPS. We agreed on one thing and they keep changing the rules midstream.

Why is Running with you saying this? From observation at the station that I was involved in, the agreed route change came up different than at the implementation of the route, not that I'm saying a stop here now and again is not probably ok but more delivery that what was agreed upon is wrong, we're sending a message that we can't (meaning management) be trusted.

Hopefully from my observation this just a one time small detail than a complete city wide decision that management is using,

Whilst I'm on this subject is it the agreement within management that once the route adjustment is completed that the carrier should do the new route as if that was his or her route previously. There is a learning process and carriers would need time to learn the new adjustment to fully know the route.

Lets hope fairness will prevail and the higher ups will tell other hit men that things will not go smoothly at the inception it will take a little time before this comes into play.

A big thank you to all who helped assist and give their time to the Labor day picnic. It was fun and my grandkids enjoyed it, also I got to see a few faces I didn't see for a long time. One in point is George Miranda. When I transferred from New Jersey to Tampa I landed at Commerce which at the time was Hyde Park. George was a carrier there, as time went on I became his T-6 so we bonded well, after his retirement I saw him now and again. It was good when I saw him at the picnic.

Management is giving incentives to other crafts to resign, retire, or quit but not to carriers. Big question why I believe they are leaving us for the end reason I think is why give carriers incentive to retire when they are going in droves, and not only that they are observing more work. More delivery stops without asking more than the eight hours, so they are having their cake and eating it too.

Be careful carriers the summer is coming to an end but management spent to you that you must take your time during the hot weather don't believe they mean it. At one station this carrier was suffering from heat exhaustion and another stopped by to help. Well the carrier who was suffering from heat exhaustion got his I.I. and a L.O.W for expanded street time by a few minutes (this was during his lunch) this grievance wasn't to the higher ups and he got 6

by Dook Ramotar

Executive Vice-President - Branch 599

months for they say stealing time (lunch) no mention of his heat exhaustion.



Management is giving L.O.W. for going two minutes over according to them for expanded lunch time- Did they sit there for the entire time? (lunch) Did they follow carrier during lunch and how did they know the carrier was taking at the time the beginning and end of it. There was no scan point to rely upon.

When management question 2 minutes they say for long lunch, what do they expect carriers to say when they need you to go above and beyond. Sure I won't remember the L.O.W. for the two minutes which you give me, we will go above and beyond but not because of you it's because we care and love to give service. And to let the USPS exist.

So until next time, this is *Running With You*.

"It is the individual who is not interested in his fellow men who has the greatest difficulties in life and provides the greatest injury to others."

Alfred Alder

National Bowlathon for Muscular Dystrophy

The NALC and the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) are sponsoring the first national bowlathon on November 1st of this year. While a bowlathon is not new, having one on the same day for all NALC branches is a new idea.

Here is how it will work: Carriers, and their family members and neighbors if they wish to, will collect donations and meet at a designated bowling establishment. Teams of five will be formed and each member will need to turn in at least \$50.00 in donations to participate in the event. Prizes will be given out for the highest score, with additional awards and prizes throughout the day.

So start collecting donations and pledges now, and contact your shop steward with any ideas you may have to raise additional monies for this very worthwhile cause.

The results of our final day of "street corner blitzes" are in and are listed below.

Brandon totaled \$728.01, Dale Mabry & Waters totaled \$831.91, Dale Mabry & Fletcher totaled \$719.06 and \$837.00 was donated at the branch's Labor Day Picnic. This resulted in a grand total of \$3,115.98 being collected. This money will be presented to our Local MDA coordinator Nick Reaume at our October 1st Branch Meeting. Thanks and "Good Job" to all who donated their time and effort helping out over the past few months.

Arslan Uniform Drawing

The Arslan Uniform prize for the October 1st Branch 599 meeting will be **\$270.00**. If you are in attendance at the meeting and your name is drawn, you will win the **\$270.00** donated by Bill & Shirley Moran of Arslan Uniforms.

Why not come to the meeting, hear what is going on in your union, and maybe win some big money? There have been many changes happening that affect your daily work, so you really need to keep informed regarding your rights. What better place to keep updated than at the branch meeting? Hope to see you here on October 1st.

