

The Twig of the Branch



Branch 1477 West Coast Florida Letter Carriers



Serving:

**St. Petersburg — Largo — Dunedin — Pinellas Park — Indian Rocks Beach
Punta Gorda — Englewood — Bradenton Beach — Palmetto — Ellenton**

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By President Joe Henschen

Twitter @JaHe1

Disaster Relief Foundation

With Hurricane Elsa kicking off 2021's Hurricane Season, the NALC reached out to Branch Presidents to promote the National Association of Letter Carriers Disaster Relief Foundation.

At the 2018 NALC Convention in Detroit, the Union established the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation to alleviate the suffering of members affected by natural disasters, including earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, and wildfires.

The foundation was created to fill a need identified by many branches in the face of the disasters in prior years, including the wildfires that ravaged Northern and Southern California, as well as the hurricanes that swept through South Texas, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Florida Keys.

The foundation provides financial support through grants. Any NALC member who has faced hardship as a result of a natural disaster will be able to apply for assistance. The foundation's board of directors will consider the hardship applications and will issue grants on an objective basis to eligible individuals as funds are available. Job performance or history of donations to the foundation will not be considered as part of the selection process.

The foundation has been set up to function in two ways: by providing hands-on relief and by receiving donations as a means to offer financial grants. In 2019 when Hurricane Michael made landfall in the Florida

NEXT BRANCH MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM: THURSDAY, AUGUST 12, 2021

Pan Handle the NALCDRF still just getting started was part of the FSALC's response as we took supplies directly to the Letter Carriers. It was the beginning of the response teams the NALC has established throughout the country.

People on the teams have received disaster relief training from charitable organizations and government agencies.

Eligibility Criteria

Relief grants are only considered for property damage sustained to a primary residence, vehicle, or personal property, by a hurricane, flood, tornado, wildfire, earthquake, severe storm, etc. Damage declared by the applicant will be verified.

Must be a NALC member, active or retired.

Members do NOT have to wait for emergency relief or insurance claims to apply.

All members having been temporarily displaced from their primary residence "uninhabitable" MUST submit a signed, personal narrative detailing the specific reasons for the anticipated duration of the displacement.

Applications for grants from NALCDRF are available at NALC.org and must be received no later than 120 days from the date that the natural disaster occurred unless the applicant can provide sufficient reason(s) why they were unable to complete and submit their application prior to this deadline. Requests for exceptions will be ruled on by the NALCDRF Directors on a case-by-case basis.

It was recommended that along with the NALCDRF grant application form and narrative, pictures of the damage are recommended.

If anyone had damage from Hurricane Elsa they should complete the form and apply.

NALC Veterans Group

Region 9 which covers Georgia, Florida, and the Carolinas is reported to have 3,277 Veterans that have not registered with the Veterans Group. It's easy to join. Follow the link on the Members Benefits section at NALC.org. You will find a link to email the group and provide your name, address, branch number, Military branch and any affiliated veterans groups.

Each November, the Postal Record highlights the members that have served in the military. November is also the month that we field a number of calls asking why a Veteran's name was omitted from the publication.

Don't be left out of this year's Postal Record.

Thunderbolts and Lightning

It's that time of year again. If thunderstorms and lightning are occurring in your area, you should: avoid contact with corded phones and devices including those plugged into electric for recharging. Cordless and wireless phones not connected to wall outlets are OK to use. Use your phone and Scanner to call your Supervisor.

All Branch 1477's LMOU's have similar language:

"Carriers are expected to use responsible, intelligent discretion when confronted with emergency situations such as severe lightning storms, which might require independent action on the Carrier's part."

Avoid contact with electrical equipment or cords. Unplug appliances and other electrical items such as computers and turn off air conditioners. Power surges from lightning can cause serious damage. Avoid contact with plumbing.

Do not wash your hands, do not take a shower, do not wash dishes, and do not do laundry. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.

Stay away from windows and doors and stay off porches.

Do not lie on concrete floors and do not lean against concrete walls.

Avoid natural lightning rods such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area.

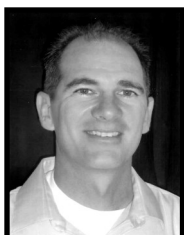
Avoid hilltops, open fields, the beach, or a boat on the water.

Take shelter in a sturdy building. Avoid isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.

Avoid contact with anything metal—tractors, farm equipment, motorcycles, golf carts, golf clubs, and bicycles.

