

# 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 642

VOICE OF BRANCH 1477

AUGUST, 2023

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*By President Joe Henschen*

*Twitter @ JaHe1*

In June the Branch hosted an OWCP Training Class for Union Representatives in the area. The Class was attended by Union Officers and Stewards in the Bay area as well as some attendees from The East Coast of Florida and Georgia. The class was facilitated by Region 9 RWCA Misty Wenger and RAA Dexter Lester. The 2-day class laid out a pretty clear road map for injured workers as well as how to address management's failures when processing claims.

### **What you need to do if you suffer a Traumatic Injury**

Stay calm. Look around, where are you located, what time is it? Notify your supervisor immediately. Request a CA-16 (Authorization for Examination and/or treatment) and a CA-17 (Duty Status Report) from your supervisor. Seek medical treatment. You have the right to choose

your own doctor. If management sends you to a contract doctor, they have the right to see you but not the right to treat. Get treated by a doctor of your choice ASAP. Register for an ECOMP account using the QR Code below. If you do not have a computer, the Postal Service must provide you with access to one in the office. Contact your union Steward or local union office if you need assistance. Write a statement of events that led up to your injury and what occurred immediately after. Be very detailed about when, where, and how it happened.

**NEXT BRANCH MEETING AT THE HALL AND VIA ZOOM: THURSDAY, AUGUST 10, 2023**

Go to the Home Page of your ECOMP account, under "New Claim", follow the instructions to file a CA-1 Claim for Traumatic Injury. Do not let a supervisor fill out your CA-1, take the time to do it yourself. Contact your union Steward or local union office if you need assistance. Request Continuation of Pay (COP). Note: COP is not payable if a claim is filed more than 30 days from the date of injury.

Submit Duty Status Reports (CA-17s) or medical restrictions to management as soon as possible. (Do not give local management any other medical documents). Keep copies of all documents pertaining to your injury, once an OWCP Claim/File# is issued, save it in your contacts on your mobile device. Write your claim# on any/all documents.

The Postal Service is required to make every effort to find work within your medical restrictions. If you feel a job offer exceeds your medical restrictions, accept the job offer and write "under protest" next to your name. Have your doctor review the offer and submit a medical report to the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) explaining why you cannot perform the duties in the job offer. Contact your union Steward or local union office if you need assistance.

### **ECOMP Registration**

When registering for an ECOMP account with OWCP, you will be asked to provide the following information:

Name, Phone number, Email, Date of Birth, Mailing Address, Social Security number.

When you create the account, you will create a password that you need to write down and protect. ECOMP will send an email for confirmation. Just follow the links. Once in, you can completely monitor your complete OWCP claim history.



Once your account is created you can file a CA-1 (Notice of Traumatic Injury) or a CA-2 (Occupational Disease Claim) and monitor your claim(s).



## **Hubble's Troubles**

*By Executive Vice President,  
Chris Hubble*

### ***I never had that training...and what is HERO?***

A group of Congressional members are demanding answers from the Postmaster General about working conditions for postal workers following the death of a Dallas Letter Carrier.

The letter to Postmaster General Louis DeJoy specifically brings up the death of Eugene Gates Jr., who collapsed and died on a customer's lawn on June 20, 2023 in Dallas during a time of extreme heat.

*"We write to express our deep concerns over the working conditions and labor policies of the U.S. Postal Service, specifically with respect to Letters Carriers,"* the letter reads.

The letter goes on to list the deaths of other Postal Service employees who died in extreme heat in recent years.

In 2012, John Watzlawick died while delivering mail in the heat. Watzlawick told management that he felt ill from the heat prior to his death.

In 2019, mail Carrier Peggy Frank was found dead "in her non-air-conditioned mail truck" in California.

*"A 2020 analysis of OSHA records showed that OSHA issued more than \$1.3 million in initial fines against the Postal Service for heat hazards in eight years. Despite these numerous and continued violations, it appears the Postal Service has yet to comprehensively address this issue and adopt nationwide work conditions policies that prevent these avoidable, tragic deaths,"* the members wrote in the letter.

The letter outlines a few questions for DeJoy about how the Postal Service plans to address concerns

over the heat.

Recently, the Region 9 business agents office put forward information I would like to share regarding the HIPP (Heat Illness Prevention Program) and how to review your training records in HERO.

