



Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume 7 - Issue 3

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

Tampa, Florida

March 2008

President's Report

Know Your Rights

There have been a number of instances lately involving letter carriers being questioned by the Postal Inspection Service or the Office of Inspector General. In many of these cases the carriers have agreed to an interview with the inspectors, and in some cases actually provided written statements, without representation present. I think it is important that all carriers know their rights when it comes to these interviews.

The right to representation during any interview which the carrier *reasonably believes may lead to discipline* is called *Weingarten Rights*. This right is based on a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) v. J. Weingarten U. S. Supreme Court decision of 1975. This rule applies only when the meeting is an investigatory interview and the results of the investigation could lead to discipline.

A union steward cannot exercise *Weingarten Rights* for the carrier, and the management official does not have to inform the carrier of their right to representation. That is why it is so important that all carriers

are aware of this right and ask for representation prior to answering any questions.

Carriers also have the right to meet with their shop steward prior to the interview. This right is extended to cover the Postal Inspection Service as well as postal management. The steward also has the right to assist the carrier during the interview, not just be present.

Your *Weingarten Rights* would be violated if the steward were not permitted to speak during the meeting. I know that many carriers believe that the Postal Inspectors are only looking for the answers to a few questions, and that it's better to sit down with them and get things cleared up. But you need to remember a few things.

Postal Inspectors and Inspector General Agents rarely travel alone. There are almost always two of them, one to take notes and one to ask questions. If you go into the investigative interview alone, it is your word *only* against the word of two inspectors. Who will be believed if you don't have a witness who is your representative? And secondly, how many times have you been interviewed by Postal Inspectors? It can be a very intimidating experience, and you would be better prepared if you sit down with your trained shop steward prior to the meeting and have him/her with you advising you during this experience.

In closing, I want to stress that you

must cooperate in any investigation done by postal officials, but you also must protect yourself by seeking the aid and advice of a trained shop steward.

by Jim Good

President - Branch 599



You can exercise your rights in a respectful manner by saying the following: *"I request the presence of my union representative. If am a suspect in a criminal matter, please advise me. If this interview will/may result in discipline I request you advise me now. I will cooperate with you fully, but I do not waive any of my rights, including my right to remain silent. I will not sign a waiver-of-rights form, nor make any written or oral statement unless my union representative is personally present and so advises me."*

If you invoke your rights in this manner the officials will suspend the interview until they have notified your steward of your request and made them available to represent you. If your immediate steward is unavailable they will notify the union office and someone will be sent to your station for your representation.

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Branch Meeting
Thursday
March 6
7:30 PM

Branch 599 Officers

PRESIDENT	Jim Good	(813) 417-8877
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT	Dook Ramotar	(813), 404-4380 cell
VICE-PRESIDENT	Gilbert Cabanas	(813) 855-0516, cell 597-7396
RECORDING SECRETARY	Mike Brink	(813) 661-1106
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	A. Sam Santilli	(813) 215-7595

Branch 599 Shop Stewards

Brandon	33510	Terry Franklin	(813) 657-9690
Brandon	33511	Phil Chirico	(813) 657-3180
Carrollwood	33618	Dook Ramotar	(813) 404-4380
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	A. Sam Santilli	(813) 215-7595
Hilldale Annex	33634	Bill Mandikas	(813) 263-8636
Hyde Park	33606	Tom Cobert	(813) 694-0711
Interbay	33611	Sammy Graham	(813) 832-6644
Interbay	33629	Jim Tobin	(813) 716-3696
MacDill	33608	Sammy Graham	(813) 832-6644
Palm River	33619	J.C. Howard	(813) 621-1976
Plant City	33565	Jim Davis	(813) 961-6865
Port Tampa	33616	Sammy Graham	(813) 832-6644
Produce	33610	Eric Fleming	(813) 310-8274
Ruskin / Sun City Center	33570	Jack Hencoski	(813) 685-9034
Seminole Heights	33603	Tony Diaz	(813) 598-9635
Sulphur Springs	33604	Matt Kokich	(813) 431-3686
Tampa Carrier Annex	33607	Dook Ramotar	(813) 404-4380
Tampa Carrier Annex	33609	Dennis Lorenzo	(813) 966-3989
Temple Terrace	33617	John Duffield	(813) 899-2405
Town & Country	33615	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
Town & Country	33635	Brain 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, .rtf, .doc or .wpd documents attached to email sent to

newsletter@nalc599.com

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>

Running With You

Helping Stewards Help You

I recently attended the shop steward meeting as your new Executive Vice President. It is an honor and a privilege to serve you in this capacity.