ARSLAN UNIFORMS

Bill & Shirley Moran

Retired Letter Carrier Branch 1477 St. Petersburg

Honorary Member Branch 599 Tampa

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A Point of Personal Privilege

Health Care Part II

Most of the Democrats in Congress are trying to formulate an affordable health care system for all Americans. However, the Republican minority continues to block, dismiss and refuse to acknowledge there is a health problem in the United States. The GOP cites a poll that indicates that 75% of Americans are satisfied with their current health insurance. Yet they do not disclose, discuss or they just refuse to comprehend that over burdening medical bills total almost a 60% majority of all personal bankruptcies. The Republicans have simply overlooked or conveniently ignored 75% of these bankruptcies included families that did have a health insurance plan! Eliminated from the rhetoric of the right is the fact that those families were unable to afford the patient portion of those medical costs. The Republicans once again believe that the private sector will compete for lower prices on medical procedures and pharmaceutical medications? This is the same lies that those same Congressional Republicans told to the American public for the previous 10 years?

Not to just condemn only Republicans on this national crisis but the Democrats are just as much at fault for any failure in passing a "single-payer

President's Report *(from page 1)*

you're gone, you're gone.

On another note, I want to thank Terry Franklin and all the volunteers who helped make our annual Labor Day picnic a huge success. We ordered food for 400 people, and although there was some left over to take home, we came very close to having the 400 carriers and their families come to enjoy the festivities. Thanks again Terry, for another job well done!

health insurance!" Senator Max Baucus (D-MT) "suggested that he'd been mistaken to exclude single payer, but asserted that the process of creating health care reform legislation was too far along now to correct that omission." With this type of statement is it no wonder that Congressional approval ratings are in the toilet! Chris Dodd (D-CT) chaired the hearings in the absence of Ted Kennedy (D-MA). Dodd has received \$2.1 million from the insurance industry throughout his career, another \$547,000 from the pharmaceutical industry and \$467,000 from health care professionals. Does this indicate a possible conflict of interest? However, he is doing what no Republican is doing...he supports President Obama's health care plan. When Senator Dodd opened the hearings with this statement, "We spend more than \$2 trillion on health care every year- more than 18% of our GDP. By 2040, 34cents of every dollar we spend could be on healthcare. That is not simply unacceptable – it's unsustainable. Premiums and out-of-pocket costs for individuals and families alike continue to skyrocket." A reporter stated that, "it is evident, throughout the day that money was on the mind of the senators. But, they could not look into the face of the obviously most efficient path, single payer, instead they were going through contortions to protect their benefactors from the insurance industry."

It can be said that there was and remains great factions over the financing of health care and there seems not to be an easy solution especially when the first goal is to protect the insurance industry! The information notes that both the business tax credit and not taxing health

benefits are two reasons the health insurance industry acquires such massive wealth. For example the CEO of Aetna Insurance, Ronald Williams has a salary about \$13 million annually and stock in the amount of \$30.86 million annually according to Insurance Industry News and Forbes. This is a portion of the current problem in that profits are the top priority of corporate interests. "The senate also struggled with how to make sure everyone is covered with health insurance because of issues such as: 1) Business groups said there should not be an employer mandate but rather an individual mandate. 2) Unions believe there should be an employer mandate not an individual mandate. 3) Big businesses say there should be no subsidy for small businesses because it would be unfair to big corporations. 4) Republicans have scoffed at the idea of expanding Medicaid to more of the working poor stating it to be too expensive and unaffordable. 5) Using a public insurance option was described as unfair to the insurance industry and too expensive to implement." Meanwhile the discussions, lengthy committee hearings, lobbying and hypocrisy continues at the growing rate of 40 plus million Americans continuing to be without health care everyday!

"The American Medical Association operating from a platform of negative vigilance presents no solutions but busily fights each change and then loudly supports it against the next proposal."

John H. Knowles



by Leslie Ray Garcia

Health and Welfare

We are sad to announce that retired carrier and NALC member Earl D. Cahoon has passed away.

Our condolences go out to the Cahoon family.

Branch Meeting

Thursday, October 1

7:30 PM

Are We Having Fun Yet?

The State of Our Nation

What is happening in our country today? Where has the respect gone? What can we do about it?

When the President wants to address the students in class today, people slam the door in his face. When the President Addresses the Nation an individual in Congress yells out that he is a Liar. After the Address to the Nation a Senator reads his rebuttal which was written prior to the Address and included numerous misquotes and has very little to do with the Address given by the President.

The President, be he or she, Democrat or Republican is still the President of one of the greatest Countries in the World and we all should respect that fact.

After one of the worst eight years our Country has seen since the Great Depression it is expected that the New President should wave his magic wand and make the past disappear. Not.