If you are driving, try to safely exit the roadway and park. Stay in the vehicle and turn on the emergency flashers until the heavy rain ends. Avoid touching metal or other surfaces that conduct electricity in and outside the vehicle.¹

¹ Ready.gov thunderstorms—lightning



Hubble's Troubles

*By Executive Vice President,
Chris Hubble*

eBike...

The USPS plans to test an electric bike to determine whether alternative delivery options can improve street efficiencies, reduce fuel consumption, and reduce the cost of delivery functions. The Postal Service will also be reviewing possible reductions in relay boxes as well. The test is scheduled to begin in August in two offices in Florida, the Historic Open-Air Station in St Petersburg, and the Miami Beach Station. Both stations currently have bike routes. The pilot test is scheduled to run for approximately six (6) months.

The eBike tested have over 75 Cubic Ft of storage capacity. The drive train is electric with an average speed of 14 Mph and a range of 40 to 60 miles. The hydraulic brake life is up to 10,000 miles. The tires have foam inserts for puncture resistance with a max gross weight of 950 lbs. There is a display as well that provides information to the rider such as speed and remaining battery life. In addition, the coaster design has a cargo light, locking doors, lighting system, mirrors and/or a camera system, driver canopy, cargo box, and bike security.

As mentioned above, the possible reduction in relay boxes would afford the relay driver positions more time to deliver parcels which have increased 17% over the same period last year. With that said, the carriers on bicycle routes have different office and/or street allied time then motorized routes such as strapping out while pulling down the route to relay their mail. The average time it takes the carriers to strap out is about 10 to 15 minutes. Load time for a bicycle takes less than 5 minutes for the carry out as opposed to 20 minutes or more for a motorized route. In addition, bicycle routes were not adjusted

to deliver parcels (anything larger than a shoebox and/or over 2 lbs.), as well as using the load feature scan. Bicycle routes also can have more direct line of travel to and from the route as they can use the sidewalks. The eBike would not be able to use sidewalks so the travel to and from the route will have to be altered.

Handbook M-39 page 65 explains in part: Two types of operational surveys are to be conducted to determine feasibility of motorization, as follows:

- a. The first study will be an operational review of each delivery unit having foot routes to see if it is practical and feasible to install vehicles.
- b. Following the first survey, a second survey will be conducted by local management. Initiate and complete Form 4315, Evaluation of Routes for Motorization, in original and two copies, to reflect present and proposed costs only for those letter routes being considered for motorization.

Selection of Vehicles

Selection of vehicle type is governed by many factors, such as: (a) Terrain. (b) Number of curb line box deliveries, door dismounts, and park and loop stops. (c) Miles of travel. (d) Pieces of parcel post delivered daily. (e) Climate. (f) Traffic (environment and speed of travel). (g) Average daily mail. (cubic volume) (h) Average lot frontage.

Preparation for Conversion

After District approval to proceed with motorization and before the vehicles are assigned, the delivery unit manager shall: (a) Notify the craft organization representative as promptly as possible of the date changes will be made. (b) Assure that all carriers are qualified to drive the vehicles that will be assigned to them and hold a valid state driver's license. (c) Re-label the case to conform to new delivery pattern. (d) Make adjustments at the time of implementation. (e) Revise remaining parcel post, relay, and collection schedules. (f) Make arrangements for removal of relay boxes declared surplus.

As read above, the Postal Service selects the mode of delivery. Bicycles have been used by the Postal Service for over 100 years. Historic Open-Air Station in downtown St Petersburg has been delivering mail by bicycles since 1917. I am not so sure it is time to reinvent the wheel, perhaps electric vans for the relays and parcel delivery would be more advantageous?

Food drive update

After much consideration, NALC decided to cancel the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive for 2021 because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to having a traditional Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive the second Saturday in May 2022, just as we have done for nearly three decades.

For now, though, our focus turns to NALC's ongoing Stamp Out Hunger Donor Drive. Created in June 2020, this effort helps to fulfill the nutritional needs of the 1 in 8 Americans who face food insecurity in communities across the country—including millions of children, elderly and military veterans.

The same pandemic that has forced cancellation of the traditional food drive for both 2020 and 2021 also has increased the problem of hunger because of its economic impact, putting extra pressure on food banks.