In attendance at that meeting were five brand new stewards. The meeting was presided over by President Jim Good and later by Treasurer Mike Anderson. Both gave valuable information not only to the newly elected stewards but also to us who could use a refresher course of the topics that were presented and discussed.

Since management shows very little respect toward hard working letter carriers, these five stewards will need all the help they can get. Our branch is in a good position to step up to the plate with newly elected officers, Gilbert Cabanas and myself. With a total of 30 plus years in the field, we have covered most if not all types of grievances and we are ready to go to bat for you. With President Good's leadership and us working together in the defense of Branch 599 these stewards' jobs can be made easier in knowing they are not alone in their fight. As new stewards it is a learning experience, and I mean an *ongoing* learning process. So don't be afraid to call and ask questions.

One topic that will be discussed is the newly hired Temporary Employees

[TEs]. According to our national Executive Vice President Frederic V. Rolando, there are 9,392 TEs working in the Postal Service throughout the country and that number will continue to grow. Based on reports provided by the Postal Service, it is currently authorized to hire a total of 15,721 TEs nationwide. At my last assigned station where I worked as a steward, there were no contractual TEs. The present situation at hand, we all have to address this and other issues.

For now I have been assigned to be the steward at Carrollwood (33618) and Tampa Carrier Annex (33607) so I also am prepared to defend our contract.

Putting politics aside, we need to join ranks and let 2008 be a successful year for the brothers and sisters of Branch 599 and *Running With You* wants to help.

On a lighter note, the installation dinner for officers and retirees was well attended. The food was pleasing to the palette and the band was a feast for the ears. The discussion by NALC Director of Retirees Ernie Kirkland was very informative.

January 30, 2008, was my first day in the office. President Good explained my duties to me. As with the new stewards, I too am in learning experi-

by Dook Ramotar

Executive Vice-President - Branch 599

ence and I will have to learn the do's and don'ts of this office. If this was an indication of the way President Good assists, I believe it will be an easy process and smooth transition for me.



Dook Ramotar Sr.

"I never missed a single opportunity to remove obstacles in the way of unity."
Mohandas Gandhi

"Arslan Uniform Drawing"

The jackpot for the drawing sponsored by Bill Moran and Arslan Uniforms is up to \$80.00. Just show up for the branch meeting, and if your name is drawn it's your money. On top of that, you just might learn something new about what's going on concerning your job!

President's Station Visits

T. C. A. 33607	Wednesday, March 5th
T. C. A. 33609	Thursday, March 6th
Produce 33610	Wednesday, March 19th
Interbay 33611	Wednesday, March 26th
Interbay 33629	Thursday, March 27th

Health and Welfare

The mother of Commerce Station carrier Pedro Jimenez passed away.

The father of Temple Terrace Annex carrier Curtis Eluett passed away on 2/3/08.

The mother of Temple Terrace Annex carrier Cynthia Perez passed away on 2/3/08.

Congratulations to Joseph Masturzo, Jr. on his retirement effective 2/1/08.

ARSLAN UNIFORMS

Bill & Shirley Moran

Retired Letter Carrier Branch 1477 St. Petersburg

Honorary Member Branch 599 Tampa

***NEED UNIFORMS IN A HURRY?
SHOP BY PHONE FROM HOME***

320 PATLIN CIRCLE EAST PHONE: 727-584-4307

LARGO, FL 33770-3063 CELL: 727-543-0705 FAX: 727-585-9367

bilmor@tampabay.rr.com

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

Unionism

by Brian Obst

Chief Steward - Branch 599

Building the Grievance Package

As the Steward you are the first line of defense for the everyday craft employee. In the course of enforcing contract compliance you are invariably going to find the need to file grievances to make Management follow the terms of the National Agreement. In this article I will attempt to provide some tips on building a good case file for processing the grievance through to its conclusion.

