



# Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume 6 - Issue 6

A.R. "Tony" Huerta NALC Branch 599

Tampa, Florida

June 2007

## President's Report

by Jim Good

President - Branch 599

### Another Successful Food Drive

Well, the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual NALC Food Drive is behind us and I want to say a big *thank you* to our entire postal family. Our total for this year was 1,030,100 pounds. While that falls short of last year's collection it is still an awesome figure!

Every year I am more and more amazed at the dedication to the cause by everyone involved. We call it the NALC Food Drive but it would not be possible without the help and dedication of our fellow employees, from the clerks who help set up the boxes and unload the LLVs at the stations, to the management team who brings out water and drinks to the carriers; from the rural carriers who spend all the extra time picking up the food from their patrons (for which they do not get paid

for the extra time it takes), to the postmaster who allows our food drive coordinator time on the clock to schedule pick-up routes and prepare for the big day.

Many of the people who make our effort such a success go unnoticed, like the Suncoast District Manager who gives the authorization to mail out the Publix bags as First Class mail, and the Transportation Manager who allows three semi-trailer drivers to work on the clock picking up the donated food and delivering it to the Salvation Army warehouse. No one sees or hears about the Postal Service Public Relations managers, both Tampa and Suncoast District, who contact all the media people and get the word out to the public. In addition to all the USPS employees there are always volunteers from the private sector that come to the stations and help with the preparation of the

food for shipment to the warehouse.

I know I have forgotten someone, but that's just it. There are so many people involved in the effort that I could not possibly recognize everyone involved. Even Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio, as well as many other politicians all the way up to Governor Charlie Crist, took the time to recognize the event and get the public involved.



And of course I thank the NALC letter carriers. Over 214,000 active members in over 1,500 branches throughout the United States and Puerto Rico were involved in this year's drive. Since its inception in 1993, over 765.5 million pounds of food have been collected and distributed to the needy in localities where it was donated. That is an awesome fact.

Two television stations and the Tampa Tribune interviewed Hilldale Annex Carrier Tim Marx on the day of the drive. I think Tim put it very well when asked his thoughts about the drive. He said, "It makes the job harder that day, but it's a good cause. Society is judged by how they take care of the less fortunate." The NALC Food Drive goes a long way in making it easier for the members of our community to help those in need.



**BRANCH MEETING RESCHEDULED**  
**THE REGULAR BRANCH MEETING,**  
**SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, JUNE 7TH**  
**WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY JUNE**  
**14TH, DUE TO A SCHEDULING CONFLICT**  
**WITH THE FLORIDA STATE CONVENTION**  
**IN JACKSONVILLE.**

**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	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
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	Detlev Aeppel	(813) 505-7914
Interbay	33629	Detlev Aeppel	(813) 505-7914
MacDill	33608	Detlev Aeppel	(813) 505-7914
Palm River	33619	J.C. Howard	(813) 621-1976
Plant City	33565	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
Port Tampa	33616	Detlev Aeppel	(813) 505-7914
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**  
3003 W. Cypress St.  
Tampa, Florida 33609-1617  
Tel: (813) 875-0599 Fax: (813) 870-0599  
email: [nalc599@verizon.net](mailto:nalc599@verizon.net)  
website: <http://www.nalc599.com>

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](mailto:newsletter@nalc599.com).

Jim Good - Publisher  
Kit Kelley - Editor

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

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

**BRANCH MEETING**  
**RE-SCHEDULED**  
**FOR**  
**THURSDAY**  
**JUNE 14, 2007**

## Executive Vice-President's Report

by Detlev Aepfel

Executive Vice-President - Branch 599

*That's a Lot of Ifs*

Everyone knows that *DOIS* is management's computerized tool for calculating projected letter carrier hours to meet the workload. There was great hoopla when this program was first introduced. *DOIS* uses base data to compare with the daily workload and then spit out a projected time that this work should take to accomplish. Base data, as the name implies, is the basic volumes and times usually established during a route inspection that define a certain route. Management remained tight lipped about many of the features and characteristics of *DOIS*. Eventually the union discovered and demonstrated that this program was open to manipulation of the base data by just about everyone from the floor supervisor on up. This manipulation was mostly done by delivery supervisors and station managers in an attempt to intimidate letter carriers into working faster. After that management attempted to gain respectability for *DOIS* by putting barriers in place that effectively locked in the base data once it was established and could only be altered by higher management.

