

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 628

VOICE OF BRANCH 1477

MAY, 2022

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By President Joe Henschen

Twitter @ JaHe1

Probationary Employees

In January, the USPS in the Florida 2 District implemented a form that standardizes the process when an employee is proposed for separation rather than retention during the probationary period. This form requires the District HR Manager and the District Labor Relations Manager to review and concur prior to separation.

This should help standardize how employees are coached throughout the probationary process and not up to the whim of a supervisor. This is an important layer in the process. The 511 Separation request documentation log requires a great deal of documentation prior to requesting a separation.

The information requested includes: An OSHA required New Employee Safety Checklist, A Post Office Acclimation Checklist, PS 1750 Employee Evaluations, Safety Observations, OJI Trainer Checklist, TACS Clock Rings, Payroll Adjustments Processed, Schedules and Work Assignments, if Bid Installation includes multiple locations, outline approaches used to further coach for success, and a Narrative of Justification why further training would be ineffectual. Management must record the Enter On Duty (EOD) date how many calendar days since the EOD and how many days worked. Additionally, a detailed narrative is required explaining reasons for requesting separation and include why "other corrective" measures would be ineffectual in correcting employee's behavior.

***We are back to having
Branch Membership
Meetings at the Hall.***

***Meetings will continue to
be held via Zoom.***

Mask at your own discretion

***The Auxiliary will be serving
food***

NEXT BRANCH MEETING AT THE HALL AND VIA ZOOM: THURSDAY, MAY 12, 2022

In a recent request for all this information, I received 2 items listed from a request for information. It is clear in some offices we will continue to see separations that are not based on an objective evaluation of the employee. Having a set criteria will help in a large number of cases that the employee was evaluated solely on how fast they can go rather than how they should be evaluated.

I urge all members to keep an eye on each other. When you see a new employee in need of help, please offer it. If you hear of an employee being given the option resigning or being separated, have them call the hall for advice before a form is signed. If an objective and fair evaluation period is not documented there are avenues available to protect the employee.

Article 12.1.A Section 1. Probationary Period

A. The probationary period for a new employee shall be ninety (90) calendar days. The Employer shall have the right to separate from its employ any probationary employee at any time during the probationary period and these probationary employees shall not be permitted access to the grievance procedure in relation thereto. Not filing a grievance is not the same as not being represented. The NALC can represent City Carrier Assistants even during probation.

The NALC has added a layer to our dispute process. (Grievance process) The Alternate Dispute Process (ADR), allows the parties to look into and address circumstances objectively. What this means is if management fails to properly adhere to the process of the evaluation, we can send the information to headquarters for discussion. In many cases, an alternate resolution can be reached that I'm told has included moving the employee to another Installation or directing them to continue their probationary period.

Of course, the best avenue is always to reach out and ask for assistance when the evaluation has unacceptable marks at the 30-day period. Ask what you can do to improve that evaluation. An OJI, your Steward or Supervisor can help here. Do not feel you have failed in some way, reach out and ask. It's that simple.



Hubble's Troubles

By Executive Vice President,
Chris Hubble

No one else knows your route like you do!

We as carriers help maintain address quality by monitoring address changes on our routes, noting them in our *Edit Books*, and submitting them to update the Address Management System (AMS). It is the primary tool used to report new growth, additions, deletions, and seasonal deliveries, as well as line of travel changes.

The address data base is used to create every address product and service that the Postal Service offers to mailers. It is also the source of all the address information used by our internal systems and equipment. The information in the *Edit Book* reaches far beyond the delivery unit. It has a direct impact on the quality of mail we receive each day from virtually every mail stream.

Most importantly, it's our responsibility. For every mail piece a mailer doesn't send, we lose the postage for that piece of mail plus every subsequent piece of mail that would have been generated by a response from the addressee.

Each carrier is responsible for keeping his or her *Edit Book* accurate. The carrier is the individual most familiar with a route and aware of changes as they occur. City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities M-41 Section 253.1 states in relative part.... *since the Edit Book is an important document used by Delivery Service, it is absolutely essential that the carrier keep it accurate and up to date.*

If the supervisor is not allowing you time to review and/or make changes in your *Edit Book*, ask to see your steward! It's an office function that we perform, and that time spent reviewing and/or making changes in the edit book should be time built into your route.

Up to date and accurate address information translates into service performance, cost-effective operations, and customer satisfaction. As a doorway to customers, we know when new housing or apartment developments open. We know also when a new business opens. Major mailers must have this

Please note:

**Joe Henschen's phone number has
changed to: (727) 492-4009**

information in order to build business. They want to reach every possible delivery, and they want to do it accurately.