All grievance packages are going to contain certain documents, regardless of whether they are contract or discipline cases, and your package should always start with these documents.

First and foremost all packages should contain a Table of Contents. The Table of Contents is of the utmost importance because it tells the reader exactly what is in the package and where it is located. This simple document might not seem that important but it can cause a case to be won or lost based on its inclusion or lack thereof. You see the Table of Contents establishes the total package and the numbering of the pages prevents management from adding anything to the package after it is appealed to the B-Team. It will prove the Union position should Management attempt to bring new information into an Arbitration hearing and the Arbitrator will have clear evidence that it is not in the completed package that left the B-Team. Since we build the package jointly with Management at the Formal A level they must ensure they have added all information and documents at this time. Once you prepare to send the package to the B-Team you must send Management a copy and the Table of Contents will be a part of the copy you send them. As far as the B-Team goes they must provide a copy of this information to the Business Agents office so they need it anyway and it

helps them in processing the case as well.

The next documents are the 8190 form and the Grievance Investigation Request as well as any other information requests and any time limit extension paperwork. These are the moving documents of the case file. The 8190 form is the grievance document and is used to document the grievance information and appeal the case forward through the dispute resolution process. The Grievance Investigation Request is where you started the grievance file and it includes your initial information request and has time limit extension information on it. Sometimes you find it necessary to file for additional information or do secondary time limit extensions and these documents should be in the file behind the grievance investigation request.

The next documents are related to the 8190 form, they are the Union Block 17 Statement of Contentions and the Management Block 18 Statement of Contentions. It is rare that these are short enough to go on the actual 8190 form so they are placed into the package after the 8190 form and the Grievance Investigation Request. Basically these are the documents where each side argues their points as to why they should prevail in the case at hand. In the case of the Union, you should provide a thoughtful journey through the facts of the case and Managements contentions as raised in the Informal and Formal A case hearings as well as presenting your own reasoning as to why the Union position should be upheld. Managements contentions should simply be a restating of the positions they argued in the Informal and Formal A portions of the process and you should have been able to present your arguments against them in your Block 17 statement. Sometimes Management adds arguments, information or documentation that has not been previously discussed to their Block 18 statement. If this happens then you may have to make use of the Letter of Addi-

tions and Corrections, if this occurs then the Letter of Additions and Corrections should be included in the very front of the package.



All grievance packages should start in this fashion regardless of grievance type (Contract or Discipline). The package after these documents will take shape based on the type of case as the necessary documents change.

For a Discipline case the package would follow with the 278E Discipline package, a copy of the Discipline letter and any other information Management used to reach the discipline action such as a Postal Inspector Memo, OIG Report, Management statement, witness statement and previous discipline related to the current discipline. This is not an all inclusive list and there may be many other documents as well, this is just to provide you an example to help you put the package together.

Conversely the Contract package might have copies of precedent setting decisions, copies of parts of manuals and handbooks, clock ring reports, copies of ODL signup lists, curtailed mail reports and others too numerous to mention.

One thing that both cases require is a written statement from the grievant. This can be either handwritten (if it is legible) or typewritten as long as it is signed by the grievant and it is a good practice for them to also date it as well.

You should include any and all interviews that you conduct during the course of your investigation and these should be typewritten (Questions and Answers) and these interviews should have name and title of the interviewer as well as the interviewee and any witness in attendance as well as the date of the interview. The steward should also include in the pack-

(continued on page 6)

Another Point of View

Stepping Up

Let me start by congratulating all the new officers! Some of them ran on their own record and defied the odds by winning without the endorsement of the branch president. Now our officers are pulling together to work as one to defend all letter carriers, as it needs to be.