In May of 2018, the USPS notified the NALC that it had created a HIPP, whose purpose it was to equip employees with knowledge needed to recognize and abate heat-related illness advising that “... *The HIPP is triggered when any employee in any facility is exposed, or reasonably anticipated to be exposed, to heat index temperatures exceeding 80 degrees Fahrenheit for extended periods of time, six hours or more, over the course of a work day or work shift.*”

During a meeting of the National Safety Committee (USPS-NALC) on May 15, 2018, the NALC was notified that “*In the future, all supervisors will be required to take the LMS (Learning Management System) course by April 1st of each year.*” Management also emphasized that every single City Letter Carrier in our bargaining units will be required to undergo this training, which is expected to be conducted in group sessions. [Emphasis added] We have been informed that if requested, there are materials that can be printed and distributed to make sure the message is understood by all our employees.

In May of 2019, the USPS notified the NALC of its updating to the HIPP indicating that it is now “...*triggered when weather reports issued by the National Weather Service (NWS) for a particular work location indicate that the outdoor heat index temperatures are expected to exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit during the course of a workday or work shift.*”

The memo goes on to say “...*It is the responsibility of each installation head to ensure that employees complete the above referenced HERO course. Employees must complete this training prior to April 1 each year. Employees who are absent when the training is provided are required to be provided with the training prior to returning to street duties, during the period April 1 through October 31.*” [Emphasis added]

The updated memo also included the following that “*An escalation process is put in place to prioritize all requests for HVAC repairs and temporary abatement efforts in postal facilities....*”

In February of 2020, the USPS provided its 2020 HIPP which is as follows. The FY 20 Heat Stress Recognition and Prevention training course has been finalized and uploaded into our integrated HR system, **HERO**. This course, currently available to employees, discusses the effects of heat on a person's body, outlines the risk factors for heat-related illnesses, and describes the associated treatments for each. It also explains several control measure techniques and safe work practices that can be used to prevent heat-related stress.

So, as of April 1 of 2023, all supervisors and City Letter Carriers on the roles should have completed the required HIPP training. If you are of the opinion that you have not received said training, you may verify that as well as other training in **HERO**.

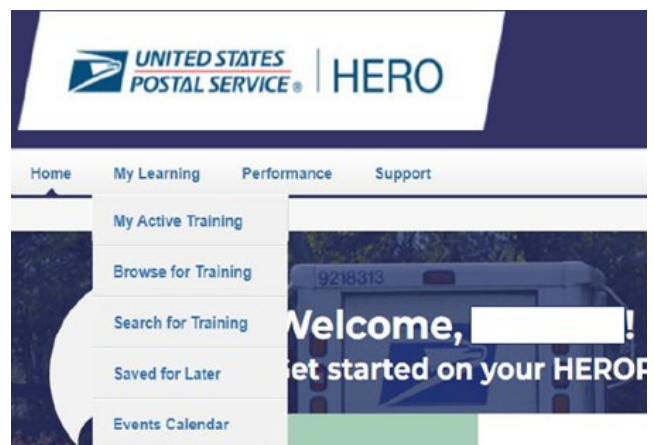
Below is a step-by-step procedure to do so.

**Step 1.** Log into LiteBlue.

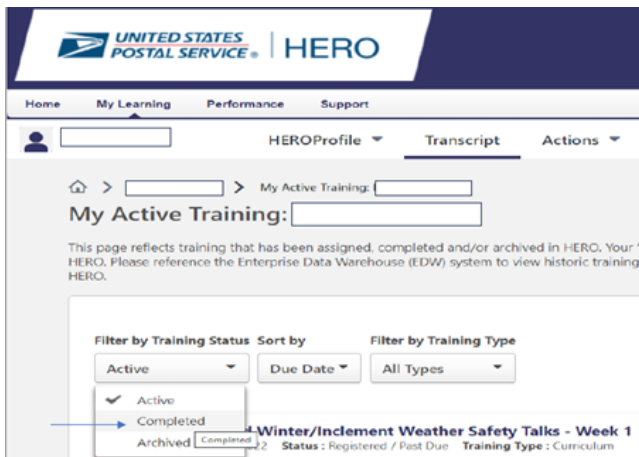
**Step 2.** On the Home page, under **Human Resources** click on **HERO** login.



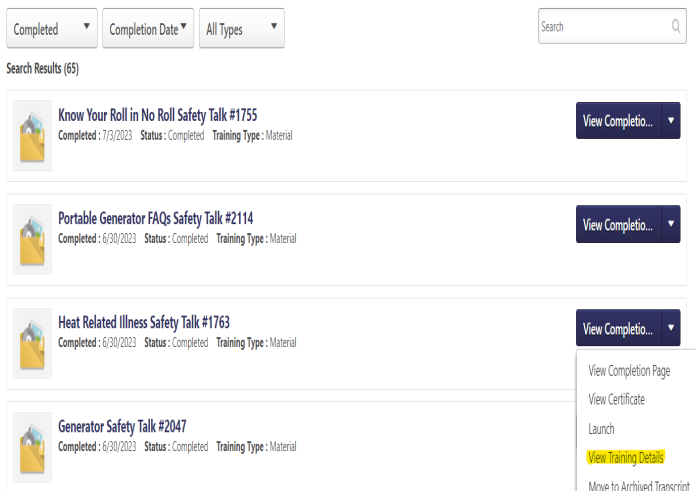
**Step 3.** Once there, hover over **My Learning** at the top of the page and click **My Active Training**.



