

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**

VOLUME 651

VOICE OF BRANCH 1477

JUNE, 2024

Inside This Issue:

President's Report by Joe Henschen	1-3
Logging into Union Meetings	3
Executive Vice President article—Hubble's Troubles by Chris Hubble	3-5
Editor's Corner by Judy Dorris	5-6
Legislative Update by Gene Carroll	6-7
Minutes of the Branch by Recording/Financial Secretary Ken Grasso	7-9
Director of Insurance article by Tom Phillips	9-10
Meeting Attendees	10
Union's Data Page	11
Calendar	12



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By President Joe Henschen

Twitter @ JaHe1

Letter Carriers get paid to deliver mail. Managers get paid to make decisions.

Many times, Letter Carriers make the decision to either bring some mail back or deliver all the mail and get back late. After all, these seem to be the only options there are. You should do everything you can to put the ball back in the manager's court. The trick is to force the manager to make the choice. After all, that's their job, isn't it? The best way to handle this situation is to contact your supervisor, per local instructions. Remember, the MDD scanner has a text feature which allows you to send a message to management at your office. If you have no local instructions, try contacting them at least an hour and a half to two hours before the time you are scheduled (approved on PS Form 3996) to be back. Let them know where you are and how long you think it will take you to finish. Ask your supervisor whether they want you to bring the mail back or finish the route. If you call and your supervisor isn't available, ask for the station manager or postmaster and talk to them about it. Make a note of who you spoke to, what time it was, and what instructions were given. If no one in management is available, leave a message with the

person who answers the phone and be sure you know who you are talking to. Make sure they understand when you are scheduled to be back and how long it will take you to complete your assignment. Once again, make a note of who you spoke to and what time it was. Then just keep working until someone tells you otherwise or it's time for you to go back to the office to make it back in the time that was approved on PS Form 3996 (whichever comes first). If the line is busy or no one answers, you should keep trying to get through. If you use your cell phone, you'll have a record of your call(s). Just don't wait until it's time for you to be back to call. Also, be sure to make a note of how much time you spent calling. Try to give your supervisor or manager a reasonable amount of time to decide whether to send you some help or authorize you to finish

NEXT BRANCH MEETING AT THE HALL AND VIA ZOOM: THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2024

your route. Follow whatever instructions your supervisor or manager gives you. Any disputes that arise from the instructions given will have to wait. If the supervisor or manager refuses to tell you what to do with the rest of the mail or you can't get through, you should return to the office at the time approved on the PS Form 3996 and ask for further instructions. Follow whatever instructions your supervisor or manager gives you.

Note: Don't ever return mail to the office and leave it without getting instructions on what to do with the mail from a manager! Make a note of what instructions you were given and what time it was. If you have local Instructions like "Don't call back to the office and don't bring mail back", you should request to see your shop steward and ask them to file a grievance. The same is true when your supervisor refuses to give you instructions when you call back in the afternoon. If you want a successful grievance filed, you should write a detailed statement. This will be easy if you take notes as advised above.

Sanctity of the Mail

The Postal Service requires its employees to adhere to very high standards of integrity and fidelity. These standards are set forth in the Code of Ethical Conduct, which you can obtain from your supervisor. Foremost among these standards is the requirement that employees preserve the sanctity of the mail. Mail is private property entrusted to the Letter Carrier for safe passage and delivery to its intended recipient. Any compromise of the mail or other violations of these standards may lead to discipline or removal from the Postal Service. In addition, there are federal statutes pertaining to willful and knowing delay, obstruction, or theft of any mail. When you were hired you signed PS Form 8139, Your Role in Protecting the Security of the United States Mail. This form is your pledge to uphold public trust and protect the security of the mail. This document, along with many others, is retained in your official personnel file for your entire career. Be mindful of this pledge when performing your Letter Carrier duties. New Letter Carriers often work under great time pressures because of unfamiliarity with some work assignments. As a result, some are tempted to seek shortcuts that are not proper. Do not fall into this trap — you must take extreme care not to be involved in any action or practice involving the mistreatment of the mail. Carelessness can get you into serious trouble. If you need extra time to complete a work assignment, inform your supervisor by submitting *PS Form 3996, Carrier-Auxiliary Control* and ask for appropriate instructions.

PS Form 1571, Undelivered Mail Report is the form that Letter Carriers use to record undelivered or curtailed mail. You will use PS Form 1571 when mail assigned to your route is not delivered for any reason. It could be your manager or supervisor instructed you to leave in the office or mail you were unable to deliver on the street. If you did not deliver the mail, then the reason, amount, and type must be recorded on this form.