"We could not simply stand by and do nothing, because as letter carriers in every neighborhood in the country six and seven days a week, we see the need," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Our goal is to do everything we can to fill the shelves of food pantries."

By visiting nalc.org/food, donors can find a food bank in their area to support with an online donation. The site links directly to donation pages on each food bank's website. The same list also provides branches with a convenient means of informing donors in their area about how to locate and donate online to their local food banks.

As with the traditional Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, donations stay in the communities of the donors. Any resident, whether in a big city or suburb, small town or rural area, can



donate funds for a local food pantry to purchase food and replenish their stocks so local families can put food on their tables. Food banks make good use of cash donations—each dollar can provide up to three meals. The money also gives food pantries the flexibility to buy what they need the most.

Under the donor drive, Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Vela Davidson noted, NALC Headquarters matches every contribution from the branch's treasury to a local food bank. She asked that branches mail proof of such branch donations (copy of branch check and food bank receipt) to: Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive, c/o NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001.

"With the national online donor effort in place," Rolando said, "and the tools for branches to use available at nalc.org/food, every branch can help its local food banks restock their shelves. And when it's safe to do so," he added, "we look forward to once again holding the

largest one-day food drive in the United States. In 2022, letter carriers will be there to hold our traditional Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive and pick up bag upon bag of groceries from the generous customers on our routes."

NALC had considered trying to hold the door-to-door food drive this fall, but after consultation with the Postal Service, decided instead to aim for next May.

The annual spring effort comes at a critical point on food pantry calendars—holiday donations are largely depleted, while the free or reduced cost meals from school cafeterias generally are not available to needy children over the summer break. The donor drive can help fill this summer's needs. **PR**



Retiree Update

*By Director of Retiree Affairs,
O.D. Elliott*

Recently, while assisting a carrier with his retirement papers, I learned that on the date of his scheduled retirement, he would have used approximately 8 hours of annual leave more than earned to date. He asked what would happen about the 8 hours not yet earned. I told him; he would almost certainly get a Debt collection notice from the Postal Service after retirement. (The following is a partial reprint of a previous article about Post Retirement Debt Collection.)

This is where the Postal Service claims that a retired employee owes it money and attempts to collect it through administrative offset by having it deducted from the OPM pension, Social Security benefit or tax refund.

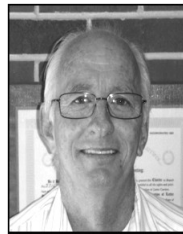
When this happens, the Postal Service sends the retiree a Notice of Intent to Collect a Debt by Administrative Offset. The notice advises the retiree that he/she has a right to request a copy of the Postal Service records related to the debt and has the right to request reconsideration (challenging the existence or amount of the debt). The notice provides the address to send the reconsideration request. It also advises the retiree of a 30-day time limit for making the request and notes that a timely appeal will stay all collection efforts. That 30-day time limit begins the date the notice is received.

Often, the retiree has no idea why the Postal Service is claiming money is owed. The Notice of Intent to Collect a Debt usually does not explain why the Postal Service believes the debt exists. Their Notices usually contain a vague statement that previous correspondence reflected the existence of the debt. If the retiree has not received previous correspondence regarding a debt, or if the amount or calculation of the alleged debt has not been explained, it will be important for the retiree to request copies of the Postal Service records related to the debt. It will also be important to request reconsideration within 30 days of receipt of the notice, to suspend collection efforts. The combined request for records and reconsideration should be sent to the address provided in the Notice of Intent to Collect a Debt.

In addition to making a timely appeal, you should

contact your Branch Leaders and we will assist and/or advise to the best of our ability.

And don't forget that your 30-day time limit for appeal begins the date you receive the Notice.



Legislative Update

By Gene Carroll, CDL District 15

On June 22, 2021, the Senate approved the nomination of Kiran Ahuja to serve as the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) today. Vice President Harris broke the 50-50 party-line vote to confirm Ahuja. Ahuja will fill the position that has been vacant since March 2020 and will lead OPM, the federal agency that provides human resources policy and manages healthcare, life insurance, and retirement benefits for federal employees and retirees. The agency makes decisions that affect letter carriers including providing policy direction and oversight for human resources systems and the administration of many of the benefits for active and retired letter carriers.

"NALC congratulates Kiran Ahuja on this important confirmation," said NALC President Fredric Rolando. "After a long vacancy, we are pleased to see a new director confirmed to lead OPM."