One item listed in the base data is the so

called *percent to standard*. *Percent to standard* attempts to compare the amount of time it takes a letter carrier to prepare a route for delivery at his actual rate with the amount of time it would take if the letter carrier were working at the rate of 18 letters per minute and 8 flats per minute. This is a very crude way to determine numerically if the letter carrier is doing a good job or not. It fails to take into account all the uniqueness and nuance of any particular day's workload. It also fails to consider whether the letter carrier is having a good day or a not so good day. Most importantly it must be remembered that there is absolutely no contractual basis for using *percent to standard* as a measure of whether the letter carrier is doing a good job or not. *Percent to standard* is a "nice to know" figure that has very limited legitimate use. Letter carriers are bound by the national agreement to give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. What that means is that we will do our jobs the best that we can every day. If management feels we are not giving our best effort, it is incumbent upon them to tell us what we are doing wrong that we could do better. There is no provision to simply rely on a simple statistic like *percent to standard* to determine if we are expending adequate effort.

On the other hand, if a letter carrier is doing his job to the best of his ability and giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, and if the supervisor is entering the data properly, and if the program is working properly, and if the base data has not been manipulated, then the *percent to standard* shown by the letter carrier coincidentally should reflect favorably on him. That's a lot of *ifs*.

Letter carriers need to avoid the urge to ask what *DOIS* says. Letter carriers need to avoid the temptation to discuss their daily workload in terms of *DOIS*. Letter carriers need to stick with what they know. Examine the mail volume and apply what you know about letter carrying to give the supervisor an accurate and professional estimate that you can live with. Let the supervisor worry about why *DOIS* does not agree with your estimate.

In Solidarity...



## NALC Food Drive - 2007



# ***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*

---



**Your union cares about you!  
That's why you can now have Aflac  
Payroll Deducted  
Call  
Lynne Herrick  
(813) 376-2799**

**Unionism**

**by Brian Obst**

*Chief Steward - Branch 599*

***Investigation - Finding the Facts***

**A**s a steward it has been my experience that most of the time when I must file a grievance it will usually involve a substantial amount of time investigating to glean all the available facts on the grievance issue. It is the rare exception that a case arrives all tied up with a bow, ready to go. This month we shall look at investigations and some of the necessary parts for a proper grievance investigation.

First thing we have in a grievance investigation is the grievance being filed by the grievant through the steward. It is essential to any good grievance investigation that you obtain a comprehensive, detailed statement from the grievant. This will provide a starting point for any investigation as well as allow the steward to ensure the validity of the grievance. It is important that the steward relay to the grievant how important this statement is to the case file because many people filing grievances seem to feel that all they have to do is say they want to file and we suddenly become the world's greatest detective. Believe me when I tell you that Sherlock Holmes couldn't get started on any of his famous cases without some basic detailed information to start his investigation. You simply must know the main facts of the case you need to investigate because without them the

steward is going to be lost.

One of the best investigational tools we have at our disposal is the personal interview otherwise known as the *Investigative Interview*. Now we are all familiar with the *Investigative Interview* from management's point of view but the steward has the same right to interview anyone pertinent to the issue in the case he is working on. The steward will want to interview witnesses, management personnel, other carriers and possibly other union stewards, to name a few. It is important to conduct the interviews in a proper fashion and as soon as possible after the event giving rise to the grievance. The reason to do the interview as soon as possible is to lock in the facts and Managements answers to them. The longer we wait the more likely the answers will become scripted and be of little or no value to the investigation. When I speak of a proper interview I mean written questions pre-prepared for the interview, everything said is written down, and after it is finished, a legible copy is made of the questions and answers so that anyone reading it will understand it completely. Remember, prepare every case as if you had to present it to an arbitrator who has no information other than what is in the case file. This will help you set the scope of your investigation properly.