The Postal Service uses AMS data to deliver mail to every address in the country, more than 163 million delivery points. Accurate address information helps to process mail through automation to reduce delivery costs associated with manual mail handling. Furthermore, business mailers purchase address information for delivery of mail pieces to targeted customers. Correct addressing is critical to reducing the costs associated with handling returned mail for the Postal Service and its customers.

As the Postal Service moves forward, the integrity of the address database is critical. It is our job to observe and be aware of all changes on our route and to record additions, deletions and changes in the Edit Book as they occur.

202-606-1640 or 202-606-4237. When faxing, you need to include a copy of the son's birth certificate and a copy of the son's prior health insurance termination letter. At the top of the son's birth certificate and the termination letter, you should enter your CSA number in pencil.

The NALC Retirement Dept. suggests that in addition to faxing that you also email it. Send the email to: retire@opm.gov. In the subject line of the email, enter **Subject: OPM form 2809 to add eligible son- (add your CSA number and name).** In the body of the email write **I (your name and CSA number) am submitting form OPM2809 to add my son to my FEHB plan and change my enrollment from "self + one" to "family". Add attachments of son's birth certificate and prior health insurance termination letter.**

As stated previously, I have never encountered this particular situation before. Hopefully, this might be of assistance to someone else in the future.



Retiree Update

By Director of Retiree Affairs,
O.D. Elliott

As a Union Officer for 47 plus years, I still get questions from members for which I must research to find the answer. Recently, a retired member contacted me with the following scenario and question. The Retiree has a son not yet 26 years of age. This Retiree has a Health Benefit Plan in which the premiums for the "Self plus one" category is less than the "Family" category. Several years ago, the Retiree's son got a job that had a decent Health Benefit Plan, so the Retiree removed his son from his "Family" Plan and switched to the cheaper "Self plus one" category. However, recently, his son lost his job. Since his son is still under the age of 26, this Retiree wanted to know if he could change his plan back to "Family" and add his son back into his plan. I had never encountered this problem, so I did some research through our NALC Retirement Department. The answer is yes. This is a QLE (qualifying life event). The event code is **2G – eligible family member loses coverage under non-federal health plan.**

You must get a **form OPM 2809**. You can get this online. The form must be submitted between 31 days prior to the son's loss of coverage through 60 days following the loss. The form must be completed and signed. It can be faxed to OPM at:



Legislative Update

By Gene Carroll, CDL District 15

H. R. 82 & S. 1302

The Bill: To amend title II of the Social Security Act to repeal the Government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVE
JANUARY 4, 2021

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois (for himself, Ms. SPANBERGER, Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana, Mr. COHEN, Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. MULLIN, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. COMER, and Mr. GOHMERT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES
APRIL 22, 2021

Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. COLLINS, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. SMITH, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. REED, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CASEY, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BOOKER, and Mr. SANDERS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

This bill repeals provisions that reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who receive other benefits, such as a pension from a state or local government.

The bill eliminates the *government pension offset*, which in various instances reduces Social Security survivors' benefits for spouses, widows, and widowers who also receive government pensions of their own.

The bill also eliminates the *windfall elimination provision*, which in some instances reduces Social Security benefits for individuals who also receive a pension or disability benefit from an employer that did not withhold Social Security taxes.

Since being introduced, H.R. 82 has received 269 co-sponsors, with 197 being Democratic and 72 are Republicans, of those 14 are in Florida.

If your Representative is not listed above, you need to call them and ask for them to sign on as one to the Bill. 4,5,8,9,10,13,14,20,21,22,23,24,25,27

Since being introduced, S. 1302 has received 39 co-sponsors, with 33 being Democratic and 4 are Republicans and 2 Independents, of those non are from Florida. Everyone needs to call their Senators and ask them to sign onto the bill.

The NALC has been working for decades to reform or repeal the WEP and GPO provisions. They are trying to do so once again in the current Congress.
NALC

Auxiliary 181 News

By Dottie Tutt-Hutchinson

We'd like to thank Branch 1477 for donating \$500 to our good will fund for the year 2022. Tom Phillips thoughtfully proposed the motion in order to aid us in financially helping Carriers and their families in

need, especially around holiday times. We were so surprised and are very thankful since our usual money-making source has stopped during Covid--our baked goods raffle. For years, we've baked brownies, cakes, cookies, and more and Union members bought raffle tickets for them before membership meetings. Joyce Keller made sure there were lots of winners! I jokingly asked her if she could sell goodies along with uniforms! Hopefully, Covid will pass soon, we'll bake again, earning enough to donate to our Carriers in need.

Congratulations to Lisa Ryan (Madeira Beach) and Ken Rosetti (Gulfwinds) for winning our Christmas baskets raffle in December. And thanks to Lisa for returning the basket so we can fill it again.

We mourn the loss of Joyce Keller's sister Kay Ludwig, 83. She succumbed to cancer after bravely battling different types for over 20 years. We all knew the fun loving, cheerful, optimistic Kay from our teas and other socials and will sincerely miss her smiling face. Our hearts go out to Joyce, family, and friends.

