



Tampa Letter Carrier

Volume 5 - Issue 9

A.R. "Tony" Huerta NALC Branch 599

Tampa, Florida

September 2006

President's Report

Retirement: Are You Thinking Ahead?

A recent survey taken, and published in the Federal Times, shows that nearly eight out of ten federal workers feel that they are on track or ahead of schedule in planning and saving for retirement, yet less than four out of ten have sufficient knowledge on how to invest their money. The survey also found that less than half of the employees have attempted to calculate how much money they will need to retire in the lifestyle that they are accustomed to.

As most carriers know there are two different retirement systems covering City Letter Carriers. Those hired prior to December 31, 1983 are covered under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and those hired after that date are covered under the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS).

The qualifications for voluntary retirement in the two different systems vary greatly. The retirement eligibility date for CSRS employees is the earliest date that you meet both the age and service requirements for optional retirement. They are as follows; age 55 with 30 years of service, age 60 with 20 years of service or age 62 with 5 years of service. FERS employees may retire and receive a full, immediate annuity if

they are at least age 62 with five years of service or age 60 with 20 years of service. They can also retire when they reach their Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) with 30 years of service or at their MRA with as little as 10 years of service, but with a reduced benefit. That reduction is 5 percent for each year they are under age 62 when they retire, unless they have at least 20 years of service and their annuity begins at age 60 or later.

Once you figure out when you are eligible to retire you must figure out how much your annuity will be. You can request an annuity estimate from Shared Services, the department that has taken over for the Personnel Department that was formally stationed right here in Tampa. They have been given the responsibility of processing the retirement applications. They are also responsible for explaining the retirement process and answering any questions that arise as you are completing the application. And there will be questions! How much life insurance should I carry over into retirement, am I eligible to carry over *any* life insurance, should I elect a full or reduced spousal annuity, or none at all? What is the best day of the month to retire, or does it make a difference? How much credit will I receive for my accumulated sick leave, or will I receive any credit?

As you can see, you will probably need some type of assistance if you want to ensure that your retirement application process goes smoothly. I must say, at this point, that Shared Services is failing miserably in their responsibility to help the employees through the process. They are extremely slow; they often do not return phone calls and in some cases they have not completed

by Jim Good

President - Branch 599



the necessary paperwork prior to the carriers' last day on the job. So you must make sure that you fill out the paperwork properly before submitting it to Shared Services and follow-up with them to make sure they do their job correctly and in a timely manner. I will be happy to meet with any member and assist them in completing the necessary paperwork. I am familiar with the process and will do everything in my power to make sure Shared Services does their job.

I also have some good news for all Branch 599 members. Don Southern, our National Director of Retired Members will be at our union hall on Sunday, September 17th to conduct a Retirement Seminar. Any member who is thinking about retiring in the near future, or anyone who wants more inside information about their options is encouraged to attend this seminar. It will begin at 9:00 am and will last approximately four hours. Please call my office if you plan to attend so we can plan accordingly. Don will also be handing out informational packets and answering any questions concerning both retirement plans. Please take the time to prepare yourself for making some of the most important decisions in your life.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- EX. VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT.....3
- UNIONISM..... 5
- POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE.....8
- AROUND THE HORN.....9

**Branch Meeting
Thursday
September 7
7:30 PM
at the Union Hall**

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	Gilbert Cabanas	(813) 855-0516
Commerce	33602	Dook Ramotar Sr.	(813) 780-6254
Forest Hills	33612	Warren Sumlin	(813) 486-7612
Forest Hills Annex	33613	David Camuy	(813) 892-6553
Hilldale	33614	Gilbert Cabanas	(813) 855-0516
Hilldale Annex	33634	Lance Jones	(813) 220-1292
Hyde Park	33606	George McEndree	(813) 935-0244
Interbay	33611	Dean Minter	(813) 767-6538
Interbay	33629	Marie Brown	(813) 832-6644
MacDill	33608	Marie Brown	(813) 832-6644
Palm River	33619	J.C. Howard	(813) 621-1976
Plant City	33565	Misty Bauer	(813) 681-6890
Port Tampa	33616	Dean Minter	(813) 767-6538
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	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
Temple Terrace	33617	Detlev Aeppel	(813) 505-7914
Town & Country	33615	Brian Obst	(727) 458-0679
Ybor City	33605	Detlev Aeppel	(813) 505-7914