Documentation is another great tool we

have available to us for investigations. You are permitted to ask for pertinent documentation for your case to provide evidence to back up any claims that you make in your case presentation. An example in the case of an overtime grievance would be that you would want the carrier clock rings of all the carriers in the zone and a TACS overtime report. This allows the steward to show what all the carriers were doing so he can prove his case on overtime. If you are not sure about what documentation you can get, just check *Article 31 of the National Agreement*. Also, don't be afraid to call the union office for assistance if you're still unsure.



This is a basic introduction to some of the techniques of investigation and is not designed to be a complete guide so if you need more information please reference the *National Agreement, Articles 17 and 31*, and check with your other union officers and stewards to help sharpen your own investigational skills. Remember, *knowledge is the key*. Until next month I remain

Yours in brotherhood,

Brian Obst  
Chief Steward - Branch 599

**Arslan Uniform Drawing**

Carrollwood carrier Robert Grimes' name was drawn for the jackpot sponsored by Bill Moran and Arslan Uniforms at the May 3<sup>rd</sup> branch meeting, but he was not in attendance. Because of that, the jackpot goes to \$90.00.

Show up for the June 7<sup>th</sup> branch meeting, and if your name is drawn, it's your money. On top of that, you just might learn something new concerning your job.

**June Meetings**

**Thur 6-14-07** - Executive Board Meeting  
Union Hall, 6:30 PM

**Thur 6-14-07 - Branch Meeting**  
**Union Hall, 7:30 PM**

**Tues 6-26-07** - TLC Board Meeting  
Union Hall, 7:00 PM

**Health & Welfare**

Retired letter carrier Andrew Alvarez passed away on April 16, 2007.

Father of retired letter carrier Oscar Alvarez passed away.

Denise Cantrell, wife of Carrollwood letter carrier Jimmy Cantrell, passed away.

## A Point of Personal Privilege

*Lower Than Dirt*

This should not be news to any concerned Union member but as of this writing (April 2007) our contract negotiations have reached an impasse and will more than likely go to arbitration. It seems that the USPS has always considered the NALC and the letter carriers as a necessary evil or we are the dreaded stepchild. The only exception (to my reasoning) is when the USPS needs our assistance in increasing revenue. On several of these issues they have acted as if the NALC and all letter carriers are knights in shining armor. You know, "all for one and one for all." Two of these revenue increases are the *Postal Reform Bill* and *Customer Connect*. Both will (and have) added money to the coffers. Yet, what seems to always occur is that this money will be depleted by the *Department of Stupid Ideas* (DOSI). Many years ago the DOSI literally gave away the majority of the parcel post business and special delivery because they said it was no longer profitable. Boy did they miss the boat on this because UPS and Federal Express are making billions of dollars on this "not profitable" business!

As usual the USPS seems to refuse to appreciate the situation that the NALC and the letter carrier craft have a viable interest in this business of delivering the mail. The DOSI continues to eliminate letter carrier positions throughout the 50 states. One method used was the creation of delivery point sequence (DPS) for letters (*Doesn't Produce Service?*). This form of automation was intended to do everything but place the mails in the mail receptacles. The only two things it did do was to eliminate the letter sorting machine (LSM) and eliminated letter carrier routes by consolidating thousands of routes. These machines actually delay the mails.

The billion dollar DPS machines did not eliminate management positions where they were needed especially in the ivory towers of the DOSI. Now the DOSI has implemented testing sites for flat sorting machines that supposedly will place them in delivery sequence order. This has caused a freeze on the hiring of full time employees, *except in the area not needed: management!* The proposed date for these machines to come on-line is 2.5 years from now. Can

you sing "Anticipation"?