The United States Postal Service (USPS) divides mail into different **classes** based on various features, service levels, postage prices, and presort requirements. Here are the main classes of mail:

Priority Mail Express: Suitable for anything mailable, including letters, merchandise, and important documents. It offers fast delivery with guaranteed overnight service. **No-cost forwarding and return services are available, along with extra services like tracking and insurance.**

Priority Mail: Similar to Priority Mail Express, this class is suitable for anything mailable, such as bills, invoices, personal correspondence, and merchandise. It provides fast delivery, with some options **for free forwarding and return services.** Like Priority Mail Express, it also offers extra services like tracking and insurance.

First-Class Mail: This class covers a wide range of items, including bills, invoices, personal correspondence, and merchandise. It's commonly used for letters and small packages. **First-Class Mail provides reliable delivery and includes services like forwarding and return options.**

Periodicals: Designed for newsletters and magazines, this class requires formal authorization. **It offers in-country free forwarding for 60 days and additional services.**

Package Services and USPS Retail Ground: These classes are suitable for merchandise, catalogs, printed material, and computer media. **They offer various services, including forwarding and return options.**

The above Services should never be considered Unendorsed Bulk Business Mail (UBBM) Rather if you cannot deliver mail in any of these classes of mail; they should be identified on the PS Form 1571 as mentioned earlier in this article and left for the regular Carrier to review.


USPS Marketing Mail: Ideal for advertisements, circulars, newsletters, small parcels, and merchandise. While **it doesn't provide free forwarding,** it's a cost-effective option for bulk

mailings. This is usually identified as Standard Mail or Presorted Standard mail. It may be addressed to the current resident or our Neighbor at, or by name to the patron. This service may be utilized for the same message sent to all recipients. **Without any other endorsement of service, it is the only class that can be placed in the Office designated UBBM receptacle at each case.**

Regardless of any class of mail described, as “Return Service Requested”, “Address Correction Requested”, and/or Forwarding Service Requested, this must be reviewed, forwarded or returned to the sender.

As a USPS Carrier **we work for the customer that affixed postage to the mail piece or parcel, not the patron we deliver to.** Customers may ask not to receive a certain class of mail, that is not our or their call. A patron can call a mailer and be taken off a mailing list. I’ve known Carriers to be severely disciplined for failing to deliver mail at the known request of the customer. (the mailer) The services paid for must be provided.

You can be a part of your Union Meetings by logging into Branch1477nalc.org to find the link and passcode. The Next General Membership Meeting is May 9, 2024, at 7PM.



Hubble’s Troubles

*By Executive Vice President,
Chris Hubble*

Street supervision, street inactivity (stationary) and discipline....

Now, management is attempting to use data from the Mobile Delivery Device (*MDD*) as the sole basis for disciplinary action against city carriers. The *MDD* tracks movement of the device by recording what is called “**breadcrumb**” data. In addition to tracking the movement of the *MDD*, the device also records the amount of time the scanner is “**stationary**”.

In the discipline letters, management is alleging that City Carriers are failing to perform consistently based on reported stationary events or cumulative stationary time recorded by the *MDD*. Management is attempting to substitute GPS data for actual street management and observations.

Handbook M-41, City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities reminds City Carriers that they may be supervised anytime while they are working. Section 16 of the M-41 states:

“Carriers may expect to be supervised at all times while in performance of their daily duties.”

While Carriers should expect to be supervised at any time, management has certain responsibilities when performing this street supervision. These requirements are found in Section 134 of Handbook M-39, Management of Delivery Services, which states in pertinent part:

134.12 Accompanying carriers on the street is considered an essential responsibility of management and one of the manager’s most important duties. Managers should act promptly to correct improper conditions. A positive attitude must be maintained by the manager at all times.

Section 134.3 of the M-39 also identifies specific circumstances that may require additional street supervision:

Certain criteria may call attention for individual street supervision. When overtime or auxiliary assistance is used frequently on a route (foot, motorized, parcel post, collection, relay), when a manager receives substantial evidence of loitering or other actions or lack of action by one or more

employees, or when it is considered to be in the interest of the service, the manager may accompany the Carrier on the street to determine the cause, or meet the Carrier on the route and continue until such a time as the manager is satisfied. No advance notice to the carrier is required.