On June 23, 2021, In comments filed with the Postal Service on June 22 as part of the Postal Regulatory Commission's review of the USPS's proposed changes in service standards for First Class Mail and Periodicals, NALC argued against slowing the delivery of such mail. We noted the overwhelming opposition of the mailing community and the damage the slow-down would have to the Postal Service's brand, particularly at a time when rates are going up to levels needed to fund investment in the agency's vital networks. To read more on this issue go to NALC.ORG and at the top click on Government Affairs, then click on NALC weighs in on proposed Service Standard changes.

On June 24, 2021, the House Committee on Oversight and Reform held a hearing on the Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act (H.R. 564). This bill, which was introduced by Chairwoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) in January, would provide up to 12 weeks of paid family and

medical leave for federal employees, including Postal Service employees. This paid leave could be used for personal illness, caring for a family member, or time off work needed when a family member is leaving or returning from active military duty. Federal employees are currently entitled to 12 weeks of leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for such reasons, but it is not guarantee paid leave.

"This is a policy that is long overdue for the federal workforce and for our nation," said Chairwoman Maloney in her opening statement. "The federal government has the opportunity to lead the way on paid leave and fostering a family-friendly workplace. While providing access to paid parental leave is critically important and long overdue, it's just as important to provide access to paid family and medical leave too."

The hearing included five witnesses: Lelaine Bigelow, Interim Vice President for Economic Justice and Congressional Relations, National Partnership for Women & Families; Hadley Heath Manning, Director of Policy, Independent Women's Forum; Everett Kelley, National President, American Federation of Government Employees; Vicki Shabo, Senior Fellow, Paid Leave Policy and Strategy, Better Life Lab, on behalf of New America; Eric Sorkin, Co-Owner and Chief Executive Officer, Runamok Maple Democratic representatives emphasized that paid medical and family leave policy could help recruit and retain the federal workforce while keeping employees safe. "We don't want people going to work when they're sick, and you would have thought COVID-19 would have taught us that," said Rep. Jamie Raskin(D-MD).

In response to a question from Rep. Ayanna Pressley (D-MA) regarding why it is important to establish a federal paid leave program that covers diverse needs, Bigelow said, "Comprehensive paid leave improves health outcomes for those who need care and prevents people from having to make impossible choices between being there for their families...and their jobs and income. As the workforce ages, a comprehensive paid leave policy is just smart economics to ensure older workers can continue working and can manage work with caring for an aging parent or loved one."

The partisan tensions surrounding the bill do not give it an easy route through Congress. A mirroring Senate bill, S. 1158, was introduced in April. NALC will continue to monitor this legislation.

The Postal Service issued a mandatory stand up talk dated July 1 about the Office Personnel Management (OPM) requiring federal agencies to verify eligible family members who are enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, also known as FEHB. USPS has confirmed that only employees with self plus one and self and family enrollments that need to update eligible family members are required to fill out and return *PostalEASE FEHB Worksheet (USPS-24)*.

Eligible family members include your current spouse; your children under age 26, including adopted children, stepchildren and foster children under certain circumstances; and adult children incapable of self-support because of a mental or physical disability that existed before age 26.

NALC

If you have any questions, please contact the appropriate National Business Agent.

Minutes of July 8, 2021 Membership Meeting



***Recording/Financial
Secretary***
Ken Grasso

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Joe Henschen.

Invocation by: O.D. Elliott.

Pledge of Allegiance: led by President Joe Henschen.

Minutes of previous meeting: Motion to accept last month's minutes as printed in the Twig, by Anne Winkelbauer, Seconded by Brian Andrews. Motion passes.

Reading of Official Correspondence: by Ken Grasso: None

Application of New Members:

5/21 Class

Joseph Borrero Montalvo - Largo

Carolyn Herrington - St. Petersburg
Bonnie Edwards - St. Petersburg Main
Gerardo Hernandez Cruz - St. Petersburg
Steve Potak – Largo
Cory Johnson – Largo
Greyson Lankford – Englewood
Raphael Thomas – Englewood

6/11 Class

Kyler Ragsdale - St. Petersburg
Edward Walker – Pinellas Park
Nicol Espada Aponte – Largo
Alec Pent - St. Petersburg
Kimberly Pasquariello - St. Petersburg, Crossroads