Presidents Emeritus

Michael Anderson	Orbe Andux
James Butler	Don Thomas
Garland Tickle	

A.R. "Tony" Huerta NALC Branch 599

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Jim Good - Publisher

Kit Kelley - Editor

**RETIREES BREAKFAST
(In Tampa)**

Monday, September 10, 2006

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

Executive Vice-President's Report

by Detlev Aepfel

Executive Vice-President - Branch 599

***Hiring "Pause"
Hurts Letter Carriers***

Recently I received a phone call from a letter carrier that left me stunned and heart sick. The carrier had made a doctor's appointment for 2:00 pm on the 24th of the month and had submitted a 3971 leave request on the 6th of the month. On the 18th of the month the letter carrier was informed by the supervisor that the SCHEDULED SICK LEAVE was being denied for the needs of the service. According to management the station was so under staffed that there was no one to deliver the mail if the carrier left work early to receive scheduled medical treatment. Phone calls up the chain of command yielded the same response from management: "We have to deliver the mail."

I discussed this matter with President Jim Good who shared with me the story of another carrier that had called him. The second carrier had put in for a week of annual leave in conjunction with his long weekend. He had rented a cabin in the mountains so as to spend quality time with his family. The annual leave was approved during the choice leave planning period in January. Indeed, many carriers combine leave with scheduled days off. Contractually, the leave protects the carrier from being forced in on the SDO. However, the letter carrier was told on Thursday afternoon that he would be needed to work the next day

on his SDO. To add insult to injury the station manager had offered to let the carrier off without adding a trip if he ran his route that day. President Good placed phone calls up the chain of command but to no avail. Management would not budge.

These events illustrate that currently the city of Tampa is so radically under staffed that in some instances management can no longer meet their obligations to provide letter carriers with the annual leave protections and scheduled sick leave that the national agreement promises letter carriers. The hiring "pause" that has been inflicted upon the Southeast Area by management at the highest levels has basically tied the hands of local management and resulted in an apparent loss of benefits by letter carriers. In response to these sad circumstances a class action grievance has been filed in an attempt to correct the under staffing problem in Tampa. If we succeed it should bring some welcome relief to letter carriers and local management as well.

On a happier note, mark your calendar for Sunday September 3rd. That's the day Branch 599 will be holding our annual Labor Day picnic at the union hall from Noon until 4 o'clock. This year's festivities will be organized by Brandon Shop Steward Terry Franklin. Terry has been hard at work lining up the activities, the food, and

of course, the beverages. The great thing about these picnics is that there is something for everyone. There will be games for the kids as well as for the adults. There will be entertainment indoors and outdoors if you are feeling more sedentary. Catering by the Family will once again be serving up delicious barbecue. If that's not enough, then try the ice cream, snow cones and popcorn. There will also be plenty of soft drinks and also beer if you are so inclined.



If you have not attended a Branch 599 picnic before then you are in for a treat. Carriers from all over the city of Tampa plus Brandon, Plant City, and Sun City Center will gather for an afternoon of camaraderie and celebration. But don't let the free beer fool you. This is a time to meet each other's loved ones, to see how fast the kids are growing up, and to renew old friendships. It is also a time to realize that we are all in the same union working together for the same goal: Providing the best life we can for ourselves and those we care about. So come on down and spend a little time with some friends.

In Solidarity...

President's Station Visits

TCA 07	Friday	September 01, 2006
TCA 09	Wednesday	September 06, 2006
Produce	Friday	September 08, 2006
Interbay 33611	Wednesday	September 13, 2006
Interbay 33629	Friday	September 15, 2006
Forest Hills .	Wednesday	September 20, 2006
Forest Hills Annex	Friday	September 22, 2006
Hilldale	Wednesday	September 27, 2006
Town & Country	Friday	September 29, 2006

Health and Welfare Report

Orville Harrell, retiree, passed away.