For the first time in Branch 599 history we have three retirees in the top three offices. This will be a learning experience for all of us, one that may prove to be very beneficial to all members, if all this experience is used properly. These three officers can go into any station if used by our President, without any fear of reprisal from any manager. They don't have to worry about street supervision or office harassment as a result of representing letter carriers. The branch keeps the vast knowledge accumulated by these officers over the years of representing us by continuing to use these elected officers. As retirees, they could not be pushed to get back to carry a route; their only concern would be

addressing your grievance and getting all the proper documentation to support your grievance. Documentation is crucial to winning any grievance, make no mistake about it.

This will come at a financial cost to the branch, as all of our representatives are paid. I feel this will be a great investment in protecting the jobs of letter carriers. After all, what do we pay dues for? Representation! What are you willing to spend to enforce the national and local agreements? [Which when enforced improves your overall working conditions.]

Today I attended my first retiree breakfast, after being retired for three years; it was nice to see several carriers that I had not seen in years. Brother Gebo, is doing a good job, which was obvious by the attendance. If you have not attended one, I would have to say it is well worth your time. Also President Good picked up the check for first timers, sorry no steak on the menu, however the restaurant did a fantastic job at serving the retirees.

I received my *Tampa Letter Carrier* today, and after reading the entire paper, I'm left with deep concern from some of

by Donald H. Thomas, Jr.

President Emeritus - Branch 599

the articles about the lack of letter carriers willing to step up to serve our branch as stewards and officers. Yes, you have a life outside of the post office! The question is—can you afford that lifestyle without the wages you receive today? You would not be making anywhere near your present wages if it was left to management. Some of you really need to step up, to protect and serve the membership. Now is your chance to learn from our current officers before it is too late. You will be the ones left behind without the benefit of knowledgeable representation; is this really what you want?



Look at our beautiful union hall; this would not have been possible without union members stepping up and going the extra mile to take care of business. We owe them a lot for what they gave us; now is your time to step up and preserve our branch for the future. By making Branch 599 the best it possibly can be for the future, the future is ours to control.

Unionism (from page 5)

age a concise statement of what was discussed at the Informal A hearing and the final determination of said hearing as the more information in the package the better it is for the next person up the process, you don't want the next guy guessing what might have happened during a hearing so make a clear statement of what actually happened to help the next guy prepare for the next hearing.

Lastly you should include any and all supporting documentation/information that has not been covered previously such as photographs, witness statements, et cetera. If you referred to it in defense of your position it should be in the case file. This includes previous Arbitration cases where you have

quoted from the Arbitrators decision, simply make a copy of the case and put it in the file.

Remember to number all the pages and list them on the Table of Contents so there is no question as to what is in the package and where it can be found. By approaching the building of the case file in this manner you will find that your cases will almost build themselves and your record of success should ultimately improve as well as you will not forget to include important facts/documents in your files.

This overview cannot cover everything that one might need to include in a file and is based only to provide you an idea of what items you should have and a general order to put them into, each case will have its own unique facets that need to be

addressed and this will influence how your package will be constructed. If you have any questions on building a grievance package you can contact me anytime as well as your Branch Officers and we can answer any questions you may have and provide you with whatever assistance you might require to help you put together the best package for your case.

Remember, **Knowledge is the key.**

Brian Obst
Chief Steward NALC Branch 599

A Point of Personal Privilege

by Leslie Ray Garcia

The Loser Is...Us

When the Democratic National Convention convenes there should be only one candidate left standing. It will be either Senator Barak Obama of Illinois or Senator Hillary Clinton of New York. On November 4, 2008, the electorate of the United States of America will make a historical choice. They (hopefully) will elect the first African American or the first female to our highest political office, the President of the United States.

The media has continually tried to make this an issue of gender against race. The outlets of television, radio, newspaper and magazines have extensively covered these two candidates since they declared themselves a candidate for President. The pundits have treated this as a "Soap Opera" and have tried to get the candidates into a cat fight. Rather than allowing them to address each of their platforms or an in depth discussion on the issues facing our country. It seems that the media is only concerned with their ratings and profits for their monopolistic CEOs.