6/19 Class

Craig Schnee - St. Petersburg Main
Joslyn Bouche – Largo
Stanley St. Fleur - St. Petersburg
Georgia Beckford - St. Petersburg
Michael Hayes - St. Petersburg
Daevid Brown – Pinellas Park
Phoukune Vongsanga - St. Petersburg, Crossroads

6/25 Class

David Kerr - St. Petersburg
Neil Fincher - St. Petersburg
Angel Torres – Dunedin
Nicole Walton – Northside
Wilmarie Rosado - St. Petersburg
Brian Gonzalez-Boneta – Pinellas Park

7/1 Class

Chad Abel - St. Petersburg
Debra Roberge - St. Petersburg
Ekresha Thompson - St. Petersburg
Kirt Kaempfer - St. Petersburg, Main
Sean Heiter - St. Petersburg

Branch by the Numbers: As of PP 13 the Dues Roster has 761 Active Members with 725 paying dues. We have 36 members with no deductions, 5 are on Military Leave. 4 paying direct, 4 other OWCP accepted claims were sent letters, with 15 on LWOP. Retirees 543 (85 Gold Cards). 1306 Total Members.

I would like to welcome Kelly Bins from Absolute Quality Interpreting Services LLC.

Treasurer: Chuck Cavicchio—read the account balances this month. We will send to Trustees for a more comprehensive report next month.

Director of Retiree Affairs: No Report,

Director of Insurance: Tom Phillips—Human Resources requesting members of Health Insurance to update their dependents on USPS Form 24.

Political District 13 Liaison: Tom Phillips—New House Bill HR 4268 for temporary employees to be able to participate in catch up contributions.

Political District 15 Liaison: Gene Carroll—No Report.

Trustee Report: Brian Andrews—No Report.

Sergeant at Arms: Clay Hansen—No Report.

Editor/Webmaster: Judy Dorris—Links for the upcoming Zoom meetings will be on the Links page of the Website, instead of under Upcoming Events.

Vice President Report: Zulma Betancourt—Manager had tour talk about any address that has a gate and a dog to be reported and they have to move the box to the front.

Executive Vice President: Chris Hubble—A new delivery service called Fetch being used by condos and apartments for delivery service.

Welfare Reports:

Sad Report:

- Darby Cummings, Carrier Gulfwinds—Wife passed away.
- Dave Kanich, Gulfwinds—Had Knee Surgery
- John Walsh, Gulfwinds—Had Knee Surgery
- Ken Grasso, Retiree, Branch Secretary—Underwent skin cancer surgery with skin graft.
- Willie Cochran, Retiree Midtown—Nephew passed away.

Glad Report:

- Gary Adams, Retiree St. Petersburg—Granddaughter Careana had her art work selected to be on display in the hallway of Pinellas County Board of Education Building.
- Matt Powell, Carrier Crossroads—Wife gave birth to twin baby girls.

President's Report:

COVID -19 Suncoast Numbers/Information
1778 Total Cases

1792 Confirmed Cases
0 Current Unconfirmed/Under Investigation
1758 Confirmed Positives have RTW
34 Active Cases

Manny Peralta, Director of Health and Safety—A conference being planned to discuss the issues that members who identify as Deaf or Hard of Hearing are facing on the Work Room Floor. You can register in the Members-Only section on the NALC.ORG website. You will be contacted when conference will occur.

Scholarships

Baxley: Alexander Hill, son of Mike Hill Retiree St. Pete Beach (Winner). Samantha Novak, Daughter of Mike Novak Punta Gorda Retiree (Alternate).

Elliott/Branch 1477 Male—Parker Micha Munro, son of Amanda Munro, Crossroads. (Only Male entrant)

Female—Eve Vanagas, Daughter of Lina Lekaviciute (winner), Jasmine Stilwell, Daughter of Joel Stilwell, Largo (alternate).

FSALC Convention: The 2021 FSALC Convention, August 12-15 at the Lake Buena Vista Palace, at Disney Springs. Rooms have been reserved with 16 Branch Delegates arriving on 8/12-8/15 and those Stewards attending training only will have rooms 8/13-8/15. The Friday and Saturday Training is Basic Steward Training with emphasis on Articles 15, 17 and 31 and Article 16. On Saturday each attendee will be put in a group and assigned a position either (Steward, Manager, Grievant). The groups will work a case from the Investigative Interview, through issued discipline investigation, the Informal A, and present work to the group at the end of the day.