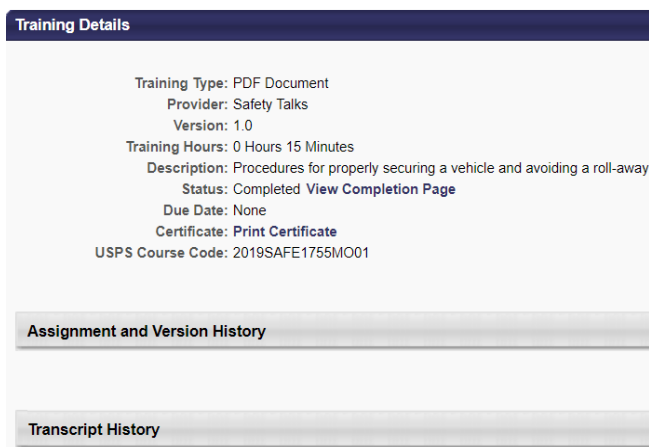
**Step 4.** On the next screen, under Filter by Training Status, click the Active tab and then click on **Completed**.



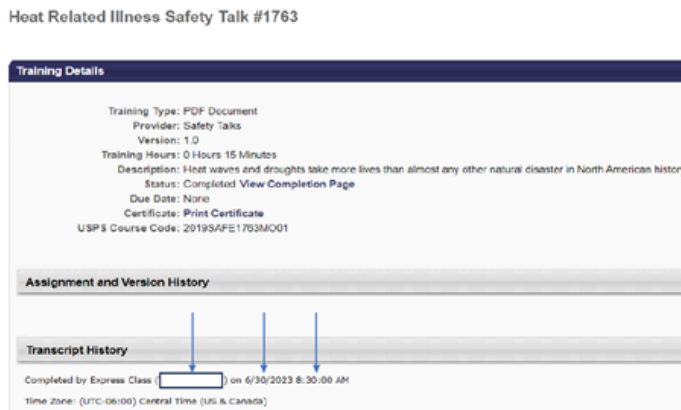
Step 5. Once the **Completed** training has been compiled, select the drop-down menu for the training you would like to review under **View Completion** and click **View Training Details**.



Step 6. The screen below will appear. On the **Transcript History** tab, in the far-right corner of the tab, click the drop-down arrow.



Once opened, you will see who input the training, as well as what date, and time as indicated below



If any Letter Carrier has not received this training, please contact your Shop Steward, and/or Branch Officer as soon as possible so the matter may be investigated, and a grievance filed. A copy of the transcript, a schedule and the EER (Employee Everything Report) for the week in question will prove you were not there for the training. In interview with the supervisor who entered the date and time will prove that they falsified the training.



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

## WHEN CAN I RETIRE

Under CSRS (Civil Service Retirement System), you are eligible for optional retirement at age 55 with 30 years of service, age 60 with 20 years of service or age 62 with 5 years of service.

Under FERS (Federal Employees Retirement System), you are eligible for optional retirement with 30 years of service provided you have reached MRA (Maximum Retirement Age), age 60 with 20 years of service or age 62 with 5 years of service. Note: The MRA is determined by the year of your birth, ranging from age 55 if you were born prior to 1948 to age 57 if you were born in 1970 or later. Under this retirement, you would also receive a supplement from OPM. This supplement would continue until the age of 62. At that time, you would be eligible for Social Security. It would be your

choice whether to take Social Security at that time or delay it. Each year you delay it would mean additional money when you do take it.

Under FERS, a Carrier can take Early Retirement with Reduced Benefits with a minimum of 10 years of service provided they have reached their MRA. The reduction in this type of retirement is equal to 5 % for each year (or 5/12 of one percent for each month) under the age of 62. This reduction is permanent and does not stop when the retiree reaches age 62. It should be noted that if you take an early retirement with reduced benefits, you will not receive the OPM Supplement.

There are provisions for Disability Retirement under both CSRS and FERS. Under both systems, to qualify for disability, the employee must become totally disabled for the useful and efficient service in the position held. Under CSRS, a Carrier is required to have completed at least 5 years of service for eligibility and under FERS, the Carrier is required to have completed at least 18 months of service.

It should be noted that accumulated sick leave does not count towards the number of service years needed for eligibility in either CSRS or FERS retirement. In both types of retirement, accumulated sick leave only counts toward the years of service in computing the dollar amount of your annuity.