While there is no requirement for management to notify Carriers in advance, Sections 134.21 and 134.22 of the M-39 provide the proper approach management must use for conducting street supervision:

134.21 The manager must maintain an objective attitude in conducting street supervision and discharge this duty in an open and above board manner.

134.22 The manager is not to spy or use other covert techniques. Any employee infractions are to be handled in accordance with the section in the current National Agreement that deal with these problems.

This section of the M-39 requires management to use a straightforward, upfront manner and not to spy on Carriers when supervising them on the street.

Presently, management is trying to use GPS data as an alternative to physical street supervision. GPS data is not always accurate and does not tell the whole story.

When discussing the value of *MDD* GPS data, City Carriers should be aware the computer systems involved record stationary time when the *MDD* appears to not be moving from one GPS location to another. Stationary events are recorded in USPS's Delivery Management System (*DMS*) or Regional Intelligent Mail Server (*RIMS*).

There are a variety of reasons why a Letter Carrier and their *MDD* may be recorded as stationary. For example, the *MDD* might not register as moving if the Carrier is servicing a centralized mail location or cluster box unit (*CBU*). Perhaps the *MDD* isn't moving because the Carrier is picking up parcels or fueling the vehicle. Stationary time could also be recorded while the Carrier is on their break or lunch or is replenishing mail and preparing a relay.

“The MDD may be inactive when the Carrier is using a comfort stop and/or seeking shade and water to cool down from the heat as trained in our Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP) training.”

Stationary time, in and of itself, is not a violation of

any handbook or manual. The absence of movement of the *MDD* does not mean the Carrier is not working.

MDD connectivity also can affect the reliability of the GPS and *breadcrumb* data obtained. Like a cell phone, the *MDD* sends and receives information, including GPS data. Also, cell phones, walls, vehicle roofs, tall buildings, and other obstructions can interfere with the scanner's connection to the network. This could affect how accurately the scanner records the movement and positioning of the device. Additionally, extreme weather, inaccurate mapping and insufficient cellular service can have an impact on the accuracy of GPS and *breadcrumb* data. GPS data and any associated reports must always be reviewed for errors. Any perceived time-wasting practices alleged against City Carriers should be documented with actual street observation.

For management to sustain any disciplinary action against Letter Carriers, it must satisfy all of the requirements related to the just cause principle contained in Article 16 of the National Agreement. Simply put, the just cause provision requires a fair and provable justification for discipline.

The Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM) defines just cause into six sub-questions that arbitrators use when deciding whether to uphold disciplinary action. JCAM pages 16-1 & 16-2 provide in part:

- **Is there a rule?** If so, was the employee aware of the rule?
- **Is the rule a reasonable rule?** Management must make sure that rules are reasonable, based on the overall objective of safe and efficient work performance.
- **Is the rule consistently and equitably enforced?** A rule must be applied fairly and without discrimination.
- **Was a thorough investigation completed?** Before administering the discipline, management must make an investigation to determine whether the employee committed the offense.
- **Was the severity of the discipline reasonably related to the infraction itself and in line with that usually administered, as well as to the seriousness of the employee's past record?**
- **Was the disciplinary action taken in a timely manner?** Disciplinary actions should be taken

as promptly as possible after the offense has been committed.

The fourth sub-question of just cause requires that before the decision to impose discipline is made, management must conduct a full, fair and impartial investigation, including giving the Letter Carrier an opportunity to respond to the charges.

A question of... "Are you aware of your requirement to follow instructions from management?"

Which instruction? Managements questions in investigative interviews are most likely a leading question. One which encourages a desired answer such as "yes."

A question of... "Are you aware of your requirements as stated in ELM....M-41...etc.?"

Have you been given time to read all the handbooks and manuals management may ask of you? I'm pretty sure the answer is "No."

It is evident that there may be many reasons why City Carriers' GPS data may be unreliable or show the MDD as stationary. These stationary events may or may not be accurate; it is management's burden to prove the charges in the disciplinary action are substantiated.

Management has specific contractual and handbook responsibilities it must satisfy when assessing City Carrier performance, and productivity. As always, if you have been issued a disciplinary action letter, provide a copy of it to your Steward immediately.



Editor's Corner

By Editor/Webmaster,
Judy Dorris

Heat Illness Prevention Program (HIPP)

In Florida, the summer temperatures have already arrived. There's barely been enough time to get acclimated, and the humidity is quickly getting higher.

In 2022, the USPS issued instructions to management which detail their ongoing responsibilities relating to their heat illness prevention program.