TLC, Inc. Board of Directors Meeting Summary

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Detlev Aeppel at 7:00 pm. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as read. The financial report was given by John Gebo. Building Manager's report by Mike Anderson. Three trash cans will be purchased for the front of the building. The sprinkler system will be replaced with a soaker hose. A motion was made and properly seconded to pay the building manager up to four hours per day, as needed. Discussion. Passed. A motion was made and properly seconded to allow the yard maintenance man to park his trailer behind the garage as long as he signs a disclaimer releasing us from any possible damage. Discussion. A friendly amendment was offered to have the building manager work out the best deal with the yard man for our allowing him to park there. Accepted. Passed by division vote. Donation committee report by Adam Noble. Recommendation to give \$500.00 to "Faces of Courage". Passed. Motion to adjourn. Passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

JimGood
Secretary, Tampa Letter Carriers, Inc.

September Meetings:

- Tues 9-5-06 - Shop Stewards Meeting
Union Hall, 7:00 PM
- Thur 9-7-06 - Branch Meeting
Union Hall, 7:30 PM
- Tues 9-26-06 - TLC Board Of Directors Meeting
Union Hall, 7:00 PM
- Thur 9-28-06 - Executive Board Meeting
Union Hall, 7:00 PM

Flu Shots

Flu shots will be given by the USPS at the Branch 599 Union Hall on Thursday, September 7, 2006 from 6:00 pm until 8:00 pm. The flu shots will be free for any active postal employee. Retirees will be charged approximately \$20.00. ID badges must be shown to receive the free flu shots.

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

Unionism

Obey First, Grieve Later

We have all known someone who has become angry at someone in management because they gave them an order that they were not happy with and did not want to follow. Work on your SDO, take and deliver this trip etc. etc. It will happen to us all if you stay in the service long enough and there is no cure for it. The most important thing to realize when it happens to you, and it will, is that it is still a direct order that must be followed. If the order can be grieved, the proper procedure is to *obey first, grieve later*.

When given a direct order, we are responsible to carry out the order unless it is illegal or violates safety protocols. Even in these situations you had better be sure that you have backup on the issue if you fail to obey the direct order. Failure to obey a direct order can be viewed as insubordination and it can be a termination offense. I speak from experience in this matter as management attempted to terminate my employment for failure to follow an order which compromised my safety. It took over one full year to clear my name in an issue where I was right to fail to obey but it was still a tough time for me.

Absent legal issues or safety issues, if the issue involved is a grievable one the proper procedure is to follow the order and then grieve the issue. I know that this sticks in the craw of many carriers as management seems to give these orders that violate contractual provisions on a regular basis. The issue falls to your steward to handle for you. You only need ask to see your steward on the issue at hand. Now just because you are given an order and you are supposed to obey

doesn't mean that you must wait until after following the order to ask for your steward. If the order is an obvious violation of the National Agreement you may always ask for your steward immediately. It is recommended that this always be done in writing and you maintain a copy for your records in case it is mysteriously lost by management. Your steward will attempt to get the situation corrected without going to a grievance but if it is not possible to do so a grievance will be filed and processed in an attempt to correct the problem and prevent it occurring again in the future.

The most important thing to remember when dealing with situations where you are given what you feel is an improper order is that failure to obey the order can and usually will result in disciplinary action against you for your failure to follow the order. Your steward can and will defend you if this occurs however it is difficult since you refused to follow the directives of your supervisor. The reason we *obey first, grieve later* is so we can correct the problem without endangering ourselves and our employment with the Postal Service. This is why we have the grievance procedure and stewards to assist us in grievance processing. When management is wrong, and they are quite a bit, your steward is your first line of defense and will be there to assist you.

Let us attempt to not make the job of the steward more difficult by making them have to protect you from being fired for failure to follow a direct order while we process a grievance on the order itself. To protect in this matter remember: *Obey first, grieve later* and you will be able to steer clear of this issue.

by Brian Obst

Chief Steward - Branch 599

A grateful tip of the hat to Kurt Sullivan, president of Lakeland Branch # 1779 for the idea for this article.



Remember, knowledge is the key.

In brotherhood,

Brian Obst
Steward -Town and Country

NALC National Convention 2006

Are You From Missouri?

What happened in Missouri and why is it important to letter carriers in Tampa?