The economy is at its worst due to the money hungry investors, bankers and speculators. Gas prices rose not because the oil was being used, but because speculators were buying and selling paper. The housing market went through the roof because mortgage brokers were loaning money to individuals who could not afford it. I paid \$48,900.00 for my home when I bought it. I watched it go up to \$300,000.00 and now it is down to about \$154,000.00. I could have sold it for \$300,000.00 and make a hefty profit, but I could not have bought a comparable home.

Look at all the Condo's that were planned for downtown Tampa and most are in Bankruptcy. Banks are going under and the stock market and the real estate are in a shamble. The

Post Office is the worst shape it has ever been in. What can we do about it?

There is a lot we can do. We must first get away from "the me" society and back to "the we" society. We must learn to realize that our Country is great and that we can make a difference.

The National Association of Letter Carriers is not just in Washington or just in this office. It is all of us together working to make or jobs safe, secure and a place we can work in harmony. It has gotten to the point that "If I can't have it my way" the union is not working for me. Because of the loss of mail volume routes must be eliminated and deliveries increased. Times Have Changed. The good old days are gone temporarily we hope. But we can all work together the make the bad the best it can be.

It breaks my heart to see what is happening around us today. Are we going to become another Third World? Not if we work together.

Muscular Dystrophy has been an Organization that has been sponsored by The National Association of Letter Carriers since 1952. We started out by doing street light collections where Letter Carriers after work traveled their routes to collect money for this extremely important Organization. Today it has gone to Street corner collections. We used to collect in excess of \$20,000.00 in Tampa. Today we can't get the carriers to give an inch to help out. Why, because I don't have an hour to give to my fellow human beings. What is in it for me? Why should I help anyone?

Why should I give to COLCPE what does it give to me? Why should I donate to CFC the Postal Relief Fund? What does it do for me? Why should I care about anyone else, they don't care

by Michael Anderson

Treasurer - Branch 599

about me. Why should we have Health Care for everyone, just as long as I have it? I work for the Post Office why should I get involved in what happen in Congress? All of the above should be because we are Citizens of this great Country.



Although the Post Office is supposed to be self sustaining, they are regulated by the Congress of the United States. Why? Because it is in the Constitution. I want to deliver mail Monday through Friday so I can have every Saturday off.

Will you? You eliminate in excess of 20,000 Carrier Technician positions you eliminate in excess of 20,000 Carriers. Does that mean only the Carriers Technicians will be eliminated? No the junior employees will be eliminated.

What happens when Saturday delivery is eliminated? Another company is going to jump in to make Saturday delivery. That will most surely be the demise of the Post Office. Then everyone will be looking for jobs. When the mail volume is low, do we cut our losses and run. No we should be working together to let the Country know that the Post Office and especially the Letter Carrier is the most trusted and safest way to communicate. How many of you use the internet to pay your bills? You are letting someone else take your job from you. How many Companies lower your bills in an effort to keep from sending you a bill in the Mail? They are taking your jobs. And they're increasing their profits at your expense.

Why is COLCPE so important? There is not one letter carrier out there that cannot spare \$5.00 per pay period to insure their future. Because our National Representatives in Washington only operate by the amount of money

(continued on page 7)

Carrier Craftsmanship

by Sam Santilli

Labor Management Representative - Branch 599

A Case of the A.S.S.

Hello, you all know me as Sam (letter carrier at Hilldale) but my real name is Anthony Sam Santilli. As you can see, the initials form the word ASS, so there is the background and here is my story.

It will start like this: I get a case of the A.S.S. when:

1. I get an hour trip and tell the supervisor I will be back after 5:00 and it is not noted. He says, "Try your best and, oh yeah, be safe." How? Is it Magic?
2. The floor supervisors, who all get paid well, can't make their own decisions. Everything has to go through their "Almighty Three"! Why have them? Get rid of 'em. Save money.
3. I hear carriers bitch and moan about all kinds of things. Why? Can we control it? Is it going to help us by being negative?
4. People that have too much or have it easy and yet in their hearts they have hate for others.

5. Management makes stupid decisions.
6. Carriers who say they can't make it back by 5:00 and then the supervisor rides with them and they are done by 4:00. Come on, let's be smarter!
7. The Flyers and Red Plum can't just be addressed "Postal Customer". Just give me 800 and I'll deliver them. Who needs addresses?
8. People at work who have all the better ideas and ways to do things but never speak up or take part in changing things.
9. Implementing routes on Saturday but start riding with the carriers on Monday to get a 3999 done. Does this make sense?
10. Adjustments every 3 – 6 weeks. Where is the savings?
11. How's about once again, upper management making stupid decisions? Sound familiar?
12. My biggest case of the A.S.S. (and this month's *shout out*): *How's about being involved in your job and union?* Here's how:

A. Learn the rules of your job.

B. Become an *e-activist* in the union. Easy instructions on how to sign up are online at <http://nalc.org/>



C. You buy car insurance and house insurance. How's about some job insurance? That is what COLCPE is. Everyone can afford to give \$5.00 per pay period to save your job. See your shop steward for detail. Call the union office at 875- 0599 and ask how, or go online to <http://nalc.org/depart/legpol/gimme5contest.html> to learn how to contribute.

