



# Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume 6 - Issue 8

A.R. "Tony" Huerta NALC Branch 599

Tampa, Florida

August 2007

## President's Report

by Jim Good

President - Branch 599

### Uniting to Inform the Public

The days leading up to Wednesday, June 27<sup>th</sup> were quite hectic, to say the least. It all started back in April when O. D. Elliott, the President of Branch 1477 St. Petersburg and I drove to Ft. Lauderdale to meet at Judy Willoughby's office. Branch presidents from around the state gathered at the National Business Agent's office to discuss the possibility of a statewide informational picket to inform the general public of the Postal Service's policy of contracting out mail delivery.

During that initial meeting a committee was formed to finalize plans for a simultaneous picket in the cities impacted by these Contract Delivery Service (CDS) routes. A meeting was planned for May, so that informational packets could be prepared in time to distribute to branch presidents at the June 7-8<sup>th</sup> Florida State Association of Letter Carriers' Convention. We made the drive again in May and met with the committee. NALC's officers in Washington had developed a Field Plan for Florida to assist us, and that, together with the committee members input gave us the informa-

tion we needed to complete plans for the picket.

After sending out a sign-up sheet to all the stations, along with paperwork explaining the importance of getting carriers to volunteer their time on the picket line, we held a meeting at the union hall to plan and make up signs for the event. That meeting was what really enlightened me as to how the carriers felt about finally becoming involved in the union's fight to stop management from contracting out our jobs. Because of the number of carriers that showed up for the meeting we were done within 45 minutes.

The next step was to phone all of the retirees and invite them to be involved. Their part in the picket was an important one because they had to cover for the active carriers until they could get to the airport after work. John Gebo, Director of Retirees, along with Lance Jones, Jose Oliva, Al Rosello, Henry Dupree and Ray Wallace split up the roster of retirees and made the phone calls.

Finally the day of the picket arrived. I got a call from WTVT television wanting me to meet with them and a carrier for an interview. I called Hilldale Annex carrier Tim Marx and asked if he was willing to be involved, and once again he agreed (he was interviewed for the 2007 NALC Food Drive back in May). We did the interview and then I headed back to the union hall to meet with other carriers for the trip over to the airport.

By the time 3:30 rolled around we had carriers from Lakeland, Clearwater, Tarpon Springs, and other smaller branches together ready to go. Don Southern, National Director of Retired Members (retired himself) even drove in from Winter Haven to join us. We car pooled to the airport and started walking. Reporters from the Tampa Tribune, St. Petersburg Times and Channel 10 News were all at the main post office looking and listening to what we had to say.



And what we had to say was this. "We are the carriers who have proven we care about our customers. We are the ones who show pride in our community through our involvement in the NALC Food Drive and Muscular Dystrophy collections. We dedicate our entire careers to the Postal Service, and we cannot allow short term, low paid and untrained contract carriers to replace us".

I was extremely proud of all the carriers, both rural and city, retired and active, who took the time to come out and show the residents of our community what a union really stands for. I want to say a special thank you to our Branch Treasurer Mike Anderson who worked closely with me throughout the planning for this event. We had over eighty carriers show up to walk the picket lines, and for those who couldn't be there, you missed a really great experience.

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Brandon	33511	Phil Chirico	(813) 657-3180
Carrollwood	33618	Freddie Nimphius	(813) 263-7895
Commerce	33602	Rickey Robinson	(727) 409-1911
Forest Hills	33612	Warren Sumlin	(813) 486-7612
Forest Hills Annex	33613	Alan Robinson	(813) 843-9762
Hilldale	33614	Sam Santilli	(813) 215-7595
Hilldale Annex	33634	Bill Mandikas	(813) 263-8636
Hyde Park	33606	John Livingston	(813) 253-3651
Interbay	33611	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
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**Presidents Emeritus**

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James Butler Don Thomas  
Garland Tickle

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Jim Good - Publisher  
Kit Kelley - Editor

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

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

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

## Executive Vice-President's Report

by Detlev Aepfel

## Management Is Failing

Well, here we are again. It is summertime, the prime time of choice leave, and non-ODL letter carriers are once again being forced to work unwanted over time. While the contract does provide for non-ODL carriers being forced on an occasional basis, under very specific circumstances, the use of forced over time should never be considered just another option available to management to get the job done. So how did we get into this mess?