On a much lighter note, Joyce celebrated a big birthday in Harrogate, England with her daughter and family. She said she experienced all 4 seasons while there, and she was only gone in the months of March and April!

As a twist we met for Auxiliary business on a Saturday, April 9th. Joyce gave each of us a candy-filled Easter bag and everyone won spring flowers in our drawing. On May 4th Sandy Hart will host. Don't bring your lunch, we're having a tea to celebrate Mother's day. We're off for the summer but we'll lunch at Frieda's July 6th at noon. We'll get back to business September 7th. Thanks to Sandy for contacting us with Auxiliary 181 news.

Happy Mother's Day to all the moms and thanks to all who served, especially on Armed Forces Day.

Steward Meeting Attendees

March 16th meeting led by Joe Henschen and Chris Hubble:

A.J. Pollard, Tonya Lee, Patrick Jaques, Scott/Linda Held, Donny DeMilta, Tom Phillips, Eric Short, Sheldon Jones, Tim Cox, Kris Beal

Minutes of April 14, 2022 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 the March minutes as printed in the Twig by O. D. Elliott, seconded by Brian Andrews. Motion passes.

Reading of Official Correspondence: by Ken Grasso: One

Branch by the Numbers: As of PP 7 the Dues Roster has 810 Active Members with 776 paying dues. We have 34 members as No Deductions, 4 are on Military Leave. 4 paying direct, 20 OWCP, with 6 on LWOP.
Retirees 568 (90 Gold Cards). 1366 Total Members

Application of New Members: None

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

Treasurer: Chuck Cavicchio—Checkbook and Investment ending balances were read. Motion to accept the Report of the Treasurer by Eric Short, seconded by Terry Johnson. Motion passes.

5 of 6 CDs will mature this year. Making plans to get a new CD from the Leave Accounts for about \$38,000. Motion to have Finance Committee make a recommendation and move funds by Clay Hansen, seconded by Tom Phillips. Motion passes.

Director of Retiree Affairs: O.D. Elliott—Due to Postal Reform Act we are looking into how this affects those retirees of the future.

Director of Insurance: Tom Phillips—No Report.

Political District 13 Liaison: Tom Phillips—Read article about the Postal Reform Act.

Political District 15 Liaison: Gene Carroll—No Report.

Trustee Report: Eric Short—Books for January and February are done and ready to do March.

Sergeant at Arms: Clay Hansen—No Report.

Editor/Webmaster: Judy Dorris—Question about the Postal Reform Act effective date.

Vice President Report: Zulma Betancourt—No Report.

Executive Vice President: Chris Hubble—You need to make sure your edit books are up to date.

Welfare Reports:

Sad:

None

Glad:

- Tom Phillips, Gateway Carrier/Officer— Welcomed a new grandson.
- Bert Lewis, Ellenton—Birth of a grandson.
- Adam Crosson, Carrier Largo—Converted to PTF.

Presidents Report:

Since 1992 we have been tracking and storing all grievances filed in a program called Easy Office. As the years have gone by Microsoft does not support this program any longer. We hired Software By Design to work on a project to rebuild the program several years ago and last week Owner Gil Ribal came in to the office to explain that he could not fulfill his commitment to us due to the existing program not interfacing with current Microsoft platforms. He then returned to the branch a check for over \$9500 for the hours he had been compensated.

National Convention delegate registration took place and we received the Convention Credentials to register for rooms for housing. We were in the 6th

batch mailed from Headquarters. We will be staying at the Hilton on South Michigan Avenue which is 1.6 miles from the Convention Center and 2 blocks from transportation pickup area.

Food Drive planned for Saturday May14, 2022. This will be a difficult drive. Many of our members have never participated in a Food Drive. Sandra Pagan is the Food Drive Coordinator in St. Petersburg. Working with the Food Banks now. We have about 1.6 million bags stored in Ybor. We also have "Leave it before you Leave" Flyer and Program. Designed to get your customers who go back north early before the drive to leave their food with us.

Joint Route Count and Inspection Process:

Testing has been done in Georgia and Oklahoma with the new process using a PS Form 3999 generated from the GPS in the Scanner. The Digital Street Review Software should be up to date soon. For many years we have evaluated territory being transferred to or from a route based on a one day PS Form 3999. Technology now is to create a file that is based on the average over the course of a week rather than a single day.

Annually we must complete up to date I-9 Forms. Every employee must complete this form. All Officers and Stewards need to do this. I-9 Forms are available from the Branch Office.

South Branch Meeting had a nice turn out. But April's meeting will be cancelled because President Joe Henschen will be away.

Boot Camp, Trustees Eric Short and Patrick Jacques will be attending in Atlanta April 28-May 2.