Region 9 has reported the 3,277 Veterans in the Region who are not a member of the Veteran's Group. If you want your name listed in the November Postal Record you have to register your name to join the group.

Previously it was announced that the back pay computations were scheduled for the end of July. The USPS has announced the payments are now projected to be paid on August 20th (PP17). The payments will be in active Carrier's payroll checks. Checks will be sent to last station of employee for those retired. Make sure you address of record is updated.

Unfinished Business:

Branch Finances/Hall Repair

Metro Air installed the new A/C units at the hall today and will finish up with some electrical work tomorrow.

Executive Vice President Chris Hubble made a motion to take from the table about the trimming of the trees issue. Seconded by Chuck Cavicchio. Motion passes. Executive Board made a recommendation to accept the bid from Yutzy Tree Service for \$800.00. O.D. Elliott made motion to accept bid, seconded by Tom Phillips. Motion passes.



Article contributed
by
President Joe Henschen

Back Pay Update

The Branch and Region has been fielding several calls as to when you will be receiving your back pay for the 11/2019-4/2/2021 period.

Computations are being finalized and processed through the Quality Assurance Department. Payments are not projected to be paid on August 20th PP 17.

Payments will be in active carrier's payroll checks. Checks will be sent to the last station of employment for those retired or separated. Management can either mail it to you or you can make arrangements to pick it up.

Please make sure your address of record is updated.

Sunday not always Sunday

The Postal Service is looking for ways to expand delivery options and provide additional services for mailers. City Carrier Assistants are essential to this economic growth. New business, like parcel delivery outside of traditional delivery hours, is very important to the continued viability of the Postal Service because it is the best opportunity to increase revenue well into the future. One of the most visible areas of expansion is the delivery of parcels on Sunday and holidays. The Postal Service

primarily uses CCAs to deliver these parcels.

USPS is using a computer program called Dynamic Routing to sequence these parcels and create dynamic routes. A manifest of the parcels' delivery locations is loaded into the dynamic routing program, which generates routes with turn-by-turn directions based on those delivery locations. The Carriers simply follow the directions and deliver these parcels as they are routed.

With the huge growth in ecommerce, USPS has increased revenue opportunities and offers additional services to the American people. USPS has partnered with national level retailers to provide additional next day services in certain markets. Consumers can order online goods to be picked up by Letter Carriers at the store, then delivered to the customer in one to two days. USPS and NALC are committed to exploring new delivery initiatives nationwide.

The parcel business is booming, and the Postal Service has invested greatly in new scanner technology to increase accuracy of tracking parcels from the shipper to the customer's home. The new scanners communicate through GPS signals that provide a digital tracking of parcels for customers. Customers can now receive near real-time notification of when they are delivered. With near real-time notification of parcels and the ability to preview incoming mail, customers are more connected with USPS than ever before.

These are just some of the areas where the Postal Service is looking to expand and CCAs are involved in each of them. You are the future of your Postal Service.¹

Problem Sunday-Hubs

The Letter Carrier Resource Guide paints a picture of the significance of the Sunday City Carrier Assistant and the importance of the work done on Sunday. Unfortunately, reality is a bit different in some Branch 1477 Cities.

Yes the work done is so important however in some "Hub" locations, short staffing; either intentionally directed during scheduling, Sick Calls and "On Call" tactics leave needed assistance sitting at home resulting in long and frustrating days for those who report.

Further compounding the worsening Sunday delivery issues are missing Condo Access Keys and

Codes, CCAs not presented with Promaster Training and conflicting instructions: one week it's deliver everything, the next week – scan it "no access" and bring it back. At one Sunday Hub. Routes are created by Delivery Unit (Zip Code) which sometimes create larger workloads than can be completed and parcels being left on the dock for a second trip. Providing auxiliary assistance to these routes is almost impossible to offer because the turn-by-turn directions provided by Dynamic Routing is given when all the parcels assigned are scanned while loading the vehicle.

These are some of the issues we are working to overcome. Fixing the issues can only be accomplished by taking notes and reporting the issues to the Union and Supervision so we can work to work around these problems.

Getting Sunday Delivery Right Is important. If anyone is experiencing these issues let your Steward know.

Limited Duty/Medical Restrictions

When injured on the job USPS relies on a CA-17 Duty Status report to identify the limitations placed on the injured worker by his/her physician. The Postal Service uses the CA-17 to see whether there is work available within the worker's limitations. The Postal Service has an obligation to make every effort to assign compensably injured workers to limited duty consistent with the employee's medically defined work limitations.