You may recall that last year Branch 599 filed a city wide class action grievance on forced over time. In the past staffing in the city was set at 1.40 carriers per route. There were Reserve Regular carriers and PTF carriers in addition to the T-6 carrier technicians. Management did away with the Reserve Regulars and greatly reduced

the number of PTFs. As the ratio of carriers to routes fell below 1.40 more and more instances of forced over time were needed to get the mail delivered. The grievance went all the way to arbitration. Management argued that with the onset of savings due to automation fewer carrier hours were needed per route. Management succeeded in convincing the Arbitrator that 1.34 was an adequate ratio of carriers per route to get the job done.

So what's the problem you might ask? The problem is that we are not at the 1.34 ratio of carriers per route that management asserts is the necessary ratio. Let's look at my station, Ybor Station, as a case in point. Ybor has 16 routes. Ybor Station's Leave quota is three carriers. After figuring in regular carriers and T-6's Ybor should have two PTFs. Unfortunately, until the beginning of July Ybor had no PTFs. Then we got

only one PTF. That puts Ybor Station at a carrier to route ratio of 1.25. If Ybor Station had two PTFs as the 1.34 ratio calls for then there would be no need to force non-ODL carriers to cover the leave compliment. The ODL and the two PTFs could pick up the slack. But by failing to staff Ybor Station at the 1.34 level that management claims is adequate, management is setting the stage for failure. And make no mistake about it. Management is failing to meet its responsibility as outlined in Article 3 of the national agreement when carrier compliments are allowed to slip below 1.34 without taking adequate measures to correct the situation.

In Solidarity...



### Branch 599 Annual Labor Day Picnic Sunday - September 2, 2007 - Noon to 4pm

**Retirees please call the Union Hall  
For ticket reservations**

#### Music

Inside - Local artist, *Manatee Man*, Noon-4pm

#### Food

(Provided by *Catering by the Family*)  
Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Chicken -All Day  
Beer, Soft Drinks and Water - All Day  
Cotton Candy, Snow Cones, Ice Cream

#### Kids

Face Painting & Balloons - 12:30-3:30  
Gigantic Wet Slide & Moonwalk - All Day  
Sack Race  
Pony Rides - 12:30-3:30

#### Everyone

Egg Toss  
Water Balloon Toss

Cost: \$5 per Family (up to five family members, \$2 per each additional person)

Proceeds benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association

### Summary of Tampa Letter Carriers, Inc. Board of Directors Meeting - June 26, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Obst at 7:00 PM. Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as read. Financial report by John Gebo. Building Manager's report by Mike Anderson. Pat is doing a good job as maintenance man. The design consultant gave an estimate of \$5650.00 to paint and finish wood in hall, plus paint the walls. Estimate to paint the conference room for \$950.00. Estimates were submitted by two companies for complete remodeling of both bathrooms. The estimates were both in the \$80,000 range total. A lengthy discussion was had on the question of the remodeling. The west entrance gate is broken. A part had to be ordered. The donations committee report was given by Adam Noble who recommended a \$500.00 donation to Special Olympics. Discussion. Motion Passed.

OLD BUSINESS: Termites in the kitchen were taken care of. A carpet shampoo machine was purchased. The leaf blower was fixed.

NEW BUSINESS: A motion was made to accept the estimate for painting the hall and conference room. A friendly amendment was offered to leave out the conference room. Accepted. Discussion. Passed. Motion to appoint a committee to look into financing for a loan to remodel bathrooms. Discussion. Passed. Chairman Obst appointed a committee consisting of John Gebo, Jose Oliva and himself. A motion was made for the committee to talk to some financial institutions regarding a possible loan and report the findings at the July TLC meeting. Motion to adjourn. Passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Jim Good, Secretary - Tampa Letter Carriers, Inc.