COP—Executive Vice President Chris Hubble and President Henschen will be attending from 4/24/22 through 4/27/22. We will be moving the Executive Board Meeting from Thursday, May 5th to Wednesday, May 11th.

Bradenton Beach Carrier/Trustee Brian Andrews and St. Petersburg Main Office Carrier Sandra Pagan completed a 2-day Facilitators Workshop along with St. Petersburg Carrier Harry Nieves and others across the Country. The course will allow Brian and Sandra to be Carrier Academy Instructors.

We will have OJI Training right after Food Drive. We are in discussions to make sure all OJIs are trained even if the participants join via Zoom.

Customer Connect has generated over 2 billion dollars in revenues since its inception in 2004. Branch Presidents have asked the Stewards to verify the placement of coordinators in the units.

In 2021 some Carriers had their N/S day changed in the system. It wasn't noticed immediately but when it came to light, we realized that on a false N/S day the Carrier was charged A/L and then paid overtime on a regular workday.

Sunday Amazon Loading:

Postal Service has completed a Pilot Program that has Non-Career employees load parcels into LLVs and FFVs prior to the assigned delivery carrier reporting to work. This will begin here on 3/27/22. The first Sunday was very difficult but, in some hubs, they have run smoothly.

Some Carriers were given Letters of Demand, but we are coming to a resolution to mitigate for about 8 Carriers that it affected. Please monitor your Earnings Statement.

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Rochelle McDevitt (239) 691-4474

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
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For Branch 1477 St. Petersburg FL

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UNION FAX: (727) 531-1478

EMAIL: branch1477@tampabay.rr.com

WEBSITE: branch1477nalc.org

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EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

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VICE PRESIDENT

Zulma Betancourt (813) 597-8363

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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

Clay Hansen (727) 744-2456

TRUSTEES:

Brian Andrews (941) 807-5669

Patrick Jacques (727) 218-2721

Eric Short (727) 251-9846

STEWARDS OF BRANCH 1477

St. Petersburg:

Crossroads 9	Ken Domingos	(716) 598-1205
Alt	Jody Dodd	(727) 772-0577
Crossroads 10	Ben Hamilton	(727) 735-5125
Euclid	Kerry Thompson	(347) 623-2108
Alt	Patrick Green	(813) 671-4770
Gateway	Tom Phillips	(727) 458-4127
Gulfwinds 7,11,15	Zulma Betancourt	(813) 597-8363
Madeira Beach	Patrick Jacques	(727) 218-2721
Midtown 5	Anwar Douse	(727) 495-3535
Midtown 12	Patrice Cannonier	(786) 200-0957
Northside 2	Tiffany Naughton	(727) 642-5466
Alt	Suzette Brown	(727) 580-1084
Northside 16	Tonya Lee	(813) 270-2918
Alt	Ben Mead	(727) 249-4610
Open Air	Ben Toussaint	(727) 463-3001
Alt	Scott Archbold	(727) 422-4766
St. Pete Beach	Cheryl Anderson	(727) 531-1477
St. Pete Main 13	Anthony Roger	(813) 574-9971
Alt	Scott Holderbaum	(813) 777-7626
St. Pete Main 14	Alan Pollard	(727) 667-4254
Alt	Dee Grant	(727) 225-9272

Bradenton Bch	Brian Andrews	(941) 807-5669
Dunedin	Chuck Cavicchio	(727) 798-8506
Alt	Scott Held	(727) 418-5742
Ellenton	Mark Patrick	(941) 524-1746
Englewood	Kris Beal	(813) 500-0841
Alt	Josh LaGrew	(763) 232-8954
Indian Rocks Bch	Tim Cox	(727) 481-5348
Largo 70/71	Adam Deveau	(978) 435-1280
Largo 73/78	Eric Short	(727) 251-9846
Palmetto	Sheldon Jones	(941) 580-1058
Pinellas Park	Chris Hubble	(727) 641-8396
Punta Gorda	(Branch Hall)	(727) 531-1477
PC Annex	(Branch Hall)	(727) 531-1477
Seminole 72/74	Jim Grazioso	(727) 410-6492
Seminole 76/77	Donny DeMilta	(727) 430-4413
Alt 72/74/76/77	Anne Winkelbauer	(708) 692-6540

Auxiliary 181		
President	Joyce Keller	(727) 541-2194

Congressional Liasons:

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.
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

May, 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 <i>Pinellas Park Retiree Breakfast</i>	3 <i>St. Pete Retiree Breakfast</i>	4 <i>Largo Retiree Breakfast</i>	5	6	7
8 Mother's Day	9	10	11 <i>Executive Board Meeting</i>	12 General Membership (at the Hall)	13	14 NALC Food Drive
15	16	17	18	19 Steward's Meeting	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 South Branch Meeting	27	28
29	30 Memorial Day	31				