Management must train all employees and supervisors every year by April 1. It focuses on education as a means to prevent or mitigate heat illness.

It's important to know the signs of heat illness and how to respond.

Abnormal thinking or behavior, slurred speech, seizures or loss of consciousness are signs of a medical emergency. Call 911 immediately, cool the worker with water or ice and stay with them until help arrives.

Heat illness can cause:

- Headaches
- Nausea
- Weakness or dizziness
- Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin
- Elevated body temperature
- Thirst
- Decreased urine output

If you spot someone experiencing the signs above, take action:

- Give them water to drink
 - Move them to a cooler area
 - Cool them with water, ice or a fan
 - Remove unnecessary clothing
 - Do not them leave alone
- If in doubt, call 911 or seek medical care**

Remember: Water, Rest, and Shade

For more comprehensive information: <https://Nalc.org/workplace-issues/safety-and-health/extreme-weather>.

Residence: Cell: (727) 743-5395 Home: (727) 772-8383 ganneken@msn.com Palm Harbor, FL	Business: (513) 621-4787 (800) 543-0379 Fax: (513) 621-0483 Postal Fax: (888) 724-7882
ROY TAILORS UNIFORM CO., INC. Postal Uniforms - Shoes Your Union Preferred Uniform Company Spouse of NALC Branch 1477 Member	
TERRI ANNEKEN Sales Representative	1905 Dalton Avenue Cincinnati, Ohio 45214

The Grievance Procedure

Shop Stewards are the foot soldiers in the NALC's efforts to enforce the National Agreement. Stewards are Letter Carriers with special training and knowledge of the contract. Whenever management fails to provide a Letter Carrier with what he or she is entitled to under the National Agreement, the Steward is the first to handle the problem.

The Shop Steward is the person to start with. Talk to your Steward if you have an issue, no matter how large or small the issue may be. Sometimes the problems are resolved without the Letter Carriers involved even knowing about it. When a Steward goes to a manager and fixes the problem or a potential problem, just by informing the manager of the situation or reminding the manager of what the contract requires, sometimes that's enough. The issue gets nipped in the bud, and Letter Carriers down the line may never have to deal with the problem in the first place.

All Letter Carriers including CCAs have rights under the National Agreement, and all Letter Carriers should ask a Steward to enforce those rights if they have been violated or denied.

If other attempts to resolve a dispute or correct a contract violation fail, the Steward may decide a grievance is necessary. A grievance is a dispute, difference, disagreement or complaint between the parties related to wages, hours and conditions of Letter Carriers. The process gives each and every Letter Carrier an opportunity to have his or hers voice heard when management violates Letter Carrier rights under the National Agreement.

Your best chance for a successful grievance is to give your Steward all the information you have and whatever else they need to build a solid case. Help your Steward make the best case for you.¹

Belonging to the NALC Union is your Insurance Policy for your working conditions as Letter Carriers. Do not let management intimidate you into thinking that you shouldn't speak to your Steward or file a grievance. Under that scenario, you lose and management wins. They get to break the contract and keep you silent. Filing a grievance is not the same as filing a claim for a fender bender in an auto accident. Your dues will not go up if you do. Don't let management make you think staying silent is the best thing to do. Sometimes it seems as if they hold all the cards. You do have a card to play...it's your Union.

¹ Postal Record/Rolando, July 2013



Legislative Update

By Gene Carroll, CDL District 15

The House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security held a hearing on the repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO). These two provisions are parts of Social Security law that unfairly reduce—or sometimes eliminate—the Social Security benefits of public employees, including letter carriers, who have earned pension benefits from public employee pension plans such as the Civil Service Retirement System. The Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82/ S. 597), a priority bill for NALC, would repeal the WEP/GPO. The bill has 318 co-sponsors in the House and 53 in the Senate.

Ranking Member John Larson (D-CT) also expressed his support for repealing the WEP and GPO, calling the provisions “blatantly unfair,” and also emphasized his support for a broader legislative package to improve Social Security’s solvency. At the hearing, witnesses offered several opinions on reforming or repealing WEP/GPO, as well as methods to improve Social Security’s solvency. While several approaches were mentioned, NALC fully supports H.R. 82/S.597, which repeals both WEP and GPO. Many members referenced the unfair burden these provisions impose on public service workers and their spouses. The hearing followed a field hearing in Baton Rouge, LA, in November. The Louisiana hearing featured witnesses affected by the WEP and GPO, including a police officer, a retired state employee, a firefighter and a teacher.