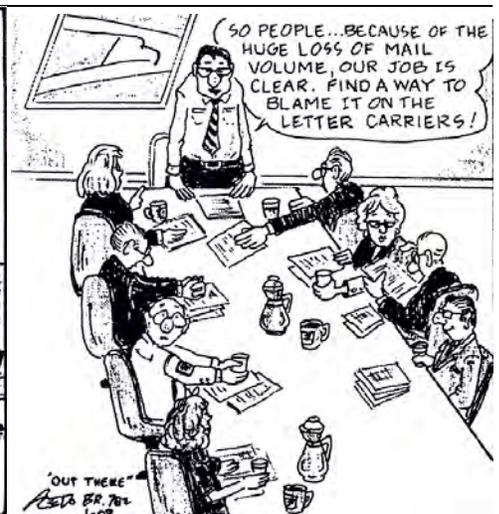
So what do you think? Do you have a case of the A.S.S. and want it published? Send it to newsletter@nalc599.com and it will be published in this newsletter. Make it your place to vent and then on the work-room floor, as hard as it is, try to have a positive attitude instead of negative.

We all have so much to be thankful for. As the song says, "...we are all only a phone call from our knees...". Let loose, break out a smile. It's contagious.

Having Fun Yet? (from page 6)

they collect from Lobbyists, Corporations, and organizations to get bills passed. And the Post Office is regulated by Congress.

So to end this message take a look into your heart and as President John F. Kennedy stated so eloquently, "Ask not what my Country can do for me, but what can I do for my Country?"



Branch 599 Labor Day Picnic 2009



Branch 599 Labor Day Picnic 2009



Around The Horn

Route Adjustment Process

Brothers and Sisters, now that MIARAP (Modified Interim Route Adjustment Process) has been implemented, I wanted to share with you a few of my thoughts and points of view. First some background, as many of you are aware I served on one of the Local Teams with IARAP (Interim Route Adjustment Process), where I teamed with Kent Moyer, the first process. MIARAP, the second process, I was assigned Dennis Brooks (Postmaster of Frostproof), as my Management partner. Together we formed one of three appointed District Teams and were responsible for the route adjustments in 5 Stations and 7 Zip Codes or Zones. The groundwork began in May and lasted until the beginning of August, two full months. The process was agreed upon at the National Level between the USPS and the NALC, with the emphasis on adjusting and implementing thousands of routes jointly, before September. The word jointly, defined as together, in cooperation, both, equally and mutually is paramount to the success of a District Team and MIARAP. So my first order of business was beginning a rapport with my new partner. It was a successful approach with Kent Moyer and I was confident of the same success with Dennis Brooks. I will say this, Dennis and I worked very well together, and jointly we listened and read all carrier comments. He was as fair as I could ask, and there was a mutual respect. This is important when you spend as much time locked in a small office in the back of a Station as we did. Overall and I repeat overall the carriers in the Stations we adjusted were satisfied with the results of their routes. In fact, I am pleased to say I have received several phone calls from carriers in those Stations thanking me for my (our) efforts. "You made us think our opinion meant something" one Carrier told me, and while I am pleased with the results, I am not happy. Not happy because in several cases, Carrier routes were seriously impacted. Personally, it is a helpless feeling when this happens, knowing a fellow Union Brother or Sister is going to lose a large percentage of the route they are accustomed to carrying, a route they bid on.