In some areas of the country the USPS is once again hiring TEs because of this new wonder machine and once again violating the National Agreement. At a safety talk at one of these sites management asked the carriers present what could be done to make this new processing of the mails work. One intelligent letter carrier said don't implement this new program because the Delivery Point Sequencing of letters is still not working as initially intended. It has been over 10 years since DPS was forced down our throats. Right now the DPS machines do a 2 or 3 pass on sorting the mails and when they want to bring the error total down they run 5 or more passes. Hence our starting times are moved later to accommodate the late dispatches.

At first management asked for our input on the three proposed methods of delivery. A test was run on each of the three methods and the only one found to save time was the one bundle system. The final outcome of the one bundle test run in San Diego was that each letter carrier on average would save a total of 45 minutes a day. The rural route carriers are allowed to use this method but we *stepchildren* are not allowed to use the same method. It is apparent to me after 35 years that those in charge of the USPS want more than ever to privatize because they are attempting to outsource the service through contracting. They are already doing this in many major metropolitan areas of the United States. In the Miami area it has been reported that new subdivisions are only receiving 2 or 3 days delivery by these contractors. Tampa has contract delivery in one place that I know of and that is The International Plaza on Boy Scout Blvd. Management believe that it is in their best interest to contract out all new deliveries whether they were previously delivered by city or rural letter carriers. They consider the past practice of *highway contract routes* (HCR) a blue print for outsourcing our jobs. HCR involves the bulk transportation of mails to rural areas of the country. This new form of mail delivery is called *contract delivery service* (CDS). This system would use contractors for newly established deliveries whether they exist within rural or city delivery areas. The International Plaza used to be the old Airport Golf Course and was delivered by a city carrier out of TCA. The address was magically changed. It became

a new street address delivery and it is now being delivered by one such CDS. By the way, did I mention that several members of the USPS Board of Governors were appointed by Republican presidents and are proponents of deregulation and privatization?



A fellow letter carrier told me that the quit percentage of new hires is around 80%. I am sure one of the causes of this (besides the intimidation and harassment) is the *5PM Window of Operation*. Over 10 years ago our then-president signed an agreement with management establishing a *5 PM Window of Operation* (WOO). This WOO has spread throughout the 50 states like the bird flu and in some locals carriers are disciplined for WOO failures. I disagreed with our president's decision then even though he had an escape clause written in the agreement. My personal belief was that management would use this piece of paper as a binding agreement and totally ignore the escape clause. I argued that the WOO started when the first clerk in each office clocked on in the AM and ended when the last clerk clocked out in the PM. At one time the first clerk on the clock started at 4AM and the last clerk left at 7PM.

The DOSI refuses to speed up mail processing so that all stations receive all mails by 8 AM, as when the mails were manually sorted and the LSMs were totally operational. Thus many letter carrier start times have been moved from 6AM to 7:30AM or later. Many routes have had their deliveries increased because of the elimination of routes and consolidation into other routes by *fuzzy math*. One route that I know of has had 90 delivery points added to its total but no additional time for office procedures or delivery was added. (Decreased, yes, increased, no) Was it because of the decrease in 1<sup>st</sup> class mailings? No, it was because the mail volume for the week of inspection mysteriously reached all time lows (like the stock market in the 1930s) and the 6 weeks analysis studies were eliminated. Management continues to ignore the necessity of hiring new career employees because of the predetermined estimate of time savings when the DPS flat system comes online. In the 12 months of 2006 our workforce compliment was down by 25 letter carriers because of retirements. In the 1<sup>st</sup> four months of this year it is estimated that the workforce will be down an additional 10 to

(continued on page 11)