# ***ARSLAN UNIFORMS***

*Bill & Shirley Moran*

*Retired Letter Carrier Branch 1477 St. Petersburg*

*Honorary Member Branch 599 Tampa*

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## Unionism

by Brian Obst

Chief Steward - Branch 599



## Past Practice and Article 5

**P**ast Practice is a term we hear a lot when ever change is in the air. The reason we hear it is usually because management is attempting to make some unilateral change to wages, hours or working conditions. This is covered in Article 5 of the National Agreement *Prohibition of Unilateral Action*. Before I start I would like to inform you that most of this information comes directly from the text of the JCAM so you may want to get hold of a copy to review this information at some point to help in understanding Past Practice.

National Arbitrator Mittenthal, in a paper that was provided to the National Academy of Arbitrators, described the elements required to establish a valid Past Practice. First, there should be clarity and consistency. It would be difficult to classify some course of action as a past practice when the action is vague and ambiguous or has been regularly contradicted when attempts are made to put it into action. An example would be if management allowed you on one day to case your DPS mail and on several other days they denied you the same action. Conversely, if management allowed you to come in to work on your day off 1 hour early for the last 20 SDOs then there may be room for the argument of Past Practice as it is clear and consistent that this has been the practice for the past 20 SDOs. Second, there should be longevity and repetition. A consistent pattern of behavior must be established, not just one or two incidents occurring but a longstanding pattern. Arbitrators, management and stewards must use good judgment in determining just how frequently and over how long a period of time an action must occur to be considered as a practice as there is no set formula for this determination. Third, there should be acceptability. Both parties (employees as well as supervisors) must have the knowledge and consider the conduct to be customary and correct. This can come from long periods of al-

lowing a particular conduct to continue without argument or complaint, which will lead both parties to see the conduct as acceptable. One must also consider the underlying circumstance which gives the practice its true dimensions. A practice can be no broader than the circumstances out of which it has risen. Every practice must be carefully related to its origin and purpose. Example an issue on past practice on the night shift does not necessarily automatically apply to the day shift.

Finally, the significance to be attributed to a practice may possibly be affected by whether or not it is supported by mutuality. Some practices are the product of a joint understanding while others are the product of management choices in the exercising of their management discretion without intent of a future commitment.

Arbitrator Mittenthal also defined the three separate and distinct functions of "Past Practice" and they are as follows: To Implement Contract Language. In cases where contractual language may not be sufficient to resolve an issue past practices of the parties can provide evidence of how the contractual provision has been applied in the past.

To Clarify Ambiguous Language. Past practice can be used to clarify the party's intent when the contractual language is considered ambiguous; where it is considered that the language could mean different things. The past practice is an indicator of how the parties have mutually interpreted the language and how they have applied it previously.

To Implement Separate Conditions of Employment. Past Practice can establish a separate enforceable condition of employment concerning issues where the contract is "silent". An example would be providing the local union a file cabinet even though the contract does not address this specifically.

Making changes to Past Practice are

different depending on which function the practice is associated with. When the practice deals with implementing or clarifying contractual language it becomes, effectively, an unwritten part of the contractual provision it is addressing. These practices generally can only be changed by changing the underlying contract language or through bargaining. When a practice deals with the "silent contract", Article 5 prohibits management from making unilateral changes without giving the union appropriate notice. Prior to making the unilateral change management must provide the appropriate notice and engage in good faith bargaining over the impact on the bargaining unit. If the parties are unable to agree, the union may grieve the change.