The next step is for the bill to be marked up by the House Committee on Ways and Means. NALC strongly urges the committee to mark up the bill and send it to the floor for a House vote.

The Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs held a hearing on oversight of the Postal Service. The hearing focused on service issues, network modernization, implementation of the Postal Service’s 10-year strategic Delivering for America (DFA) plan, USPS’s finances and other topics. In his opening statement, Postmaster General DeJoy acknowledged the success of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 but emphasized that it was only the first step: “What we need now is for our stakeholders to support us in the implementation of key self-help initiatives outlined

in the Delivering for America plan that are critically necessary and that will ultimately enable our operational and financial success.”

Chairman Kubayanda expressed concern with the Postal Service’s performance in his opening statement and encouraged the agency’s leaders to be “transparent with stakeholders.” In her opening statement, Inspector General Hull discussed ongoing audits of regional processing and distribution centers in Virginia, Georgia and Oregon, as well as service performance reviews in Missouri, Minnesota, North Dakota, California and Washington, DC. Many of the questions posed by senators focused on the implementation of the plan and its effects on service. Sens. Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Jon Ossoff (D-GA), Laphonza Butler (D-CA), Josh Hawley (R-MO), Roger Marshall (R-KS) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) all referred to specific local issues related to service delays or problems with postal facilities.

DeJoy acknowledged issues in the plan’s rollout, especially in Atlanta, GA, and Richmond, VA. “We apologize to the constituents that have received that service. But in the long term, if we don’t make these changes, that will be every day everywhere around the nation,” he said. While the postmaster general recognized the “significant obstacles” that lie ahead for the DFA plan, he also cited the “significant progress” that has been made. Outside of service questions, Ranking Member Rand Paul (R-KY) criticized the Postal Service’s labor practices. He called converting non-career postal workers to career “nonsensical” since it makes their pay and benefits more expensive for the agency. DeJoy defended the decision, saying that it was the “right thing to do,” and that it improved employee retention. In their questioning, Chairman Gary Peters (D-MI), Sen. James Lankford (R-OK) and Ranking Member Paul all stated that the Postal Service needed a new investment strategy for its retirement funds instead of keeping them in low-yield Treasury bonds. NALC has had productive conversations on Capitol Hill with lawmakers about and Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE) brought up the Postal Service Health Benefits Program, which is set to launch this year under the Postal Service Reform Act. When asked if the Postal Service and the Office of Personnel Management were prepared to implement this. Sens. Butler and Rosen also brought up the upcoming election and the Postal Service’s immense responsibility to deliver tens of millions of ballots. Postmaster General DeJoy ensured that the agency was prepared and committed to another successful election season. Inspector General Hull agreed that this is a top priority. She said that the OIG will release its election mail readiness audit in late summer and will visit delivery units and plants across the

country to observe operations and flag problems in advance of November’s Election Day. The hearing concluded with Chairman Peters saying he remains “laser focused” on service. He emphasized the need for transparency and requested a list of locations the Postal Service plans to change with specific timelines for implementation, full-service data on every location implemented so far, and documentation for any cost projections from Postmaster General DeJoy by May 1. The two did not reach an agreement on that.

NALC

Minutes of May 9, 2024 Membership Meeting



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

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

Invocation by Greg Welsh.

Pledge of Allegiance: led by President Joe Henschen.

Minutes of previous meeting: Motion to accept April’s Minutes by O.D. Elliott, seconded by Greg Welsh. Motion passes.

Branch by the Numbers: As of the recent dues roster, 817 Active Members with paying dues, 4 paying direct. Retirees 557, (89 Gold Cards) – 1378 Total Members.

Recognize from Absolute Quality Interpreting Services Kelli Benz.

Treasurer: Chuck Cavicchio read ending balances for April. Motion to accept Treasurer’s Report by Eric Short, seconded by Terry Johnson. Motion passes.

Director of Retiree Affairs: O.D. Elliott—The FSALC are having a 3 hour Retirement Seminar after the Region 9 Training taking place Sunday May 19, 2024, at the Double Tree across from Universal Studios. Spouses are welcome to attend.

Director of Insurance: Tom Phillips—Eyeglass Plan totals-6 applications for \$ 325.00. If you have NALC Insurance, you can get 2 physicals a year with 1 being a wellness physical.

Political District 13 Liaison: Tom Phillips—Spoke of a business down in Sarasota that the drivers became unionized.