ELM Section 545.31 instructs the supervisor or manager who authorizes medical care to advise the employee, in writing, of the obligation to return to work as soon as possible. "Return to work" refers to work in the employee's bid assignment or work in other locations and positions. Notification to the employee must include the following:

- If a specific alternative position is available, the supervisor/manager must advise the employee in writing of the specific duties and physical requirements of the position.
- If no specific alternative position is necessary, the supervisor/manager should advise the employee of any change the agency can make to the employee's permanent assignment to accommodate the employee's limitations due to the injury.

The Postal Service normally makes a job offer on PS Form 2499. Section I of the form contains employee information, Section II contains the hours and duties of the job, and Section III is where the employee can accept or refuse the job offer.

Postal and federal regulations allow the injured worker to take the job offer to their attending physician. **Injured workers who get a job offer where some of the duties may exceed their medical limitations should accept the job offer, do what work they feel is within their medical limitations and take the job offer to their physician for review.**²

Once you find yourself with a workable Modified Duty Job Offer – within your restrictions it may be changed as the injured worker's limitations lessen.

These changes must be done by an additional MDJO. Until this occurs, it is important limited duty carriers must work within the limitations on the accepted MDJO. Injured workers should not be instructed by management to work beyond their MDJO. Additionally, no matter how good you are progressing on any day, if the additional work results in slower recovery or further damage to the condition, it could result in challenged OWCP claims. **DO NOT TAKE IT UPON YOURSELF TO EXCEED YOUR LIMITATIONS.**

¹ Letter Carrier Resource Guide

² Postal Record August 2017, Limited-duty job offers, Kevin Card, Assistant to the President for Workers' Compensation.

fundraisers, deposited our baked goods raffle and cat-in-the-bag monies, and probably much more than I can guess! She must be exhausted from all her years of duties! Sally also calls each of us every month to remind us of the upcoming meeting. And she has done this with the nicest, most cheerful and kind words. It's always a pleasure to get a phone call from Sally. We're so lucky to have her.

Sue Elliott has graciously agreed to become our new treasurer, as well as keep her Sunshine Lady job of remembering us with cards on special occasions.

Although there are no summer auxiliary meetings, we can't seem to go too long without seeing each other. We want to know how everyone is doing, any vacation plans, grand kids visiting, etc. So, we're meeting for lunch at Frida's Cafe on Wednesday, July 14th at noon. We'll skip August and meet September 1st at noon at Joyce Keller's.

We send sincere condolences to Zulma and Rudy Betancourt for the loss of her mother, who had been ill for some time.

Belated July birthday wishes to Alan Hutchinson, Rudy Betancourt, Diana Keller, and our great country.

Belated July anniversary wishes to Shirley and Bill Moran.

Happy August 11th birthday to Alice Wannike.

Steward Meeting Attendees

Meetings are held at the Hall and on Zoom, led by Joe Henschen and Chris Hubble

July 15th:

Tom Phillips, Shiela Bradley, Cheryl Anderson, Anthony Roger, Jim Grazioso, Brian Andrews, Sheldon Jones, Patrick Jacques, Tiffany Naughton, Anne Winkelbauer, Donny DeMila, Bert Lewis, Ben Hamilton, AJ Pollard, Ken Domingos, Chuck Cavicchio, Jennifer Cohill, Eric Short, Chris Kotonski, Joel Baez

Auxiliary 181 News

By Dottie Tutt-Hutchinson

After more than 30 years as our treasurer, Sally Madden has resigned her position. What are we going to do without her financial expertise? She kept our books up-to-date, filed monthly reports, guided us to be fiscally sound, led us through audits, handled our dues, paid the national Auxiliary, wrote checks for supporting Branch 1477's

BRANCH 1477 PHONE DIRECTORY

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The Twig of the Branch is published monthly by Branch 1477 West Coast Florida Letter Carriers. Articles and opinions printed herein are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of Branch 1477 or the NALC. We invite all members to contribute material for possible publications. The editor reserves the right to edit or reject such material for reasons of good taste, legality, space, or the good of the Branch. Articles should be of general interest, be 350 words or less and be submitted by email to the branch by the 10th of the month.



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August, 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5 Executive Board	6	7
8	9	10	11	12 General Membership (Zoom)	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 Steward's Meeting (Zoom)	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				