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**MBA Info**  
Report by President  
Joe Henschen

## ***Short-term Disability Insurance***

In November 2021, the U.S. Letter Carriers Mutual Benefit Association (MBA) began selling its new short term disability insurance—MBA Individual Disability Income (MBA IDI).

The MBA had not offered this type of insurance since the early 1990s. As postal employees, City Letter Carriers are not provided with disability insurance from the Federal Government and are not covered by state run plans. If you are ill or injured and have exhausted all of your sick and annual leave, your only option is leave without pay. You will need an additional source of income. The MBA IDI helps cover you when the unexpected happens. It helps ensure that you have the money you need and are able to continue living the lifestyle you've

worked for if you become hurt or too sick to work.

Applications may be download from the MBA website, [www.nalc.org/mba](http://www.nalc.org/mba), or call the Branch Hall at (727) 531-1477 or the MBA office at the phone number listed at the end of this article and we will mail them to you.

MBA IDI is available for purchase by all active NALC members between the ages of 18 and 59. Spouses and family members are not eligible. The plan is guaranteed renewable to age 65. As long as the premium is paid on time, we cannot change any benefits or refuse to renew your policy. However, we reserve the right to change premiums. Premiums will not be changed on an individual basis. Premiums will be based on the table of rates in effect for all people insured under the policy who have the same issue age and policy date and are in the same class as you.

Any premium paid after age 65 for a period not covered by your policy will be returned. Premiums may be paid through biweekly payroll deduction or directly to the MBA office on a monthly or annual basis. Electronic fund transfer (EFT) is also an option for paying your premiums.

The MBA designed this plan specifically for Letter Carriers. The plan is offered at three monthly benefit levels and two benefit periods. Your options are a benefit level of \$650, \$1,350 or \$2,000 per month, for a period of either six or 12 months. The MBA IDI contains a 14-day elimination period, as compared to longer periods you will find with other disability products offered by other private insurers. Disability benefits start after the elimination period as defined in the policy. The elimination period begins the day your total disability starts.

Pre-existing conditions MBA IDI does contain a pre-existing condition limitation. A pre-existing condition is defined as a condition for which symptoms existed that would cause an ordinary prudent person to seek diagnosis, care or treatment within a one-year period preceding the policy date, or for which medical advice or treatment was recommended or received by a physician within a two-year period preceding the policy date. The pre-existing condition limitation states that if total disability starts within two years from the policy date, and is due to a pre-existing condition, benefits will not be paid unless you have gone for a period of one year while the policy is in force without receiving any medical advice or treatment for that condition.

## Recurrent disabilities

For the purpose of determining the benefit period, we will treat a total disability as a recurrence of a prior disability if:

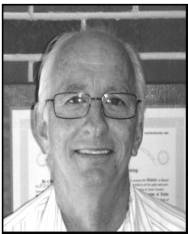
- (a) it is due to the same or related cause applicable to the prior period of total disability and
- (b) it occurs within 180 days after the end of the prior total disability.

If it is determined that your disability is a recurrence, your payments will be limited to the remaining balance of your purchased term. If your disability does not meet these criteria, it will be treated as a new disability and be payable for your full purchased term.

For more information about the MBA IDI plan or any of the MBA products, **The Branch 1477 Director of Insurance is Tom Phillips, and he can be reached at: (727) 458-4127**

Or please call the MBA office toll-free at:

800-424-5184, Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., or call 202-638-4318,  
Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern.



## Legislative Update

*By Gene Carroll, CDL District 15*

Following a contentious period of negotiations between President Biden, Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY), Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), a deal to avert a default on the nation's debt was agreed upon and signed into law just in time for the nation to avoid default on June 5.

The Fiscal Responsibility Act (Public Law 118-5) suspends the debt limit through Jan. 1, 2025, and imposes federal spending caps for the next two years. In Fiscal Year 2024, spending for non-defense agencies will essentially remain flat, except

for the Department of Veterans Affairs. Increases in funding will be capped at one percent for defense and non-defense agencies in Fiscal Year 2025. The deal also includes a stipulation to help avoid government shutdowns in 2024 and 2025. If by Jan. 1, 2024, Congress has not approved all 12 appropriations bills, a continuing resolution will be enacted that cuts spending for both defense and non-defense agencies by 1 percent until all 12 appropriations bills are approved. This provision will be in effect next year and in 2025. The Congressional Budget Office estimates the law would reduce the deficit by \$1.5 trillion over a decade. The law rescinds \$28 billion of unspent Covid-19 relief funds. It redirects \$20 billion of the \$80 billion in funding for the Internal Revenue System included in the Inflation Reduction Act to other nondefense spending. It expands work requirements for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by 2025 to those ages 18-54. The current SNAP work requirements affect those who are 18-49. Additionally, it cancels extensions for federal student loan payments suspensions 60 days after June 30. It also includes permitting changes that would streamline environmental review processes.