Editor/Webmaster: Judy Dorris—With the purchase of a new computer I hope next month's Twig is going to run more organized.

Vice President Report: Greg Welsh—Worked up at the Hall one day last week. Told a story about how to be smarter in a situation when you are dealing with supervisors.

Executive Vice President: Chris Hubble—

Office Grievance Summary: 38 Grievances Filled, 15 appealed to Formal A. We had 53 files processed last month.

3 files appealed to Step B. We do have a new Step B Team for the District. We have about 59 cases at Step B awaiting judgement.

Management is now attempting to use data from the MDD to track stationary time (street inactivity). They then go out and take pictures of what mail you have in truck and try and compare it to another day. There are a lot of reasons your MDD may be recorded as stationary. If the carrier is servicing a centralized mail location or cluster box, the Carrier is picking up parcels, getting fuel for vehicle. Other stationary time Carrier is on break or lunch or is replenishing mail.

Welfare Reports:

Sad:

Russell Hertlein, Northside—Father passed away. We discovered that his mother also passed away last year.

Kerry Morris, Gulfwinds—Had surgery.

Glad:

Javier Urrutia, Northside—Proud father of a baby girl born on 4/24/24.

Retired

Suzette Brown—Northside
Debbie Castro—Madeira Beach
Richard Simmons—Euclid
Paulette Remy—Gulfwinds

Presidents Report:

The Executive Board discussed at its meeting last night purchasing a new laptop for the Editor's use. The board recommended we spend up to \$1,000 to update the computer that we run the Twig on as well as the laptop. Motion by Tom Phillips, seconded by Terry Johnson. Motion passes.

2024 National Convention August 5-9 Boston MA.

We are still waiting for NALC to let us know which hotels we are going to be in. We have a June 1st deadline to cancel rooms. If any of the delegates have decided not to go, please let us know before that date.

Update on Article 10 Charges against NALC President Brian Renfroe:

The panel of 3 disinterested members submitted its report and recommendations on each of the four charges to the Executive Council who then met on April 25 and 26 to discuss the panel's report. After review of the panel's findings, the Council voted on each of the charges as follows:

For the charge alleging "**Neglect of Duty**" the NALC Executive Council found President Renfroe **not guilty**.

For the charge alleging "**Circulating False or Misleading Statements about a NALC Officer**" the NALC Executive Council found President Renfroe **not guilty**.

The charge alleging "**Misconduct. Impaired driving after hours in a NALC owned vehicle,**" the NALC Executive Council found President Renfroe **guilty**.

For the charge alleging "**Abandoned Position and Dereliction/Neglect of Duty,**" the NALC Executive Council found President Renfroe **not guilty**.

Article 10 of the NALC Constitution states:" If the Executive Council finds the Officer guilty, it shall be empowered to remove them from office, or impose such other penalty as it may deem appropriate. This decision of the Executive Council is subject to appeal to the National Convention in accordance with Article 10 of the NALC Constitution.

For the one charge in which the Council voted guilty, the Executive Council voted to revoke, for the period of one year, the driving privileges of President Renfroe in any NALC owned vehicle, in

addition to any rental vehicles for conducting union business. President Renfro will also record a public service announcement, in collaboration with the Director of Safety and Health and Director of Health Benefits about alcoholism and driving under the influence.

In May, we have **FL Legislation/Contract Training** in Orlando, FSALC Districts. We are sending members Heather Manley, Chris Hubble, Greg Welsh, Jillian Iullicci, Scott Archbold, Patrick Jacques. State Association is paying for sending O.D. Elliott, Tom Phillips, and Gene Carroll.

President Henschen discussed about some of the problems were having dealing with estimates and discipline. Another issue is Stationary Events in which management asserts that you are being inactive. These must be proven by direct observation.

Help the new carriers understand the what Unendorsed Bulk Business Mail is and the different classes of mail.

Food Drive coming up on **May 11th**.

All the Merged Cities are up and ready to go.

Many of the assignments available to the Carrier Craft must be recommended by the Local President and concurred by the National Business Agent before discussed with the USPS locally. President Henschen told of when he attended the 1st Class of the NALC Leadership Academy. When he returned, he was tasked with picking a very promising steward that he held in high regard. He learned however this Steward never participated in the mission of the Branch and the NALC when it came to the Food Drive and to this day has never participated to his knowledge. When Carriers ask to be recommended to a position like OJI, Academy Instructor, or on the Safety Committee. Weight is given to pride in uniform, attendance and I will ask them to attend Union Meetings to stay in touch. An elected Steward in fact. They should be proud of their position. I want elected steward to represent a Letter Carrier fairly with poor attendance issues with a good record themselves. I want them to participate in the community efforts with MDA and the Food Drive.