While Past Practice may be called into many contractual arguments through the grievance process it is important that proper documentation of the facts surrounding the practice in dispute are properly developed so an informed decision can be made. In other words it is not enough to just say that it has always been done this way, you must prove beyond any doubt that this is the way it has been done and all sides were in agreement with the practice. It should be made clear that it was an ongoing practice that was clear and acceptable as a practice in the workroom environment.

The information for this article comes directly from the JCAM, with some minor rearranging by this writer. I highly recommend that you take the time to read the JCAM text on this issue as it will be helpful in your dealings with Article 5 and Past Practice. As always talk to your union representatives, stewards and officers and if you have questions. Please ask them so there will be no misunderstandings.

Remember: Knowledge is the key.

Brian Obst - Chief Steward

## A Point of Personal Privilege

### Who's Country?

One of the most widely used media formats in the United States is talk radio. It recently had its political make-up statistically analyzed. The Center for American Progress and Free Press has raised serious questions about whether the public airwaves are broadcasting the listening needs of all Americans fairly and equitably. It was found that progressive talk programming is making inroads on commercial stations however right-wing talk programming reigns supreme. Some of the statistics are very revealing. 1) "In the Spring of 2007, of the 257 news/talk stations owned by the top five commercial station owners, 91% of the total weekday talk radio programming was conservative and only 9% was progressive." 2) "Each weekday, 2570 hours and 15 minutes of conservative talk are broadcast on these stations compared to 254 hours of progressive talk – 10 times as much conservative talk as progressive talk." 3) "76% of the news/talk programming in the top 10 radio markets is conservative, while 24% percent is progressive." The supposed imbalance is explained thusly: 1) "the 1987 repeal of the Fairness Doctrine (which required broadcasters to devote airtime to contrasting views)" and 2) "simple consumer demand." These two statements do not fully explain the serious lack of competition. The report goes on to explain other discrepancies. "Our conclusion is that the gap between conservative and progressive radio is a result of multiple structural problems in the U. S. regulatory system, particularly the complete breakdown of the public trustee concept of broadcast, the elimination of clear public interest requirements for broadcasting and the relaxation of ownership rules including the requirement of local participation in management. The report recommends that national radio ownership not be allowed to exceed 5% of the total number of AM and FM broadcast stations and local ownership should not exceed more than 10% of the total commercial radio stations in a given market." The following is a small sampling of the content in some cities in the United States: 1) San Francisco, CA supposedly a bastion for liberals there are 69% conservative to 31% progressive, 2) Los Angeles, CA, was 69% conservative to 31% progressive, 3) Dallas, TX. was 100% conservative and 0% progressive, 4) Houston, TX, was 100% conservative and 0%

progressive 5) Chicago, IL, was 53% conservative and 47% progressive, 6) Detroit, MI was 58% conservative and 42% progressive, 7) Atlanta, GA was 100% conservative and 0% progressive, 8) Philadelphia, PA was 100% conservative and 0% progressive, 9) New York, NY was 53% conservative and 47% progressive and 10) Washington, DC was 65% conservative and 35% progressive. Yes, as one individual would state, this is "Fair and Balanced".

The nonpartisan General Accounting Office (GAO) found that in a limited amount of President Bush's signing statements that were examined over 30% of the cases, the Bush Administration failed to execute the law as instructed. The GAO found signing statements in 11 of 12 appropriations acts in fiscal year 2006. 19 provisions indicated the President expressed concern in signing statements. In 30% of those sampled the President objected to and other federal agencies failed to execute public law in 6 of those cases. An April finding by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service (CRS) found that President George W. Bush issued 149 signing statements or about 85% that raised some type of objection. He has issued over 700 challenges to distinct provisions of law! President Reagan issued 276 signing statements or 26% and President Clinton issued 391 signing statements or 27% of which each raised constitutional concerns or objections. President Bush's signing statements allowed three agencies to disregard Congress: 1) the Defense Department (DOD) to delete documents on its budget justifications as to where the Iraq war funding was to be spent in its 2007 budget request when it is required by public law, 2) the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) did not submit a proposal and expenditure plan for housing, as directed by Congress and 3) the Customs and Border patrol did not relocate its checkpoints in the Tucson area every seven days, as directed by Congress.