We all know postal reform recently passed in the Senate and now we're looking forward to possibly having real postal reform for the first time in almost 35 years. But what is more important is that it's a postal reform that our union has had a major role in forming.

But it might not have happened this year. In our democratic form of government, Senators can stop bills from coming to a vote simply by placing a hold on them. It was very important for all of us that S 622 (the postal reform bill) passed unanimously so there would be no additions. Senator Bond from Missouri placed a hold on S 622 because Hallmark Cards, headquartered in his home state of Missouri, was against this legislation. Over the next few weeks Senator Bond was approached and compromises were tried but Senator Bond would not budge or remove his hold.

When Congress recessed last fall our union put its e-Activist program into action in Missouri. President Bill Young met with our legislative department and our four Regional Field Coordinators (RFCs) started with emails and phone calls to Congressional District Liaisons (CDLs) and branch presidents in four major cities in Senator

Bond's district. The RFCs were on their way to Missouri, phone banks were activated and in all four of those cities, and at Senator Bonds state offices, over three hundred city carriers showed up and participated in informational pickets. As a result of this, Senator Bond agreed to remove his hold on S 622 when Congress convened this spring. As you may know, S 622 passed the Senate unanimously.

President Bill Young created the e-Activist program well over two years ago and what a tool this has become. After S 622 passed the senate it's said that whispers passed through the halls of Congress. The power of this tool is recognized and respected. Still we need to increase our network and make this great tool stronger.

There are two ways we as union sisters and brothers can do this. First, if you are not an e-Activist join now. Its easy. Just ask your steward for the form. If they don't have one handy, call the Branch 599 office at 875-0599, or go on line to <http://www.nalc.org>. It's right on the homepage.

The second way to help is to contribute monthly to the political activist fund, COLCPE and that's easy, too. Think about it: The sorriest words spoken are, "I wish I'd done something when I had the chance." Please don't wind up saying this to yourself about your job. It won't help. So help now. Be active.

A Little Helping Hand

The primary elections are drawing near and next month we will be voting to choose the candidates we wish to run for office. Regardless of your political affiliations you need to make yourself aware of each candidate's position and pick a candidate who is labor friendly.

On Wednesday, August 2nd, Brothers Brian Obst, Mike Anderson, David Berroth and I were at the Jim Davis for Governor campaign headquarters and manned the phone banks for around three hours. I'd like to thank the brothers for their outstanding help. We had a

Congressional District Liaison - District 11

good time and for anyone who has never done this it's a good experience. Everyone should try it once. If you'd like to just stop by the campaign offices on 3508 Grace St. here in Tampa, ask for Kyle Simon, or phone 813-875-2006. Every Wednesday night is labor night. In Pasco county, volunteers are needed on Wednesday nights from 5 PM to 9 PM at 4927 SR 54. Ask for Elizabeth or phone 813-849-3365. They can use the help.



At our monthly branch meeting we had the opportunity to hear two guest speakers. First was Phyllis Busansky, the democratic candidate for Congress, District 9, which serves many of our members. Ms. Busansky is a strong friend of labor and the right person for the job at the right time. She is strongly recommended by Senator Bob Graham. Postal reform is probably not going to be passed soon and now is the opportune time for labor to step up and change the party structure inside congress. If you can, please help Phyllis get elected. Visit her web site at <http://busanskyforcongress.com> or call the office at 813-435-5161. Campaign contributions, or volunteers to help man the phone banks would be greatly appreciated.

Our second guest speaker was Jonathan Murray, Regional Field Coordinator for the Southern area (AL, AR, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN and VA). Jonathan normally works out of NALC headquarters in Washington but is currently working hand in hand with the AFL-CIO *Labor to Labor Campaign* for the fall elections. He brought the membership up to date on what is happening with postal reform and spoke strongly in support of Phyllis Busansky. Remember to vote in the primaries and this fall's election but, most importantly, vote for your jobs and VOTE LABOR FRIENDLY.

In unity...



Mike Anderson and Dave Berroth working the phones for the Jim Davis campaign.