I am sure the carriers on each workroom floor will recognize the extra efforts or lack thereof made by the Stewards on this 2nd Saturday in May.

**Door Prize Drawing:
Lotto – Scratch Off Ticket**

Drawing is being held over till next month.



Director of Insurance

By Tom Phillips

Take advantage of your exercise therapy benefit today!

- Gentle exercises developed by physical therapists to reduce joint and muscle aches, pain, stiffness, and even soreness.
- Guided exercise sessions designed to be done in 15 minutes - anytime, anywhere.
- A dedicated physical therapist and qualified health coach to help you reach your goals.
- Support for multiple areas of pain.
- Plus, eligible family members can also join at no additional cost to them!

Move beyond pain with Hinge Health.

Take advantage of your exercise therapy benefit today!

If you're dealing with pelvic health, muscle, or joint issues, Hinge Health can help.

One in four women has a pelvic floor disorder, but most don't receive treatment due to a lack of awareness, stigma, and inadequate access to pelvic floor physical therapists. The average time it takes for them to receive care for certain conditions is more than six years.

Hinge Health provides care for unique needs of women, including:

- Pregnancy & postpartum
- Bladder & bowel disorders
- Pelvic organ prolapse
- Separated abdominal muscles
- Sexual dysfunction
- Pelvic pain

If you're struggling with joint and muscle pain, like a throbbing back, aching knees, or weak ankles, start using your Hinge Health benefit today for expert care.

Learn more and get pain relief that works for you-not the other way around.

Please visit and get started today at hinge.health/nalchbp-enroll

Employees, dependents 18+ and Medicare Advantage members enrolled in the NALC Health Benefit Plan are eligible.

Questions? Call (855) 902-2777 or email hello@hingehealth.com

Your Annual Physical And Wellness Visit.

Living a healthy life starts with your preventive care. Many people think an annual wellness visit and a physical are one and the same. Although the two have some things in common, their overall purpose is different.

What's the difference between your annual and wellness visit?

An annual physical exam includes a: Head-to-toe exam. Blood sugar test and cholesterol test. The visit is a good time to review your medications and/or health concerns. Your plan covers this visit once per calendar year.

A wellness visit includes a: Blood pressure check, height and weight measurement and body mass index (BMI) test. Your plan covers this once per calendar year. Take control by scheduling your annual physical and wellness visit early in the year to give you the most time to take action. You and your primary care provider (PCP) can work as a team to create a preventive care plan to help you stay as healthy as possible. You may also ask your PCP to combine your annual physical and wellness visits into one convenient annual care appointment.

How to prepare for your annual physical and wellness visit.

The doctor you see for your wellness visit will want to know who's part of your health care team. They may also want to work closely with other health care professionals involved in your care. Therefore, you should be ready to give the person conducting your visit a list of your current healthcare current health care providers, including their contact information and their field of specialty.

Keeping track of all the vitamins, minerals, herbal supplements and prescription medications you take can be a daunting task, but your doctor will want to know about all of them. Getting a full list of all your medications can help your doctor spot potential drug interactions that could be harmful to your health, and they will also want to ensure you have a complete understanding of each medication, what it's for and any potential side effects. Make a list, including how often you take each medication and the dosage.

When you are prepared, your annual wellness visit can be more than just a doctor's appointment. It is your opportunity to help take charge of your health and ensure you're on the right path to living the life you want.

Special enrollment Period-If you were an annuitant entitled to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65) as of January 1, 2024, and did not enroll in Medicare Part B, you and your covered eligible family members may be able to participate in the one-time PSHB-related Special Enrollment Period (SEP) for Medicare Part B from April 1st through September 30, 2024.

Those who choose to enroll during the SEP will have the late enrollment penalty paid by the Postal Service. Eligibility letters were sent to annuitants and eligible family members in March.

If you misplaced the notification letter mailed to you or believe that you are eligible to participate in the PSHB- related SEP and did not receive a notification letter, please call the **PSHB Navigator help line's toll-free number at 833-712-PSHB (7742) or email retirementbenefits@usps.gov.**

Be safe! Stay Hydrated! Make you and your family's health a priority!