**Retired But Not Tired****MDA Blitz & Food Drive**

**D**ear Brothers and Sisters of Branch 599, my personal thanks go out to all who helped make the "MDA Stop-Light Blitz" a great success. Chairman Eric Fleming, President Good, active carriers and retirees deserve a "Letter Carriers' Hip-Hip-Hooray!" Many of you are probably wondering "What is a "Letter Carriers' Hip-Hip-Hooray!?" For those who never attended a National Convention, I guess you wouldn't know. So, I'll try to explain: Whenever a guest speaker, or someone was being honored, past-President Vince Sombrotto would always close by leading the convention delegates to a "Letter Carriers' Hip-Hip-Hooray!" (3 times). So to all of you who worked the "MDA Stop-Light Blitz", Hip-Hip-Hooray! (3 times).

On May 3, 2007, I attended the "Kick Off" for the annual Food Drive. As you know, the Food Drive was held on May 12, 2007. Once again, I was impressed by the support of so many to stamp out hunger, from the Governor,

Mayor, Congressional-Aides, Publix, Campbell's, The Flyer, and I could go on and on. Al Friedman and Lori McMillion, you both did a great job. Thanks to all who make this a great success. Hip-Hip-Hooray! (3 times).

On May 7, 2007, which was the first Monday of the month, we had our retirees breakfast. We had a great turnout. Albert Lazo said to me, "John, after all these years I finally got my name in the union paper." Nothing to it! Come to the retiree's breakfast and your name will be in it. We had 16 at the breakfast: C. E. Fritts, back from vacation, Pat Krezel, back from rehab, Edge, Adel, Ohmstede, Dupree, Garcia Jr., Stoffer, Rossell, Bobeau, Llana, Lazo, Lundy, Munns, Oliva and yours truly. President Good was absent as he was in the hospital. Have a speedy recovery, Jim. The Coffee Cup Restaurant is located at 4407 Hubert Avenue. Come and join us. We like seeing a new face. Maybe I should say old face.

Hope you enjoyed your Memorial Day. Not just because it was a day at the beach or a day off but to be thankful and remember all who made great sac-

**by John Gebo***Director of Retirees - Branch 599*

rifices to keep this the best country in the world. Remember Brother Larry Decos, who fought the enemy during WW II and now is under hospice care.

Anyone who has ever met Larry will tell you what a great individual he is. I have never heard anyone say anything bad about this man. What a wonderful legacy that is. Larry and I have worked bingo together for 25 years. He has always had a special way about him, which I admire. He is ready to help in any way he can to make things better. Larry is not only missed by the Bingo workers, but the Bingo players, too. Thank you, Larry, for being my friend!

Remember, too, another friend - Jack Newman, who passed away May 15, 2006.

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

Fraternally,  
John Gebo

# 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**

**by Tony Diaz**

*Financial Secretary - Branch 599*

***Staying Informed About Your Job***

**B**rothers and Sisters, I have always stressed the importance of learning and being familiar with your job. To stay somewhat in tune as to what may be in the future of the USPS and Letter Carrier. In order to accomplish this there are many educational avenues you can use. (1) You can start by reading your local Branch 599 monthly newsletter where you can find important information pertaining to local issues as well as those at the National level. (2) The Branch Union Meetings also cover current events, updates and things to watch out for that are happening around the city as well as throughout the country that relate directly to our jobs. (3) The Postal Record is also a great reference with up to date articles happening around the country that pertain to our craft and future. There are COLCPE updates, e-Activist news, Mutual Exchange ads, Retiree news, articles from our National Officers and much more. In fact, I would suggest everyone read the cover story in the April issue of the Postal Record. The article explains why Contracting out delivery service threatens the survival of the United States Postal Service, and it's a real