To make matters worse, Dick Cheney has stated that the office of Vice President is not accountable to Congress and it is not part of the Executive Branch of our government! He declared himself exempt from a rule that applies to everyone else in the executive branch in stating the office of Vice President is not an entity within the executive branch and therefore is not subject to presidential executive orders. Yet the VP's office claims executive privilege to withhold the

by Leslie Ray Garcia

energy task force names and their energy policy, his employees' names and to protect Scooter Libby. Cheney stated that "the Vice Presidency is a unique office that is neither a part of the executive branch nor part of the legislative branch." Where is Luke Skywalker when you need him?



Of all the current 2008 Democratic candidates for President, only one is not a millionaire, Congressman Dennis Kucinich. The only name candidate to consistently speak about poverty is former Senator John Edwards. He wants to eliminate poverty in the United States by 2037. Edwards has a plan for Universal Health Care for all citizens of the United States, a progressive tax, a balanced budget and he is the only candidate to state on record that he made a mistake in voting for the invasion of Iraq. Senator Edwards believes that more economic activity will occur if you give "100 million people and extra \$500 each in discretionary spending than you would have if you give 100 people an extra \$500 million extra to spend!" This is a complete reversal of Reagan's trickle down theory. It seems the scandal driven media stresses the turmoil with regard to the news his wife, Elizabeth Edwards, has received a diagnosis that she has incurable cancer. The media published in depth reports of Edward's hedge fund and about his \$400 haircut but they fail to elaborate in depth that the other candidates also have hedge funding. No news agency discusses any other candidates' expenses for haircuts. There seems to be such a clamor from the right wing media pundits Rush Limbaugh, Matt Drudge and the *Free Republic* about Edwards being a hypocrite, noting he's a trial lawyer by trade, a millionaire and has no business discussing the poor. They fail to mention or even hint that solely among all those millionaires running for the presidency, Edwards made his money the old-fashioned way. He worked for it by helping poor people get justice when he took up the battle of the common people against major corporations, at personal and professional risk, while beating very long odds in which he prevailed. Over the last 20 years we should be more informed as to how artificial the moral outrage supposedly is. Bryan Zepp Jamieson states, "They aren't seething at John Edwards because they think he's sincere. They are seething at him because they fear he is."

My wife and I went to see Michael Moore's movie "Sicko." Of course it was a sticker shock  
(continued on page 7)

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

to us on the price of admission and the price of a large coke and large popcorn even with a senior discount. This was the first movie my wife and I have been to in at least 10 years. This movie was nothing new to me as I am familiar with much of what was stated in this film. I recommend it to those of you that have an open mind and to those that want this country to be a better place to live for everyone regardless of race, color, creed or financial standing.

"I wish to become rich, so that I can instruct the people and glorify honest poverty a little, like those kind-hearted, fat, benevolent people do."

Mark Twain

**Health and Welfare Report**

Retired Letter Carrier and longtime Bingo volunteer Larry Decos passed away.

Audie Childers recovering at home from heart surgery.

Congratulations to Produce Shop Steward & Letter Carrier Eric Fleming and his wife on the June 29<sup>th</sup> birth of their daughter, Nyobi Amasa.

**Contract Delivery Service Picket - Tampa Post Office - June 27, 2007**

**Branch Meeting  
Thursday, August 2, 7:30 PM  
at the Union Hall**

# 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**

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**Around The Horn*****Protecting Yourself  
from the Heat***