Meanwhile, former Senator John Edwards of North Carolina dropped out of the race at the end of January. The media seemed to ignore his campaign and tried to implement him in a haircut scandal, high priced home and tabbed him as an ambulance chaser lawyer. This was the type of exposure the media gave to this individual.

The Gannett-chain-owned Des Moines Register gave evidence to much of the media's reasoning be-

hind the lack of coverage for the Edwards' campaign stating, "His harsh anti-corporate rhetoric would make it difficult to work with the business community to forge change." The conglomerate owned media outlets are against this Senator's firm stance for economic justice because of his firm stance against corporate power.

A statement released by John Edwards on January 2, 2008, pours more fuel on the media's fire by stating, "Corporate greed has infiltrated everything that's happening in this democracy. It's time for us to say. We're not going to let our children's future be stolen by these people."

Unlike many of the candidates John Edwards has never taken a dime from Washington lobbyists or special interest PACs and he is proud of this fact. He is the only Presidential candidate to be publicly funded, he has laid down a clear position against nuclear power, he vehemently challenges the power of the insurance industry, oil companies and the pharmaceutical giants much like Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman at-

tacked the behemoth industrial monopolies of "Big Business".

Although John Edwards voted for the war in Iraq, he was the first Presidential candidate to publicly state he was wrong for doing so. In January Edwards stated, "The continued occupation of Iraq undermines everything America has to reestablish ourselves as a country that should be followed, that should be a leader."

John Edwards has gone further on this issue by stating he would safely withdraw all troops from Iraq within the first twelve months after his election. Senator Edwards was the first candidate to propose a *universal health care plan* that would lead to the single-payer kind like the rest of the civilized world has. I believe that he was the true "Change Candidate."

"The forces in a capitalist society, if left unchecked, tend to make the rich richer and the poor poorer."

Jawaharlal Nehru



Around The Horn

by Tony Diaz

Financial Secretary - Branch 599

Privacy Issues

Brothers and Sisters, almost all of us have run into a medical situation we want to keep to ourselves or keep privately with whom we choose to let know. Whether it be a diagnosis, a test, a procedure or simply a check-up we all have the right to privacy. Unfortunately, there are supervisors and managers within the Postal Service that seem to think because they are approving the leave time off, that they should be provided our details. You know those in management that play a medical expert, that know how much time you should need off, if any. We have all been through it or know of a fellow co-worker who has. This leads me to an interesting article I first read on the NALC website and later appeared in the NALC Bulletin. It addresses the invasion of Privacy and for those of you that did not read it, I want to share it with you. The NALC has filed a joint lawsuit, accompanied by the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) against the Postal Service and the USPS Office of Inspector General (OIG). The lawsuit seeks to stop OIG agents from obtaining confidential medical information about employees without their knowledge or consent. The suit was filed by the attorneys of the two National Unions, in New York City, on January 17, in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. President Young said the NALC would continue to fight this illegal practice and abuse of power by the OIG. "I promised our members that the NALC will do everything in its power to reign in this outrageous conduct by the OIG," Young said. "This federal lawsuit is the first step. If more is needed, we will take further action." The two unions stated in their complaint filed in the court that "This is a case of unwarranted intrusion by government agencies into the privacy of their employees' medical information, an intrusion that exceeds the agencies' statutory authority and vio-

lates federal law, regulations and the United States Constitution." The complaint also states that the Defendants (USPS and OIG) have adopted a policy and practice of interviewing employees' physicians and other health care providers and reviewing their personal medical fillies, with absolutely no notice to the employees. Here are some additional facts about this case; on September 27, President Young wrote to James Miller, chairman of the USPS Board of Governors (which supervises the OIG), demanding that the OIG be instructed to cease this practice. On November 2, the secretary to the Board of Governors issued a letter denying President Young's request. Then upon receiving the Board of Governors' response, the NALC further investigated and discovered much more. There were numerous instances in which OIG agents have obtained private health information about employees from their medical care providers without the employee's knowledge or consent. Stay tuned as the NALC fights against the battle of the unwarranted intrusion of privacy.