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

NALC National Convention 2006 - Las Vegas



A Point of Personal Privilege

by Leslie Ray Garcia

Ignorance Is Bliss

After the 2000 election, two CD-ROM disks from the office of Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris (co-chair of the campaign to elect Bush-Cheney) containing a list of 57,700 names of alleged criminals was obtained by investigative journalist Greg Palast. This list of names included an individual named Bernice Kines, who “was ‘convicted’ ” on July 31, 2009, some three years from now! Palast also obtained additional lists of 94,000 voters targeted by Harris and 91,000 of those listed were innocent of any crime. Of those 91,000, 325 were also convicted in the future. It seems that 54% of those 91,000 were *guilty* only of being African-American and, on Jeb Bush’s command, they were removed from the voter rolls before the November 2000 Presidential Election. The scrub list contained a margin of 4 Democrats for every one Republican (4 to 1). Hence, Al Gore should have been elected President in 2000 even with eliminating the questionable chad ballots.

Despite this documented facts, on October 20, 2004, American Enterprise Institute’s John Lott announced on CNN’s *Lou Dobbs Tonight* that the U. S. Civil Rights Commission “...was not able to identify even one person...” wrongly disenfranchised by Governor Jeb Bush during Florida’s *black-out operation* in November 2000. Lott’s statement was echoed almost at the same time and nearly repeated word for word, in the *Wall Street Journal* by John Fund.

During the November 2000 election, an individual who worked at the Florida Orthopedic Center in Tampa, Florida, Willie Steen, was told that he was a convicted felon. Steen stated he had never been arrested in his life. He was in the military for 4 years and served in the Persian Gulf War in 1991. Since his honorable discharge from the military, he has worked in the medical field. Florida law states that you can not work

in a hospital if you are a convicted felon. Additionally, there were several thousand individuals who lived in the inner city areas of Jacksonville and Tampa who had their names wrongly scrubbed from the rolls of legal, registered voters. The NAACP sued Governor Jeb Bush and the creators of this *scrub* list compiled by *ChoicePoint, Inc.* The Bush team confessed to its “error” and agreed not to do it again. Now that the supposed “error” was corrected, a BBC journalist and network decided to film Mr. Steen exercising his U. S. Constitutional right to vote. The journalist called the Hillsborough County supervisor of elections to find Steen’s voting place. A clerk looked up his name and stated, “Steen can’t vote. He’s a felon.” It seems that the Republican supervisor of elections was notified about the filming of Steen’s attempt to vote and when the time arrived for Steen to vote a clerk stated, “Wow, this is extraordinary! Steen’s status was just changed this morning!”

In 2004, another Presidential Election irregularity occurred when Republican Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell of Ohio purged thousands of supposed felons from the voter rolls even though Ohio law *allows* ex-cons to vote. (Please note that Mr. Blackwell was also Co-Chairman of the Bush-Cheney 2004 Re-election campaign in Ohio.) Texas, which allows almost all ex-cons to vote, somehow found 525,967 of them registered illegally. However, none of them were convicted of registering illegally. Provisional ballots were to be provided if any voter were wronged but they would not be counted. In Colorado, just weeks before the election, Secretary of State Donetta Davidson removed 6,000 supposed felons from that state’s voter rolls. Colorado law states that convicts only lose their vote while serving time. Those voters removed from the rolls were overwhelmingly Democrats. To legitimize her actions, there was an “emergency” declared, even though federal law bars purges within 90 days

(12 weeks) of a presidential election to allow a voter to challenge his/her loss of civil rights. At the time of this “emergency”, George W. Bush and John F. Kerry were dead even in the polls. There were alleged registration switches of Democrats in critical swing states to the Republican party. In Florida at least 4,000 democratic college students, mostly African-Americans, allegedly switched a month before the November 2004 election to the Republican party. Just an error? I don’t think so because Ion Sanchez, a non-partisan elections supervisor in Tallahassee, became suspicious when he received a registration switch from one new Republican; the problem was that this individual was his stepdaughter and her signature had been forged.



On July 15, 2004, the United States Civil Rights Commission voted to request a federal investigation into whether Florida’s highest officials “engineered” (in their words), a racially bent scrub of voter rolls during the 2000 election. Civil Rights Commissioner Chris Edley, who is Dean of the Law School at the University of California at Berkeley, proposed digging into “...the possibility of criminal violations...” of federal law during the election of 2000. The Commissioners can’t conduct their own criminal probe, which is handled by the Justice Department. They formally requested former Attorney General John Ashcroft to send investigators to Florida but it never happened. It seems that shortly after Bush’s “re-election”, Chris Edley, law school dean, and the chairperson of the Commission, Mary Francis Berry (who had coincidentally voted for the investigation), were removed from the Commission, which effectively stopped the election voter rolls investigation of President Bush’s brother, Governor Jeb Bush, and his administration.