**B**rothers and Sisters hope all of you are enjoying your summer months and are planning to spend quality time with your families and friends on vacation. As is the life of a Letter Carrier, enduring the rising heat index daily through these months of summer can be a matter of life and death. Several weeks ago we had an incident at my office in which a veteran letter carrier was overcome by the sweltering heat. Fortunately the results did not end in stroke or fatality. This situation ended merely with a very bad headache, exhaustion and a valuable lesson to pay attention to your body. This month my Around The Horn article will focus on some very important facts concerning dehydration. Defined, dehydration (hypo hydration) is the removal of water (hydro in ancient Greek) from an object. Medically, it is a condition in which the body contains an insufficient volume of water for normal functioning. In humans, dehydration can be caused by a wide range of diseases and states that impair water homeostasis (regulation in an internal environment to maintain a stable, constant condition in the body). In letter carrier lingo, it is delivering

mail in 90 plus degree heat with over 100% humidity with a third bundle, being pressured to go faster, for a prolonged time without consuming adequate water/liquids. Symptoms may include headaches similar to what is experienced during a hangover, a sudden episode of visual snow (a brief or persisting visual symptom where people see snow or television-like static in parts or all of their vision), decreased blood pressure (hypotention) that can cause dizziness or fainting. Untreated dehydration can result in delirium, unconsciousness and in extreme cases death. In our line of work with the conditions we face, on a daily basis, dehydration can never be taken lightly. Now that we know some of the warning signs let us break down the stages so we can recognize symptoms by the severity. Mild dehydration (around 5% to 6% water loss) includes thirst, unexplained tiredness, lack of tears when crying, headaches, dry mouth, dizziness or grogginess, decreased urine volume, abnormally dark urine and possible tingling in one's limbs. In moderate dehydration (10% to 15% water loss), there may be no urine output at all, being lethargic, or extreme sleepiness, fainting, and sunken eyes. With severe dehydration, (15% or greater) symptoms of course become increased with greater

water loss. A person may experience an increased heart rate to compensate for the decreased blood pressure and feel a rise in body temperature because of decreased sweating. At this critical point you will become delirious, muscles become spastic, seizures are likely, skin may shrivel and wrinkle, vision may dim and should unconsciousness occur, these are the final stages usually resulting in fatality. The best treatment for minor dehydration is drinking water and stopping fluid loss. Water is preferable to sport drinks and other commercially-sold rehydration fluids, as the balance of electrolytes they provide may not match the replacement requirements of the individual. Also get out of the sun, find a shady place and sit down should you experience any of the symptoms we have covered. Remember as important as your job may be to you, it is trivial to your life. Taken the necessary precautions because frankly if you don't nobody will.

**by Tony Diaz***Financial Secretary - Branch 599*

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

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**Proposed Bylaw Change  
June 14, 2007**

**Article V  
Elections**

**To be voted on at the August 2<sup>nd</sup> branch meeting**

**Section 1:**

**Currently reads:**

Nominations for elective officers shall be made every three (3) years at the regular October and November meetings and the elections shall be held at the regular meeting in December.

**Proposed to read:**

Nominations for elective officers shall be made every three (3) years at the regular November meeting and the elections shall be held at the regular meeting in December.

And The Beat Goes On

by Ray Wallace

**Remembering  
Clark Alday**

**B**ranch 599 and Tampa Letter Carriers Bingo lost a brother. Clark Alday passed away on June 6th after a long battle with cancer.

I met Clark when he came to Brandon and he told me he had been employed by the Post Office years before in Tampa and after a bad car accident he said a manager told him he would be better off resigning. He took this advice which he later regretted.

As I got to know him, I asked if he would like to be the second shop steward in Brandon and he said no that he planned on going into management. I told him it would be nice to know all about the letter carrier's job and maybe he would be a better manager (I know from experience that this is not the case). Most letter carriers that go into management are the worse. A few months down the road, Alday came to me and asked if the offer of shop steward's position was still open. After seeing how management treated people he could never do that. He lived in Tampa and was forever trying to get a transfer back to Tampa and this did happen eventually. Alday was unique in that he loved to argue and mostly about politics. I told him one day that he sounded just like a damned republican and he said, "I am a Republican." I told him I had never known a Republican who was a shop steward. As time went on, Alday was at the union hall much more than was necessary and then I found out why at Bob Lockhart's retirement party

when he walked in with the union branch secretary, Jackie Bailey, widow of John Bailey. As time went on, Alday and Jackie got married. Now, once again, Jackie is the widow of a letter carrier who died too young. Clark was only 64 yrs old when he passed away.