The House vote on May 31 came after weeks of bipartisan negotiations between Congressional leaders and the administration and a procedural vote from the House Rules Committee. The bill advanced out of the committee with a 7-6 vote, with all four Democrats and two Republicans voting against the bill. Although it was a bipartisan bill, lawmakers from both sides of the aisle raised concerns. 71 House Republicans voted against the bill, 26 of whom are members of the Freedom Caucus. Reps. Jim Jordan (R-OH), Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA), and Mike Johnson (R-LA) were among eight of the Freedom Caucus members who ultimately supported the bill. The Republican "no" voters cited concerns that the bill did not do enough to cut government spending. Even with 71 opposition votes, a majority of Republican members, 149, voted to pass the bill.

On the Democratic side, 46 House members voted against the bill, 40 of whom are Congressional Progressive Caucus members. Many of the House Democrats who voted no cited concerns about new work requirements for SNAP, rescinding IRS funding, permitting provisions, and the nondefense spending caps for federal programs. Ultimately, the bill passed the House bipartisanly, with more Democratic members (165) voting in favor of the bill than the Republican majority (149). Following

House passage, the next day on June 1, the Senate passed the measure in a 63-36 vote. During Senate consideration, 11 amendments were introduced, all of which failed, before the final vote. 44 Democratic senators voted in favor of the bill, while four Democratic senators, Sens. John Fetterman (D-PA), Ed Markey (D-MA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), voted against it. A majority of Republican senators voted against the bill. 31 Republican senators opposed the bill while 17 GOP senators, including Minority Leader McConnell and Minority Whip John Thune (R-SD), voted for its passage.

In an 11-10 party-line vote, the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions advanced the Richard L. Trumka Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO) Act of 2023 (S. 567). The PRO Act would expand collective bargaining rights for workers and make it easier to join unions. This is the first Senate markup for the PRO Act, which passed in the House in the last two Congresses. “Workers in America have the constitutional right to assemble and form a union,” Chairman Bernie Sanders (I-VT) said in his opening statement. “Over the last many decades, corporate interests have done everything that they can to make it impossible for workers to exercise that right. We will be dealing with that issue today.” During the markup, Ranking Member Bill Cassidy (R-LA), who led the Republican opposition to the bill, expressed frustration with what he called a partisan markup on controversial legislation. The committee is known for considering issues that are of interest to both the majority and minority. The markup of the Affordable Care Act in 2009 was the last time the committee considered legislation that did not have interest from both sides of the aisle.

Republican Senators introduced three dozen amendments, all of which were rejected. The amendments ranged from banning remote voting in union elections, prohibiting undocumented workers from joining unions, protecting right-to-work laws, and more. The next step is for the full Senate to consider the legislation. The bill is not expected to receive the 60 votes needed to clear the Senate filibuster or even be considered on the House floor. Two other bills advanced in party-line votes during the markup. The Healthy Families Act (S. 1664), which would guarantee every worker receives up to seven paid sick days from their employer, and the Paycheck Fairness Act (S. 728), which would address the gender wage gap by making it easier for women to come together, file and win lawsuits against employers who discriminate with wages.

These bills also are not expected to reach the 60 votes needed to clear the Senate filibuster.

NALC

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## Minutes of July 13, 2023 Membership Meeting



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

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

**Invocation** by Vice President Greg Welsh.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** led by President Joe Henschen.

**Minutes of previous meeting:** Motion to accept the Minutes as printed in the Twig by Tom Phillips, seconded by Terry Johnson. Motion passes.

**Application of New Members:** by Ken Grasso—

- Tyrik Robinson—St. Petersburg
- Robert Goldman—St. Petersburg
- Ian Shelby—St. Petersburg
- Kevin Salguero—St. Petersburg
- Kyle Rothwell—St. Petersburg
- Timothy Jones—St. Petersburg
- William DeMember—St. Petersburg
- Ryan Metcalf—St. Petersburg
- Dawn Vest—Largo
- Christine Morrison—Largo
- John Sonaga—Largo
- James LeBlanc—Largo
- Austin Dailey—Largo
- Alejandro Rosado—Ellenton

**Branch by the Numbers:** As of the latest PP the Dues Roster has 821 Active Members with 792 paying dues. 9 paying Direct Dues, 3 are on Military Duty, 17 Members on LWOP for Medical or Discipline Reasons. Retirees 567 (90 Gold Cards). 1388 Total Members.