(For additional information on the above material, refer to “The Best Democracy
(continued on page 9)

Around The Horn

by Tony Diaz

Financial Secretary - Branch 599

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Brothers and Sisters, as I enter my 26th year of service, I write about a topic I never took seriously or paid much attention to. You know the “it will never happen to me” theory, so why bother. I speak about CTS or *Carpal Tunnel Syndrome*, and while I am far from full-blown CTS, I do feel some twinges, weakness in my grip at times and my thumbs sometimes feel nonfunctional. CTS has taken its toll on many fellow letter carriers and clerks past and present. Take my little station alone (Seminole Hts), we have one carrier who recently returned to work after a 6-week recovery from CTS surgery, two more are awaiting surgery and we have a clerk who has had CTS surgery several years ago. In hearing them explain their symptoms, none are exactly the same. They range from burning, stiffness, cramping, numbness, tingling, and persistent pain, to a cold feeling. They are occurring after periods of rest or sleep. These symptoms often characterize the common disorder. By the time you feel any of them in your hand, wrist or arm, cell degeneration is in process and should be taken seriously. It often progresses rapidly if ignored and doesn't take years to develop as many think. One carrier wakes up at night to find his hand cramping so bad he cannot straighten it up without using his other hand to pry his fingers. The other slaps

Point of Privilege *(from page 8)*

Money Can Buy” and “Armed Madhouse” by Greg Palast; and “Fooled Again” by Mark Crispin Miller.)

“Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable.”

John F. Kennedy

his hands together in the mornings to wake them up. Scary!

So what is Carpal Tunnel? It is made up of several bones connected by ligaments. The largest of which is the Transverse Carpal Ligament. These structures form the perimeter of a passage through its center called the carpal tunnel (also called the carpal canal). Through this tunnel run nerves, tendons, blood and other soft tissues. For a variety of reasons some of these tissues swell, especially the tendons and the protective sheaths (wraps or walls) that cover them. However, unlike most of your body where swelling simply protrudes, this swelling has no place to expand since bones and ligaments surround it. With the swelling contained, pressure builds in the tunnel. This pressure then crushes the main nerve to your hand called the Median Nerve (a major nerve to the hand that controls the thumb, index and middle fingers), causing it not to function properly. The pressure also obstructs blood flow, which retards healing and causes further cell degeneration until the cycle is out of control. Again, those affected are amazed by the progression mild symptoms turn in to major problem.

Is surgery the always necessary? Not with the first symptoms, the most common first aid is to treat the cause of the swelling with drugs. By trying to reduce the swelling, the pressure is decreased and if the median nerve is not damaged, its function can be restored. However, many times the tissues are so enlarged that drugs cannot reduce their size. Another approach and we see these used often are braces. Braces keep the hand in a position that prevents the wearer from causing even more damage. The bending and twisting at the wrist are minimized with the hopes that the pressure will just go away before you have full blown CTS. Braces are also used in conjunction with drug therapies when treating the problem. In addition, and this is a practice I found helpful, was changing the way I use my hands. I do not hold as much mail in my hands and when I pick up I am using more of my arms to avoid

any extended strain in the region. Of course in very advanced cases, like the ones I spoke of at my station, a procedure called Carpal Tunnel Release Operation is performed. It involves cutting the transverse Carpal Ligament and letting it heal back together. This gives more room for the soft tissues thus lowering the pressure. Another technique can be a preventative method, as well as a way to help relieve symptoms before they spiral out of control. This method stretches the region externally, with the use of a Stretch-assager. This is the first product available to the public designed to reduce pressure on the median nerve by helping to enlarge the carpal tunnel and increase blood flow. This can be used with either hand or both hands simultaneously. Should it be determined that surgery is required, as at my station, it usually requires many weeks to recover, and in some cases is far from a guaranteed cure. If you are having these symptoms do not ignore them, have yourself checked out. Detecting CTS early will allow you to treat this disorder and save yourself complications down the road. Also, you will find this condition may very well be work related and classified as an occupational disease. In the event this is the case, by following proper procedures and obtaining proper forms you could be covered by Workman's Compensation. Should you have any questions about CTS or would like to share a CTS story please feel free to contact me at

dcoach9@tampabay.rr.com.