I have a lot of good memories of being with Alday at the national convention in New Orleans, many state training sessions and of being a fellow carrier and shop steward. One I will never forget is the punishment Brandon inflicted on us by having us clock in and then drive to the American Legion Hall on Kennedy Blvd. in Tampa to watch movies and listen to an instructor tell us about safety because Clark and I had filled out too many CA-1s. What a great day, away from our routes and being able to sit in an air conditioned building all day. On the way back to Brandon we both said we loved this kind of punishment (ha ha). If Postal management is reading this, don't stop it. We did learn a lot. The reason for all the CA-1s was that, no matter how minor an injury, we had to fill out the form. If you didn't and four days later you had a pain from something that happened four days ago, do you think your friendly manager is going to believe it happened on the job when you failed to report it? Always look out for number one – YOU. No one else will and that's for sure.

Did you read the great article by Gil Cabanas in the July paper? If you didn't, please do so. He gave some real good advice on saving for your retirement. I really liked when he said, "One parent can care for three children but three children can't care for one parent." Isn't that the truth, not that I would want any help from them. I'm one of those who didn't save. It seemed like I had so much time to go and just living with the existing bills of everyday

life, a lot of partying and new cars. Then one day an unexpected minor stroke in November 1997. Then another minor stroke in April 1998. The doctor asked what I did for a living and I told him that I was a union shop steward in the post office and he said, "No wonder. When can you retire?" I told him I could retire anytime but I wasn't ready yet. The doctor said, "Well, my advice to you is to retire now or die very soon. Somebody is warning you with two strokes in three months." So I took his advice and took family medical leave, using up some of my 1000 hours of sick leave. While I was on sick leave, I collected my full social security but the day I retired, my social security was cut quite a bit as I am Civil Service retiree affected by the *windfall provision*. That's the result of another bill by the Congress that hurts those of us who are retired under the Civil Service. So, like Cabanas said, save now as none of us know what's in the future.



On Wednesday, June 27th, there was an informational picket done at the main post office in Tampa. This was to let John Q. Public know that the Post Office is letting private contractors deliver the mail to certain new malls, condos, etc. In the Tampa Tribune Metro Section on Thursday, June 28th. On the front page was a picture of retiree John Gebo, shown walking the picket line. Let's hope it helps to protect the letter carriers of today from losing any more work to the non-union contractors.

And the beat goes on...

**President's Station Visits**

TCA 33607	Wednesday, August 1 <sup>st</sup>
TCA 33609	Thursday, August 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Produce 33610	Wednesday, August 8 <sup>th</sup>
Interbay 33611	Wednesday, August 15 <sup>th</sup>
Interbay 33629	Thursday August 16 <sup>th</sup>
Forest Hills 33612	Wednesday, August 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Forest Hills Annex 33613	Friday, August 24 <sup>th</sup>
Hilldale Station 33614	Wednesday, August 29 <sup>th</sup>
Town & Country 33615	Friday, August 31 <sup>st</sup>

## Things You Should Know

### Who Can Destroy the Postal Service?

**F**or over 120 years, the American Public knew who was delivering their mail. Carriers have become a part of their neighborhoods, not someone just passing through. These trusted, dedicated and devoted carriers are always alert and aware of their surroundings, while delivering their mail. These letter carriers are well trained, civil service-tested with an extensive background check, before they ever deliver the mail. Since I started to work for the Post Office in 1966, the sanctity of the mail was always the main focus. "Neither rain, sleet, or snow will stop us from delivering the mail" is our motto. We have worked hard to build confidence in the public's eyes, becoming the most trusted federal agency in America.