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

**Treasurer:** Chuck Cavicchio—Read the balances. At the Executive Board Meeting we talked about moving some CDs to higher rates. Motion to accept the Report of the Treasurer by Anthony Roger, seconded by Pat Kelly. Motion passes.

**Director of Retiree Affairs:** O.D. Elliott—NALC Website is a good source for Retirement Information.

**Director of Insurance:** Tom Phillips—Eye Glass Applications for May: 4 Members for \$230 and 2 Dependents for \$100 for total of \$330. Brought information about Telehealth and its format and how it helps. New program for NALC Health Members is called Hello Heart, able to get a free Blood Pressure Monitor.

**Political District 13 Liaison:** Tom Phillips—CLC doing an orientation on canvassing on Aug 1, 2023. UPS picket practice is tomorrow for those interested at 5720 126 Street, Clearwater.

**Trustee Report:** Brian Andrews—May Books in order.

**Vice President Report:** Greg Welsh—Discussion about provisions of the JCAM and the Just Cause Principles of Article 16 Discipline.

**Executive Vice President:** Chris Hubble—Because of the death of Eugene Gates of Texas that is possibly heat related, the Region 9 NBA has sent out information about how to find out if you have received training about heat related illnesses. A slide program presented on how to find out what training you have received.

### **Welfare Reports:**

#### **Sad:**

- A.J Pollard, Carrier St. Pete—Mother passed away.
- Anthony Roger, Carrier St. Pete—Brother passed away.
- Scott Held, Carrier Dunedin—Brother passed away.
- JoAnne Cannon, former President of Bradenton Branch 1753 and FSALC District 2 Chair—Passed away.
- Al Friedman, FSALC State Chair—Was hospitalized.

- Heather Vincent-Gates, Carrier St. Pete—Husband had surgery.
- Heather Vincent-Gates Carrier St. Pete—Was hospitalized.
- Mike Williams, AFL-CIO Chairman—Passed away.
- Tony Metcalf, Carrier St. Pete—Mother passed away.
- Don Kennedy, former Supervisor St. Pete—Passed away.

#### **Glad:**

#### **Promotions to PTF:**

- Ben Toussaint—St. Pete
- Chris Tench—St. Pete
- Victor Harris—St. Pete
- Janice Pantoja—St. Pete
- Yohan Pereda—St. Pete
- Jim Cheviron—Dunedin
- Adam Deveau—Largo
- Leon Dean—Punta Gorda
- John Knighten—Punta Gorda
- Raphael Thomas—Punta Gorda
- Megan Slantis—Punta Gorda

#### **Presidents Report:**

Food Drive totals this year 717,063 lbs, just shy of 100,000 more than last year. Finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in our category.

August 24-26, 2023—FSALC Convention/Training Naples, Florida.

NALC Region 9 Rap Session, October 5-7, 2023 in Orlando, Florida.

October 14-15, 2023—Fall COP in Las Vegas. Executive Vice President Chris Hubble will be representing the Branch.

There will be a National Rap Session in the fall and I will attend that event.

Letter dated June 29, 2023, to all the Branch Presidents indicating NALC National President Brian Renfro returned back to work and there's been some other news in regards, to that but we'll let Social Media handle that.

As most of you are aware, management has taken unilateral action to run all Certified Mail in the DPS.



We have a Class Action grievance on that thanks to Steward Tiffany Naughton on getting that out.

In Pinellas Park the issue was also raised about the Certified Mail and the supervisor said just go to your DPS and pull out the Certified Mail which is what Step B seems to be going with.

Management has been crediting employees with completing training courses in the HERO platform of Lite Blue that they have not completed. We have filed a case in Punta Gorda/Port Charlotte and we are going back next week to finish that.

Currently we have 16 cases at Gulfwinds primarily dealing with discipline, 8 cases at Northside that are open and scheduling issue had a part in delaying these. 2 cases out of Crossroads, we have a St. Pete Beach remanded back from Step B which we will meet on.

Carrier returned to duty after Step B Emergency Placement was sustained. Another Carrier returned from a 16.6 Indefinite Suspension. File held in abeyance for a court decision with Adjudication withheld so they will be back to work soon. We have 4 Carriers with Back Pay paperwork at Eagan for processing.

There are 2 scheduled Arbitration Hearings scheduled for the Branch July 25, 2023 and August 1, 2023. Outside Advocates have been assigned.

One case out of Punta Gorda is about LiteBlue access. Carrier states while on vacation attempts to access LiteBlue outside the area on a computer not recognized by the system. Then tried to reset pin and password promised at 7-10 days was pushed to 28. Tried to do manual bidding but management would not accept it so it's at a difficult stage now on what the outcome could be.