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



NALC National Convention 2006 - Las Vegas



U.S. Representative Tom Davis from Virginia



NALC President William Young & Retired Region 9 NBA Matty Rose



NALC President Emeritus Vince Sombrotto



NALC President Bill Young



U.S. Representative Danny Davis from Illinois

NALC National Convention 2006 - Las Vegas



Branch 599 Convention Delegation

PROPOSED BYLAW CHANGE:**Article V: Elections****Section 13 (B)**

When the ballots are tallied the challenged ballot envelopes shall be put to one side, and the unchallenged ballots counted. If the challenged ballots cannot affect the outcome of the election (because there are less challenged ballots than the smallest margin between any winning and losing candidates), the challenged ballots need not be ruled upon or counted. The sealed challenged ballot envelopes will then be preserved together with all other election materials. If the challenged ballots can affect the outcome, the election committee shall rule on each challenged, segregating the ballot envelopes of those voters to whom the challenge is overruled. Those ballot envelopes shall be unsealed, and ballots removed, care being taken that the ballots are not to be unfolded. The folded ballots shall be intermingled to avoid identification of the voter and then tallied. The final tally shall separately show the outcome with and without the inclusion of the challenged ballots. When the challenge to the voter is sustained, the unopened ballot envelope will be preserved with the other election materials.

All challenges and objection to the conduct of the elections shall first be made to the elections Committee. Any member aggrieved by a ruling of the Election Committee may appeal to the next meeting of the Branch Executive Board.

A member aggrieved by a ruling of the Branch with respect to an election for Branch Officers may appeal within 30 days to the Appeals Committee of the NALC as provided in Article XI, Section 4, A; of the NALC Constitution Any member aggrieved with respect to the election of a delegate or alternate to the NALC Convention may appeal to the Credentials Committee of the Convention not less than 5 (five) days before the Convention, and the procedure provided in Article XI, Section 5 of the NALC Constitution shall then be followed. Any member aggrieved by a ruling of the Branch with respect to the election of a delegate to the State Association Convention may appeal to the Credentials Committee of the State Association Convention under rules prescribed by the Association. Any member aggrieved by a ruling of the State Association Credentials Committee may appeal to the State Association Convention.

Changed to read:

When the ballots are tallied the challenged ballot envelopes shall be put to one side, and the unchallenged ballots counted. If the challenged ballots cannot affect the outcome of the election (because there are less challenged ballots than the smallest margin between any winning and losing candidates), the challenged ballots need not be ruled upon or counted. The sealed challenged ballot envelopes will then be preserved together with all other election materials. If the challenged ballots can affect the outcome, the election committee shall rule on each challenged, segregating the ballot envelopes of those voters to whom the challenge is overruled. Those ballot envelopes shall be unsealed, and ballots removed, care being taken that the ballots are not to be unfolded. The folded ballots shall be intermingled to avoid identification of the voter and then tallied. The final tally shall separately show the outcome with and without the inclusion of the challenged ballots. When the challenge to the voter is sustained, the unopened ballot envelope will be preserved with the other election materials.

All objections to the conduct of an election by an aggrieved member must be submitted to the Chairperson of the Branch Election Committee within five (5) days after the date of the election. The appeal must be submitted in writing by certified mail, return receipt requested, and must include all supporting evidence. The Election Committee must respond in writing within thirty (30) days.

(continued on page 13)

Any aggrieved member may appeal the decision of the Election Committee to the Branch Executive Board within five (5) days of the committee's decision. The appeal must be submitted in writing by certified mail, return receipt requested. The Branch Executive Board must respond in writing within thirty (30) days.