This occurs primarily when a route is next to a route being eliminated. I call it the "Black Hole Effect," when it sucks in the route next to it. Another reason this occurs is when territory begins to shift in a certain direction due to the need to add a significant chunk of time to a route that was short. Believe me, I had my share of comments directed to me being the NALC Representative. I handled this by allowing you to vent, I felt your pain. Many of you wanted an explanation as to why the changes being made were not exactly what was in your comments. Dennis and I never dodged any questions, in fact, we did not hesitate to bring you and your concerns to the office for a discussion. We were both in agreement that seniority rules, Carriers with a higher seniority date are less likely to lose a high percentage of their routes. This became very challenging in Temple Terrace, as four of the top senior Carrier routes were all side by side. In this scenario, we slightly impacted the three senior Carriers, the fourth was impacted the most. We were successful in minimizing in-house bidding, except for Temple Terrace again. At T.T. there are two Zones (33617 & 33637), one route (2 combined auxiliary routes) was half on one Zone and half on the other Zone. When one Zone side of the aux. was abolished, we were forced to abolish the other Zone side, the Carrier was about half way up on the T.T. seniority list. Vacant routes were considered to abolish first, however in some instances those

routes were not in ideal locations. If a vacant route was not a good option, we then looked at the routes being delivered by the most junior Carriers. So beginning in St Petersburg at Central Station, adjusting two Zones (33714 & 33713), and ending with Hyde Park Station (33606), we adjusted 150 plus routes. I did my best as your NALC Representative to follow the agreement set forth in MIARAP. It was nice meeting all of you and nice seeing many of you I had not seen in a long time. I am not certain if I will be involved in the next process, it is an appointed detail.



Financial Secretary - Branch 599

Quick Hits:

Information you should know

*) The next route adjustment process is scheduled to begin in November, using October data. September will represent the one month taken off between processes. 3999's are should be performed in September. Hopefully mail volume will increase, but realistically at least level off. No name has been mentioned for the next process as of yet, stay tuned.

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

got help?

24 Hours a Day, Seven Days a Week

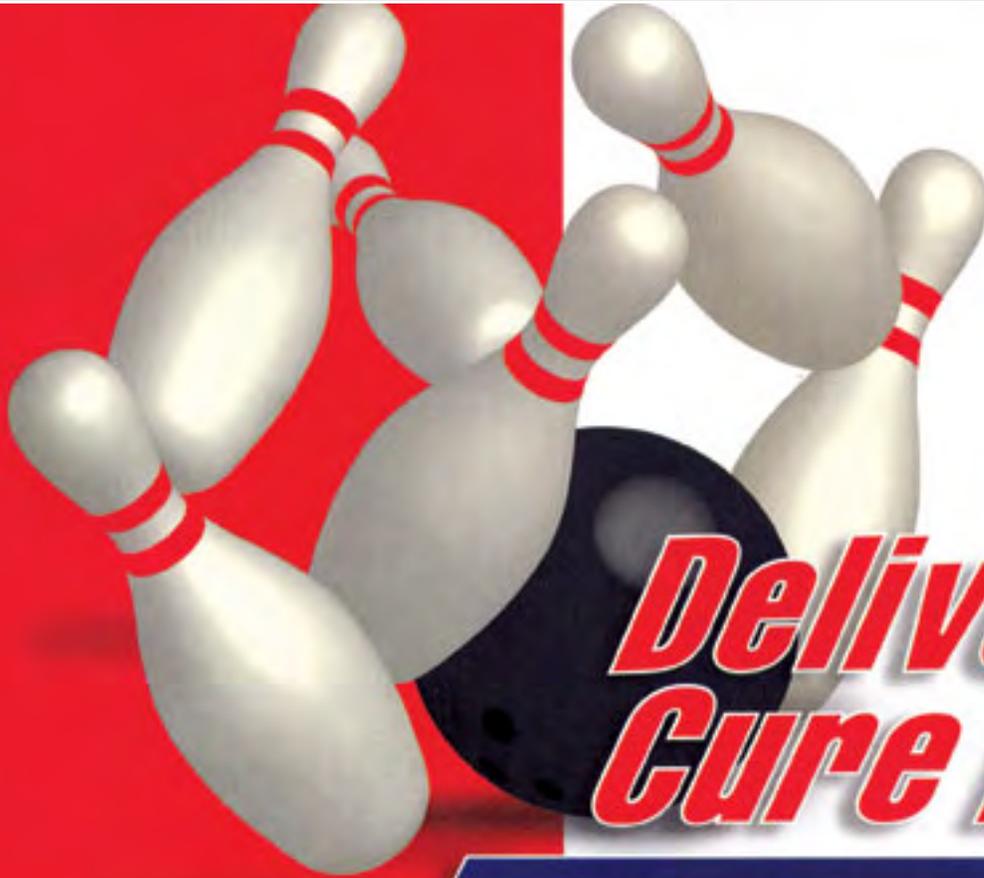
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MDA

Deliver the Cure Bowl!

Sunday, November 1, 2009

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—NALC National President Fredric V. Rolando



Jerry Lewis circa 1953

For more information, go to www.nalc.org/commun/mda/index.html

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