M-1980 issue concerns the proper method of calculating overtime and wage increases for Part-Time Flexible employees in Step AA. It was agreed the Step AA hourly basic rate is equal to Step A of the Full-Time/Part-Time Regular employees hourly basic rate in Table Two. Affected employees will be notified in writing that their pay will be adjusted consistent with this grievance resolution.

The proposed amendment to the NALC Constitution was approved by the Executive Council at the 72<sup>nd</sup> National Convention in Chicago in August of 2022. The President shall appoint one member or officer of the branch as a Letter Carrier Political Fund

coordinator to educate the members of the branch to promote participation in the Political Fund established in Article 1, Section 5 of the NALC Constitution. We will be reaching out to someone who has interest in filling this role.

On June 29, 2023 the U.S. Supreme Court issued its ruling in Groff v DeJoy, in which a former Rural Letter Carrier sued the Postal Service for failing to accommodate his request to not be assigned work on Sundays because of religious beliefs. NALC, along with the NRLCA and PMHU filed a joint brief which emphasized the practical difficulties posed by Groff's request considering chronic understaffing in the Post Office where he worked and the potential adverse impact of Groff's request on his fellow employees. It has been sent back to the lower courts to apply the test "accommodation is required unless the accommodation imposes an undue hardship on the conduct of the employer's business". The court defined "undue hardship" to refer to "substantial increased cost" and that test must be applied "in a manner that takes into account all relevant factors".

NALC members will be apprised of any impacts of this decision on the City Letter Carrier craft as the judicial process continues in the lower courts.

Teamsters/UPS Bargaining collapses as UPS fail to deliver a Transformative Contract. UPS says it was the Teamsters who walked away from negotiating. This is really all about part time employees. Their current contract is set to expire July 31, 2023.

Door Prize Drawing

**Lotto-Ticket Winner**

Vicki Weber

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

**LiteBlue issues resolved – allotment and net-to-bank changes back online. Or is it...?**

Last week, the Postal Service again temporarily disabled the ability for employees to make allotment and net-to-bank changes online while it investigated suspected fraudulent activity against the LiteBlue application. Thankfully, what USPS thought might be criminal activity against employees’ accounts turned out to be legitimate transactions with third-party vendors that were authorized by those employees. As a result, the functionality to make allotment and net-to-bank changes in LiteBlue has now been turned back on.

Due to elevated security threats, the Postal Service implemented additional device and location security policies in LiteBlue in March 2023. **These policies monitor user login activity to detect anomalies associated with known security threats, such as phishing, account takeover, etc. Specifically, the additional security policies monitor IP addresses, locations, devices, and time between attempted log-ins.** Ultimately, these policies are designed to safeguard employees’ account information by blocking attempted log-ins from unrecognized devices or locations.

As a result of the new safeguards, from time-to-time employees are having their accounts reset or they are experiencing difficulty logging into their LiteBlue accounts. USPS states that if employees do get their account reset, they should set up multifactor authentication (MFA) from their personal devices to avoid potential issues with device and location security policies.

These location security policies are causing problems for Carriers.

The Bid Process as described in Article 41 includes:

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN THE  
UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE  
AND THE  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER  
CARRIERS,  
AFL-CIO**

**Re: Article 41—Bid Process**

The parties agree that where telephone bidding is an alternative form of bidding, bids may be

submitted by telephone. When computerized and telephone bidding are available to all employees in an installation, telephone and computerized bidding is mandatory.

Date: August 14, 2000

With this information it is being reported that Carriers attempting to log into their LiteBlue Account in a geographic location or on a system that has a different IP address than what is recognized by the system locks those Carriers out. The instructions to reset passwords are clear however, Carriers attempting to reset pins and passwords are faced with weeks to months of time between request and receiving mailed temporary passwords.

Newly promoted career employees are unable to elect benefits, within the 60-day window for sign-ups. All Carriers are unable to bid until they are successful at resetting passwords.

Please, if you get locked out of LiteBlue access contact your Steward and advise them of the issue so management can be notified prior to time limits on bidding runs out.