If an aggrieved member is dissatisfied with the ruling of the Branch Executive Board, the member may appeal to the next scheduled meeting of the branch. Within five (5) days after receiving the ruling of the Branch Executive Board, the aggrieved member must notify the Branch Recording Secretary of his or her intention to appeal to the branch. This notice must be in writing and sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. Members present at the next scheduled meeting of the branch must decide the merits of the appeal.

Any aggrieved member dissatisfied with the decision of the branch meeting may appeal to the NALC National Committee on Appeals, except for decisions concerning the election of delegates and alternate delegates to National and State Conventions.

An appeal to the National Committee on Appeals must be in writing and filed with the Branch Recording Secretary within twenty (20) days from the date of the branch decision. It must be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, and should include any arguments, briefs, or other written testimony and evidence which the member chooses to submit.

At the regular meeting of the branch following receipt of the appeal, the Recording Secretary must present the appeal and all attached written materials to the members present at the meeting.

The branch then has twenty (20) days to prepare its written reply.

The original of the appeal, all supporting material and the reply of the branch must be sent via registered mail to the Chairperson, Committee on Appeals at NALC Headquarters in Washington, D.C. At the same time, a copy of the reply must be sent to the member who is appealing.

Any aggrieved member dissatisfied with the decision of the Committee on Appeals may appeal to the National Convention of the NALC, in accordance with the procedures described in Article XI, Section 4 of the National Constitution.

Any aggrieved member dissatisfied with the decision of the branch meeting with respect to the election of a delegate or alternate to the State Association Convention may appeal to the Credentials Committee of the State Association, under the rules prescribed by the Association.

Any aggrieved member dissatisfied with a ruling of the State Association Credentials Committee may appeal to the State Association Convention.

Any aggrieved member dissatisfied with the decision of the State Association Convention may appeal to the National Convention, in accordance with the procedures described in Article XI, Section 4 of the National Constitution.

(continued on page 14)

Any aggrieved member dissatisfied with the decision of the branch meeting with respect to the election of a delegate or alternate to the NALC National Convention may appeal to the Credentials Committee of the Convention at least five (5) days before the opening of the Convention. The member should follow the procedure provided in Article XI, Section 5 of the NALC Constitution.

Any aggrieved member dissatisfied with the decision of the Credentials Committee may appeal to the National Convention, in accordance with the procedures described in Article XI, Section 4 of the National Constitution.

NALC National Convention 2006 - Las Vegas



AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM BRANCH 599



WHO WILL FIGHT FOR WORKING FAMILIES?



BILL NELSON

NELSON FOUGHT TO PROTECT OUR WAGES AND JOBS

Supports Our Freedom to Form a Union. Nelson co-sponsored the Employee Free Choice Act and was targeted by an anti-union group for refusing to support "Right-to-Work-for-Less" legislation designed to destroy unions. (St. Petersburg Times, 10/30/00; NRTW Newsletter, 5/06; S. 842)

Protected Our Wages and Overtime Pay. Nelson voted against weakening wage and overtime protections for millions of workers. (S. 256, S.Amdt.128, Vote #27, 3/7/05)

Opposed Privatizing Government Jobs. Nelson voted to stop the federal government from privatizing jobs and outsourcing contracts. (S.1637, Vote #32, 3/4/04; H.R.4567, Vote #168, 9/8/04)



KATHERINE HARRIS

HARRIS WORKED TO LOWER OUR WAGES AND ELIMINATE OUR JOBS

Co-Sponsored Anti-Union 'Right-to-Work-for-Less' Law. Harris is a co-sponsor of a bill designed to restrict our freedom to form unions and to lower our wages and benefits. (H.R. 500, 3/17/05)

Voted to Weaken Workers' Overtime Protections. Harris supported new rules that would have eliminated overtime pay for millions of workers. (H.R. 5006, Vote #434, 9/9/04)

Supported Privatizing Government Jobs. Harris supported allowing the use of federal money to help agencies privatize federal jobs. (H.R. 5025, Vote #457, 9/21/04; H.R. 3058, Vote #357, 6/30/05)

CHECK THE FACTS. GET THE RECORDS.

VOTE

How you vote is a personal decision. Branch 599 has carefully researched the candidates' records and believes Bill Nelson is the best choice for working families. For more information, contact Branch 599 at 813-875-0599 or the Florida AFL-CIO at 850-224-6926.



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