Quick Hits: Information you should know

*) The Retirees/Installation Dinner, held on January 19, was a tremendous success. Our beautifully renovated hall was

on display and looked fantastic to the delight of our special guests, Ernie Kirkland (National Director of Retired Members), as well as other State and Local Officers. I would ask that for the carriers who did not attend, to just try attending one of these functions. That's all you need to make it an annual event. The food is catered by one of the top catering companies in the Tampa Bay area. The round tables were positioned for a great setting, with a DJ and a bar with all your set-ups. The best part it is all provided for FREE! Enjoy a night with your fellow active Union Brothers and Sisters and the retirees.

*) Active Letter Carriers should notice a slight increase in their Union Dues for 2008. Annually, the NALC slightly increases dues in accordance with the Grade 1, Step 0 pay scale.

*) Second COLA has reached \$312, 15 cents per hour or \$12.00 per pay period. This COLA will show up in the second full pay period following the release of the January 2008 index.

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



Things You Should Know

New Options

First I would like to thank everyone for voting in out December election. A special thanks to Mr. Jose Oliva who openly supported my reelection for vice president. So I thank everyone for reelecting me vice president but also a special thanks for voting your own convictions.

Despite Mr. Ramotar and I not being endorsed or chosen to be part of the president's team, the membership voted loud and clear for the candidates of their own choice. Now for the first time in our Union history the top 3 officers are retirees, including 9 of the 15 total officers. I think this

speaks well for our Union that we can still retain our retired carriers as officers.

Even though these carriers are not retired, that doesn't diminish their leadership qualities. I believe that these retired carriers have so much valuable experience and knowledge that they will continue to provide the quality leadership that the membership have a right to expect. Mr. Ramotar and I will also bring greater flexibility to our Union, this is a new advantage for our membership. For example, when a problem arises in the station or we lose a steward, the Union will not have to check with the Post Office for the availability of any other steward to fill in the gap.

Another example is that Dook and I

will not become a street observation target for management on any decision on a issue. In fact, there will not be any intimidation or retaliation worries for us by management on any issues because we don't work for them anymore.

So I believe that this new team will allow the Union new options that we didn't enjoy prior to this election. I hope that we can provide all of that is necessary to accomplish the very best leadership this Union deserves. Again thank you for your continue support and I look forward to the next 3 years.

by Gilbert Cabanas

Vice-President - Branch 599



Retired But Not Tired

Retiree Happenings

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Branch 599,

Well, here we are again. Do you get the feeling that the older you get, the faster the time goes? Then again, they say, "You're only as old as you feel...", "Age is only a number..." The aches and pains only stay with you longer that's all.

When the spouse of a retired letter carrier dies, do they know what steps to take? The National Association of Letter Carriers has a brochure that gives step-by-step instructions. With these, survivors are ensured of continuation of benefits. Every retired carrier should have one of these brochures. They are available at the union hall. President Good or myself would be more than happy to send you one or give you information on this matter. Be prepared. It will make things a lot easier for your beloved spouse and

family.

We had a great turnout for our February 4th Retirees Breakfast. There were twenty-three Branch 599 members and four guests. Congratulations to the four first-timers: Executive-Vice President Ramotar, Vice-President Cabanas, President Emeritus Thomas, Sr. and Jamie Rodriguez. Once again, President Good picked-up the tab for the first-timers. See, "Stepchild" Wallace, come to Tampa. I'll bet President Good would even pick-up your check. You've been known to drive further for a free meal. Right?