danger and it's happening right now all over the country. (4) The bulletin board(s) at your Station also contain additional information to help you stay informed. Your Shop Steward should keep NALC Station bulletin boards up to date with the latest news. Including, the NALC monthly Bulletin, (a summary of events from contractual to legislative straight from Washington), bylaw changes, mutual swap information, posters pertaining to the upcoming Food Drive, MDA collection results, Toys for Tots info, Contract Negotiations updates and anything pertaining to Union matters should be posted at your Station. You should also have a board for Safety and a Management board and these should be updated periodically also. (5) The NALC Homepage is a fast and easy way to keep informed and this is probably the best way to find the latest breaking news. Simply log on to the site and tag it as one of your favorites and you will have instant access. I was just on the NALC Homepage and read the NALC and USPS agreed on a neutral arbitrator. Renowned arbitrator Richard Bloch was selected for the impending hearings on the Letter Carriers National Agreement. This was breaking news and had not been published as of yet. Also there are links to e-Activist Network applications and news and COLCPE updates as well. (6) The

Tampa Letter Carriers website can actually be used as a path to reach several of the pre-mentioned ways to stay informed. The variety of links provided can reach the NALC Homepage as well as our Branch 599 newsletter and provide information on grievances with agreements and settlements. The Resources Link will direct you to the National Contract, Handbooks M-39 and M41, the JCAM and a Government Agency Link can get you in touch with OWCP and Veterans Claims. EEO, FMLA and OSHA information is available and much, much more. Finally there is a listing of the names and titles of your Branch 599 Officers and Stewards as well as Hall Rental news. I think you get the message; there is a wealth of material and ways to access it to stay updated and informed about your jobs.



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

**MDA Stoplight Blitz - 2007**



## The Cutting Edge

**MDA Drive & Station Picnic**

**Y**ahoo! We just finished collecting for the MDA Drive. What an uplifting service we can do as carriers. If you've never done it, you should at least volunteer one year. All of us had worked a long day and proceeded to go out in the heat (not as bad as years past) for a few more hours to collect for a worthy cause. Many drivers respect us and also realize what we are doing and give generously. It feels good to do something out of our ordinary jobs to show the public our hearts! I told one carrier that he could probably do this as a living because he knew to get eye contact with the people in their cars. We raised \$1,411.00! Great job for a few hours work. Great job of coming together and volunteering.

As this is published, Hilldale Station will have had it's 141<sup>st</sup> Station picnic at Fort Desoto on May 6<sup>th</sup>. A month earlier we were told that we have poor attitudes. There was a lot of griping on the workroom floor. Since I've been at this station going on 6 years or so, I have to say over all we work together well. Sure there are some arguments amongst people sometimes, but what station doesn't have that? We will help one another on trips, we collect money or console each other when there is a death

or sickness in our families; we have Christmas dinner at work; we've had some great multi-cultural days; and we have been one of the top collections for CFC. So how can you say we don't get along? I'll refer to Jim Good's April 2007 article "Management Without a Clue". After a sixteen week training program, supervisors are told they know it all, including supervising people. Not everyone is cut out to supervise a large group of employees. So how do you talk to a supervisor about anything when there is no basic communication going on? The holy grail of DOIS numbers are read and this supervisor who has just walked into your office this morning points out that your estimate is not acceptable. Doesn't know a thing about you or your route but is happy to get into an argument with you about it. Then goes on and on throughout the office making everyone so happy to be there. So that sets your tone for the whole day. You come in the next day and you get yourself ready for the fight again. Same with getting a day off when the schedule is not full (fight), and same with calling in sick (fight with a stinking computer). You have problems at home, with your spouse, your kids, your car, or your health... frustrating, frustrating, frustrating.

The one morning we get a talk about how our (mind you never theirs) attitudes suck. Hey man, take a walk in my shoes! I have to know exactly when I'm leaving, exactly when I'll be back, be back by 5 o'clock; take

by Marilyn Cutting

an hour trip across town – be back by 5 o'clock, run a trip out to someone – be back by 5 o'clock; do a collection - be back by 5 o'clock; get three express's, as you leave the door - be back by 5 o'clock; work with DPS that is out of sequence - be back by 5 o'clock; deal with customer complaints about mail not being forwarded or their brother/sister/cousin's is not to be forwarded (ugh, CFS! that's another whole article in itself) – but hey, by the way be back by 5 o'clock! No pressure! Nope, none at all! Go do your route and by the way, have a nice day!