**Steward Meeting Attendees**

**Meeting was held at the Hall and on Zoom and led by President Joe Henschen and Executive Vice President Chris Hubble.**

**July 20th:**

Javier Urrutia, Heather Manley, Brian Andrews, Mike Oster, Donny DeMilta, James Grazioso, Patrice Cannonier, Wyatt Stribling, Eric Baker, Sheldon Jones, Tonya Lee, Anthony Roger, Suzette Brown, Cheryl Anderson, Christina Torie, Tiffany Naughton

**South Meeting**

**July 19th:**

Joe Henshen, Chris Hubble, Erica Baker, Chris Kotonski, Mike Churchill, Dennis Leach, Rui Almeida, John Knighten, Ingrid Heise, Karen Banks Jason Giardina

# BRANCH 1477 PHONE DIRECTORY

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*Chris Hubble* ..... (727) 641-8396

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*Patrick Jacques* ..... (727) 218-2721

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**St. Petersburg:**

|                         |                       |                |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| <b>Crossroads 9</b>     | Heather Vincent-Gates | (727) 460-8852 |
| Alt                     | Jody Dodd             | (727) 768-2562 |
| <b>Crossroads 10</b>    | Patrick Jacques       | (727) 218-2721 |
| Alt                     | Ken Domingos          | (716) 598-1205 |
| <b>Euclid</b>           | Wyatt Stribling       | (727) 480-6121 |
| Alt                     | Patrick Green         | (813) 671-4770 |
| <b>Gateway</b>          | (Branch Hall)         | (727) 531-1477 |
| <b>Gulfwinds 7,15</b>   | Olbin Flores-Elvir    | (913) 671-0397 |
| <b>Gulfwinds 11</b>     | Mike Hancock          | (954) 955-0350 |
| <b>Madeira Beach</b>    | Patrick Jacques       | (727) 218-2721 |
| <b>Midtown 5</b>        | Javier Urrutia        | (813) 484-2489 |
| <b>Midtown 12</b>       | Patrice Cannonier     | (786) 200-0957 |
| Alt                     | Gary Johnson          | (316) 209-3764 |
| <b>Northside 2</b>      | Tiffany Naughton      | (727) 642-5466 |
| Alt                     | Suzette Brown         | (727) 580-1084 |
| <b>Northside 16</b>     | Tonya Lee             | (813) 270-2918 |
| Alt                     | Kalani Mosman         | (727) 418-8767 |
| <b>Open Air</b>         | Scott Archbold        | (727) 422-4766 |
| Alt                     | Ross Cassidy          | (727) 510-9685 |
| <b>St. Pete Beach</b>   | Cheryl Anderson       | (727) 531-1477 |
| <b>St. Pete Main 13</b> | Anthony Roger         | (813) 574-9971 |
| Alt                     | Scott Holderbaum      | (813) 777-7626 |
| <b>St. Pete Main 14</b> | Alan Pollard          | (727) 667-4254 |
| Alt                     | Dee Grant             | (727) 225-9272 |

|                         |                  |                |
|-------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>Bradenton Bch</b>    | Brian Andrews    | (941) 807-5669 |
| <b>Dunedin</b>          | Scott Held       | (727) 418-5742 |
| Alt                     | Chuck Cavicchio  | (727) 798-8506 |
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| <b>Englewood</b>        | Josh LaGrew      | (763) 232-8954 |
| <b>Indian Rocks Bch</b> | Tim Cox          | (727) 481-5348 |
| <b>Largo 70/73</b>      | Adam Deveau      | (978) 435-1280 |
| <b>Largo 71/78</b>      | Eric Short       | (727) 251-9846 |
| <b>Palmetto</b>         | Sheldon Jones    | (941) 580-1058 |
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| <b>Pinellas Park 81</b> | Josh Wheeler     | (813) 947-5369 |
| <b>Punta Gorda</b>      | Dennis Leach     | (941) 276-0806 |
| <b>PC Annex</b>         | Erica Baker      | (941) 661-5196 |
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| Alt                     | Jim Grazioso     | (727) 410-6492 |
| <b>Seminole 76/77</b>   | Donny DeMiita    | (727) 430-4413 |
| Alt 76/77               | Anne Winkelbauer | (708) 692-6540 |

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, 2023

| Sun       | Mon                                               | Tue                                          | Wed                                       | Thu                                | Fri       | Sat       |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
|           |                                                   | <b>1</b><br>St. Pete<br>Retiree<br>Breakfast | <b>2</b><br>Largo<br>Retiree<br>Breakfast | <b>3</b><br>Executive<br>Board     | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b><br>Pinellas Park<br>Retiree<br>Breakfast | <b>8</b>                                     | <b>9</b>                                  | <b>10</b><br>General<br>Membership | <b>11</b> | <b>12</b> |
| <b>13</b> | <b>14</b>                                         | <b>15</b>                                    | <b>16</b><br>South<br>Branch<br>Meeting   | <b>17</b><br>Steward's<br>Meeting  | <b>18</b> | <b>19</b> |
| <b>20</b> | <b>21</b>                                         | <b>22</b>                                    | <b>23</b>                                 | <b>24</b>                          | <b>25</b> | <b>26</b> |
| <b>27</b> | <b>28</b>                                         | <b>29</b>                                    | <b>30</b>                                 | <b>31</b>                          |           |           |