I hope everyone enjoys these breakfasts as much as I do. The conversation, the camaraderie and a lot of B.S. are great! We laugh, joke and rag on each other. All in fun. It's about unionism and what we stand for. We might not agree with each other, but we all have our say. That's the way it is. The way it should be. In attendance in addition to

by John Gebo

Director of Retirees - Branch 599

those mentioned earlier, Adel, Krezel, Oliva, Holt, Follman, Llama, Lazo, Brennan, Edge, Fritts, Munns, Stoffer, Bobeau, Freeman, Rossell, Pupello and Quintanilla. We had about four who usually attend M.I.A. Maybe they had Super-Bowl hangover or just forgot. Hope you guys are A-OK.

Next Retirees Breakfast is on March 3, 2008. Hoping to see you then. Call a retired friend, say "Hello", invite him or her to the next branch meeting or breakfast.

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

Fraternally,

John Gebo



"Mary Lou Jackman-William Corbeau" Scholarship Application

(Please do not reduce the size of this application)

Name of Student _____ Female _____ Male _____

(print legibly)

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

Contact phone number _____

NALC Branch # _____

Member's Name (must be printed legibly) _____

This is to certify that the above named member of the FSALC is a member in good standing.

(Must be signed by Branch President or Secretary)

Signature Branch President or secretary

date _____

Return all applications to:

Jesse A. Costin, FSALC Director of Education

232 Glen Eagle Circle

Naples, Florida 34104

The following requirements must be adhered to in order to qualify.

1. Student must have graduated from an accredited high school or have a GED.
2. Student must be a dependent of a member or the spouse of a deceased member of the FSALC who has not remarried.
3. Applicant must enroll as a full-time student in an accredited college or university, and submit proof of enrollment to receive the funds if awarded. (DO NOT INCLUDE NOW)
4. Applications must be postmarked on or before June 30, 2008.

This scholarship award is based on a random drawing, not on academic records or qualifications. There will be four scholarships awarded - two for a female, and two for a male - each in the amount of \$2000. The drawing will be held during the NALC Convention in Boston, Massachusetts.

The heart is an amazing part of the human body. But sadly, heart disease is the number one killer of women over the age of 25 in the United States.

The American Heart Association is trying to change this situation with its "Go Red for Women" program, which encourages women to love their hearts by understanding the risks they face and how to reduce them.

"We can no longer ignore heart disease," says Jennifer Mieres, MD, national spokesperson for "Go Red for Women" and director of nuclear cardiology for New York University School of Medicine. "While awareness is important, it's time for women to take action now."

So what can you do to keep yourself heart-healthy? Here's some good advice from the American Heart Association.

1. Stay Active

Your heart is a muscle -- treat it like one. The only way to build muscle strength is to exercise. Current guidelines recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate daily activity.

No time to exercise? That's okay. Don't think exercise, think action. Instead of the elevator, take the stairs whenever possible; take a walk after dinner instead of sitting down and watching TV; park a few blocks from the office or store and walk the rest of the way.

2. Eat Smart

Healthy food habits can help you reduce three risk factors for heart attack and stroke -- high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, and excess body weight. Set the stage for success by eating a balanced diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, cereal and grain products, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, legumes, nuts, fish, poultry and lean meats. You should also eat foods low in satu-

How to Keep Your Heart Healthy

rated fat, trans fat and cholesterol. Keep healthy snacks, such as pre-cut fruits and vegetables on hand, and drink plenty of water.

3. Take Time to Just Relax

We all feel stress from time to time, but too much stress over a long period of time, and unhealthy responses to it, may create health problems in some people. If you frequently feel exhausted at the end of the day both physically and emotionally, instead of turning to an unhealthy solution like drinking or smoking, find ways to relax.

There are a number of methods you can use: deep breathing, mental imagery, or simply turning on some soft music and lighting a fragrant candle when you come home for the day.

"The very act of lighting a candle has been proven to help reduce the stresses of every day living," says Rick Ruffolo, senior vice president of brand, marketing, and innovation at the Yankee Candle Company. "The soft glow of candlelight coupled with your favorite scent can have a calming influence, which helps your body rest and recharge."

Lighting a candle can help your heart and the hearts of the women you care about -- mother, sister, daughter and friends -- through Yankee Candle's "Light a Candle for your Heart" program, now in its third year of supporting the "Go Red for Women" movement.