So to appease the thinkers out there who say our attitude is bad, two carriers got together to help us adjust them and planned a station picnic. We bring the food, the sports, our families and play for the day. Relax, unwind, talk and get to know one another and our spouses and children. **NO WORK TALK, PROMISE**, (sorry, no management either – remember our attitude is bad).

P. S. I know we will have had a great time.

P. P. S. Great insert in our pay checks. As the most trusted government agency, guess whoever got polled didn't have their route delivered by a contractor, who in turn hired homeless people off the streets to deliver their mail that day (see *Postal Record*, April 2007).

**MDA Stoplight Blitz - 2007**

## And The Beat Goes On

by Ray Wallace

### Branch Meetings

**D**id you ever notice that you always read articles in our local union paper asking you to attend your branch union meetings on the first Thursday of every month?

Did you read President Jim Good's March and April article about your job? I hope so. Things are getting serious and a lot of new changes are in the works. There is not enough room for everything to be put in the newsletter so where do you hear about the new changes? At the union meeting. However, don't come to the meeting if you don't have the respect for others to keep quiet when the president and others are talking. There is nothing more annoying than to be trying to listen to what is being said and a guy in the next row is talking.

Years ago, I was always asking a brother to go to the meeting. He finally said if I could pick him up & bring him home he would go. What a mistake that was! As I was trying to hear what was being said, this guy was talking to me and even after I asked him to be quiet. I don't think he heard me because he kept right on talking. There is a large room on the side of the hall with a nice bar, tap beer, etc. There is a card table and after every union meeting John Gebo is there playing poker. There is a nice pool table, a large TV to watch with the sports channel on and this is the place to go after the meeting to eat your free sandwich and talk, talk, talk. As we all know, as adults there is a time and place for everything and the union meeting is not the time to be social but to listen and, if you could care less, then stay home and let those that want to listen be able to listen. I rest my case.

Have you ever noticed that every time the stamps go up, it's about the same time our contract is on the table?

Stamps are going up to 41 cents on May 14th. I'm sure a few weeks later it will be in the paper that letter carriers just got a raise in their new contract. Then the carriers have to listen to John Q. Public say how they pay your wage.

I don't know how many of you watch your doctor bills and what they are charging the NALC Health Plan but you should be doing so. I recently went to a skin doctor in Brandon and the doctor put a circle around three different spots on my body and said we need to do a biopsy on each one of these. (Years ago, I used to go to a Dr. Cole in Tampa, who has since retired, damn it! He could simply look at your skin and know if you had skin cancer, as most experienced doctors can do). I told the Brandon doctor I'm not having that done. I noticed everyone waiting was wearing a band aid somewhere on their face or arm. Biopsies are not cheap and from what I saw, this office is going crazy, doing a biopsy on everyone, and then it comes back no cancer. However, our insurance company has to pay for it anyway.

Would you believe this doctor billed the NALC for three biopsies on Ray Wallace? I called the NALC and told them not to pay as I had refused this procedure. I then called the doctor and told them I didn't have this done. The girl I talked to said, "Oh, you didn't! We will

check this out." So, *watch those medical bills!* You be in charge of your own body and don't believe everything they tell you.



My wife was refused a blood test at the Quest office on Bloomingdale Avenue in Brandon and they sent her to a different company. I called NALC and they said Quest should have taken the blood as they cover Quest Diagnostic 100%; no out of pocket, no co-payment. If she went someplace else, now we have to pay. I then called Quest on Bloomingdale and asked to speak to the manager. I told her that I was a member of NALC Health Benefit Plan and my wife was refused a blood test. The manager said, "Don't talk to me. Call our headquarters." I tried but could never get through to them. So beware of Quest on Bloomingdale Avenue in Brandon if you belong to the NALC Health Plan

Congratulations to Terry Franklin & Phil Chirico, shop stewards in Brandon who got 23 carriers to collect for the M.D.A. They collected more than any one station in Tampa for a total of \$ 2,964.82. Way to go, Brandon.