Now, the Post Office, has found a way to destroy all this hard work. How? By outsourcing mail delivery to the lowest bidder. What a way to ruin the most efficient mail service in the world. Why would the Postal Service gamble with the trust and support of the American public? These Contract

Delivery Service (CDS) workers are hired with essentially no background check or training. I guess the sanctity of the mail is no longer an priority. What kind of dedication, trust, or devotion can the public expect from these workers? Low pay and no benefits equals very little service. Someone once said, "You get what you pay for." The American public will suffer for this pennywise, pound foolish policy.

What organization would destroy its most trusted commodity? The Postal Service. How much is devotion and dedication worth to all the communities in America? It's priceless. Why can't the Postal Board understand this? Is money the only thing that they understand? Well, money didn't build this great Postal Service. Great service accomplished this legacy. High level of turnovers, with high volume of complaints, will be the main concern for this failing organization.

Many complaints have already started across the country because of these new *Wal-Mart-style* employees. Is this what the Postal Service calls efficiency? The union calls this an assault on the carriers. We were informed by the Postal Service that the CDS routes were just a small fraction of our total, about 6,500.

But in reality, the union has reports that there are over 10,700. Also, the union was informed those outsourcings were for new territories. Yet, there are plans to outsource a new rebuilt building in the Bronx. Does everyone now understand the meaning of *new*? The union feels contracting out should be the exception, not the *rule*. In reality, the Postal Board is on its way to creating a two-tier system with these temporary workers. No life insurance, no health benefits, and no retirement system equals no ties to the union. This will avoid collective bargaining, and that is the real goal for the Postal Board. In the end, a wonderful efficient service to the American public will be destroyed, which will be the Postal Board's legacy from this approach. Informational picket lines have already started across the country.

Please write to your Congresspersons and Senators to help support H.R. 282. The American public deserves quality, trustworthy, professional carriers, not cut-rate, fly by night workers. So let's stop this desperate attempt to dump us with a legion of scabs.



by Gilbert Cabanas

## Retired But Not Tired

### Picket & Remembering Two Brothers

**D**ear Brothers and Sisters of Branch 599, on June 7-8 I attended the Florida State Association of Letter Carriers 69th Biennial Convention. This was held in conjunction with a Training Seminar, which was held on June 9. NALC Executive Vice President Fred Rolando was in attendance and spoke about contract negotiations and how important it is to get politically involved. Write and call your Senators and Congressmen to co-sponsor and support Bills that will affect your jobs and retirement. This is a serious time, we must get involved NOW.

The informational picket that was held on June 27th was successful. Thanks to the retirees, active carriers, rural carriers, also members from the Lake-

land and Clearwater branches. Also, thanks to Don Southern who drove in from Winter Haven to "walk the line" and give his support. Don retired as NALC Director of Retirees. We did get exposure in the Tampa Tribune and local TV. Thanks also to President Jim Good for coordinating and making this happen.

Due to the fact that I was on vacation on July 2, I missed the "Retirees Breakfast". According to Joe Oliva and Henry Dupree I was not even missed. Thanks a lot. They informed me that we had a good turn out once again. It has been decided if the Coffee Cup is closed we will have the breakfast at Mom's on Dale Mabry. Thanks Fritts for picketing with us. Hope you recouped from all that walking.

Recently we have lost two retired members who were close to me: first, Clark Alday, and just recently Larry Decos.

They were not just Union Brothers, they were my good friends. To their families, you have my deepest condolences and sympathy. I have great memories of both. They will both be missed.

At the July branch meeting it was voted to have our Labor Day Picnic on Sunday, September 2nd. Once again, Family Catering will be doing the cooking. In the past, it has always been very successful. It is a great day for families to get together and have a great time with our Union Brothers and Sisters. Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend this year, due to travel plans.

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

Fraternally, John Gebo

by John Gebo

Director of Retirees - Branch 599



Contract Delivery Service Informational Picket - Tampa Post Office - June 27, 2007



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