In Solidarity,
Tom Phillips

Steward Meeting Attendees

Meeting was held at the Hall and on Zoom and led by President Joe Henschen.

May 16th:

Wyatt Stribling, Olbin Flores-Elvir, A.J. Pollard, Scott Held, Erica Baker, Tiffany Naughton, Patrice Cannonier, Javier Urrutia, Anthony Roger, Jody Dodd, David Mills, Cheryl Anderson, Tim Cox, Eric Short

BRANCH 1477 PHONE DIRECTORY

UNION HALL: (727) 531-1477

UNION FAX: (727) 531-1478

EMAIL: branch1477nalc@gmail.com

WEBSITE: branch1477nalc.org

OFFICERS OF BRANCH 1477

PRESIDENT

Joe Henschen. (727) 492-4009

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Chris Hubble. (727) 641-8396

VICE PRESIDENT

Greg Welsh. (727) 804-4726

RECORDING/FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Ken Grasso. (727) 744-2578

TREASURER

Chuck Cavicchio. (727) 798-8506

EDITOR

Judy Dorris. (727) 403-2173

DIRECTOR OF RETIREE AFFAIRS

O.D. Elliott. (727) 608-6027

DIRECTOR OF INSURANCE

Tom Phillips. (727) 458-4127

SERGEANT AT ARMS

Eric Short. (727) 251-9846

TRUSTEES:

Shiela Bradley. (813) 335-7783

Brian Andrews. (941) 807-5669

Patrick Jacques. (727) 218-2721

STEWARDS OF BRANCH 1477

St. Petersburg:

Crossroads 9	Jody Dodd	(727) 768-2562
Crossroads 10	Heather Gates	(727) 460-8852
Alt 9 & 10	Ken Domingos	(716) 598-1205
Euclid	Wyatt Stribling	(727) 480-6121
Alt	Patrick Green	(813) 671-4770
Gateway	Jillian Iulucci	(727) 458-1623
Gulfwinds 7,15	Olbin Flores-Elvir	(913) 671-0397
Gulfwinds 11	Mike Hancock	(954) 955-0350
Madeira Beach	Patrick Jacques	(727) 218-2721
Midtown 5	Javier Urrutia	(813) 484-2499
Midtown 12	Patrice Cannonier	(786) 200-0957
Alt	Gary Johnson	(316) 209-3764
Northside 2	Tiffany Naughton	(727) 642-5466
Northside 16	David Mills	(727) 677-8992
Alt	Javier Urrutia	(813) 484-2499
Open Air	Scott Archbold	(727) 422-4766
Alt	Dan O'Dell	(941) 315-0699
St. Pete Beach	Cheryl Anderson	(727) 531-1477
Alt	Laurann Rose	(727) 525-6920
St. Pete Main 13	Anthony Roger	(813) 574-9971
St. Pete Main 14	Alan Pollard	(727) 667-4254
Alt	Dee Grant	(727) 225-9272

Bradenton Bch	Brian Andrews	(941) 807-5669
Dunedin	Scott Held	(727) 418-5742
Alt	Chuck Cavicchio	(727) 798-8506
Ellenton	Jocelyn Pagan	(646) 417-0392
Englewood	Jon Robinson	(740) 919-7687
Indian Rocks Bch	Tim Cox	(727) 481-5348
Largo 70/71/73/78	Joe Henschen	(727) 531-1477
Palmetto	Sheldon Jones	(941) 580-1058
Pinellas Park 81/82	Heather Manley	(727) 244-0665
Punta Gorda	Chris Kotonski	
PC Annex	Erica Baker	(941) 661-5196
Seminole 72/74	Eric Short	(727) 251-9846
Alt	Donny DeMilta	(727) 430-4413
Seminole 76/77	Donny DeMilta	(727) 430-4413
Alt	Eric Short	(727) 251-9846

Congressional Liaisons:

District 13: Tom Phillips (727) 458-4127
District 15: Gene Carroll (727) 742-1640

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.



Branch 1477, N.A.L.C.
 5369 Park Boulevard North
 Pinellas Park, FL 33781-3421

NON-PROFIT ORG.
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 ST. PETERSBURG, FL
 PERMIT 5489

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

June, 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 Pinellas Park Retiree Breakfast	4 St. Pete Retiree Breakfast	5 Largo Retiree Breakfast	6 Executive Board	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 General Membership Meeting	14	15
16 Father's Day	17	18	19 Juneteenth	20 Steward's Meeting	21	22
23 / 30	24	25	26	27	28	29