And the beat goes on . . .

### MDA Stoplight Blitz - 2007



## NALC Food Drive - 2007



### Personal Privilege *(from page 6)*

15 carriers because of retirement.

DOSI continues to ignore one of business's foremost theories of operation called "*keep it simple stupid*" (KISS). Since DPS was fully implemented all letter carriers have been told not to touch this mail. Yet, we are given a strip of paper/s to look for mis-sorted letter/s and are told to give it to the proper route. Now we are being told that we have to separate the DPS errors into three different sections in order to find out why DPS is not working properly. One is for "*Mis-sequenced letters for your route but in the wrong order*", the second is for "*Mis-sent letters that belong to another route*" and the last one is for "*Mis-sorted letters that belong to another route within the zone.*" We are told that this is to improve the DPS product. However there was no mention of improvement of service to the customer and patron. *Doesn't this seem to be a time wasting practice to you?*

"There is nothing more frightening than ignorance in action."

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

### Voice of the Employee Survey

I'm sure everyone is familiar with the USPS *Voice of the Employee (VOE) Survey* that is passed out to selected employees by their station managers. I just want to make sure that everyone understands what their choices are in filling out (or not) the survey.

First, and foremost, this is first class mail. The minute the manager hands you this piece of mail it is yours to do with whatever you please. The manager does not have the right to direct you to sit down and fill it out, or to fill it out and turn it in to them at a certain time. If you choose to fill it out on the clock, they may tell you to clock over to a different operation but they absolutely do not have the right to help you fill it out. If you check the box on the survey that says you do not choose to complete the survey, the manager gets credit for a completed survey. In some cases the survey has been helpful in moving troublesome, abusive managers and/or supervisors out of a work location.

Branch 599 neither supports nor opposes the VOE Survey. The decision to fill out the survey is strictly yours.

Jim Good  
President - Branch 599



The Members Mutual located at  
Tampa Postal Federal Credit Union



Invites you to attend a dinner workshop on:  
“Retirement Plan Distributions”

Ask yourself the following questions:

Which distribution method will best match my retirement income needs?

What tax alternatives do I have?\*

What issues should I consider when deciding how to invest my money?

**June 12, 2007 @ 7pm**

**A.R “Tony” Huerta NALC Branch 599**

**3003 W Cypress Street**

**Tampa, Fl 33609-1617**

**Presented by: Steve O’Steen, CFP, Financial Advisor and Lorena Hollahan, Registered Representative.**

There is no cost or obligation for the workshop, and a guest is welcome. Space is limited, so if you plan to attend, please call Lorena at **813.264.4969 x308** by Friday June 8, 2007. An individual need not be a member of the Credit Union to participate.

\*Representatives are not tax advisors. For information regarding your specific tax situation, please consult a tax professional.

Representatives are registered, securities are sold, and investment advisory services offered through CUNA Brokerage Services, Inc (CBSI), member NASD/SIPC, a registered broker/dealer and investment advisor, 2000 Heritage Way, Waverly, Iowa 50677, toll-free (866) 512-6109. Non-deposit investment and insurance products are not federally insured, involve investment risk, may lose value and are not obligations of or guaranteed by the financial institution. The representative may also be a financial institution employee that accepts deposits on behalf of the financial institution. CBSI is under contract with the financial institution, through the financial services program, to make securities available to members.

A.R. “Tony” Huerta NALC Branch 599  
3003 West Cypress Street  
Tampa FL 33609-1617  
(813) 875-0599 fax (813) 870-0599  
<http://www.nalc599.com>

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
TAMPA FL  
PERMIT NO. 1285