According to Ruffolo, "We all care about the women in our lives. Most of our customers are women, so at Yankee Candle -- we're even more passionate about supporting causes that help our customers live healthier lives."

Yankee Candle has donated over \$150,000 the last two years to help

encourage all women to adopt a healthier lifestyle including regular exercise, eating right, maintaining a healthy weight, and not smoking. The company hopes to top that number this year through donations generated by the sale of its candles. Learn how you can help at <http://www.yankeecandle.com>.

4. Quit Smoking

If you smoke cigarettes (or cigars), your risk of developing coronary heart disease is two to four times that of non-smokers. You also have a higher risk of illness and death from heart attack, stroke and other diseases, including lung, mouth and throat cancers; chronic lung diseases and infections; congestive heart failure; and peripheral vascular disease (in the legs and arms).

The good news is that when you stop smoking -- no matter how long or how much you've smoked -- your risk of heart disease and stroke starts to drop. It is cut in half after one year without smoking, then continues to decline until it's as low as a nonsmoker's risk.

5. Maintain a Healthy Weight

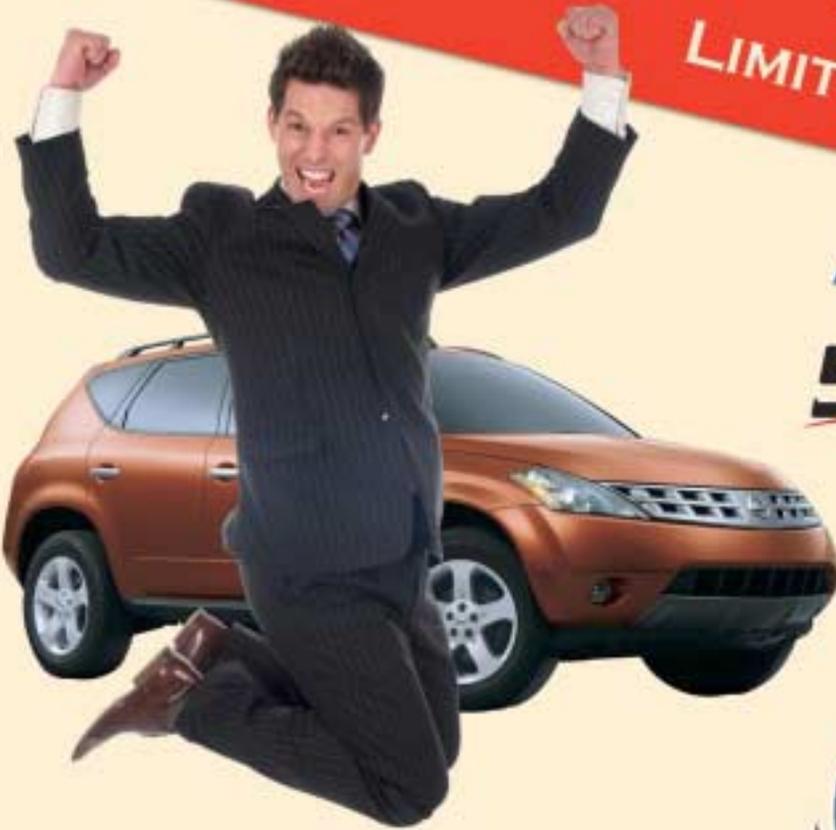
If you have too much body fat, particularly around the waist area, you're putting yourself at risk for a myriad of health problems, including high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, high triglycerides, diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Try to reach a healthy weight -- and stay there. To lose weight, most women should eat 1,200 to 1,500 calories a day, but not less than 1,200.

Start a new tradition -- one that will help your heart and the hearts of those you love for years to come. To learn more about heart-healthy habits go to <http://www.goredforwomen.org>.

Courtesy of ARAcontent

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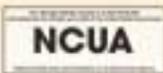
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* APR - Annual Percentage Rate. Rate received based upon credit worthiness and history. Rates subject to change without notice.