



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 339

VOICE OF BRANCH 1477

June, 2009



Les Stroup
President

Modified Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process (MIARAP)

The parties will appoint a joint NALC/USPS route evaluation team (s) in each District who will be used to implement the methodology outlined below (with the NALC team member compensated on a no loss, no gain basis). In Districts with more than one team, a lead team will be established. The evaluation team(s)

will be responsible for data analysis, route evaluation and adjustment, and oversight of jointly conducted carrier consultations, The NALC representative on the evaluation team(s) will be appointed by the National NALC President while the USPS representative will be selected by the District Manager.

The District Lead Team consist of Jesse Costin from the NALC and Bill Bishoff from the Postal Service.

There will be one lead team in each district who will be responsible for oversight of the process and the District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams. These teams will be responsible for prioritizing and scheduling evaluations and adjustments so that all needed adjustments can be completed within the given time frame. Schedules will be provided to the Area/Regional Teams. District Lead Teams are responsible for resolving issues advanced by the District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams. Any issues that can not be resolved by the District Lead Team will be referred to the Area/Regional Team within two

working days of receipt of the issue. The District Lead Team is responsible for assigning the District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams to units and communicating with them at least weekly.

It will be the responsibility of the District Lead Team, after coordinating with a district office designee to schedule the COR technicians when COR is used for adjustments, to make sure that valid PS Form 3999s are available, and to ensure that necessary travel time validations are completed so as there are no delays in scheduled evaluations or adjustments.

The District Lead Teams will be responsible for data entries tracking the progress of each of their District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams in all the units. Additionally, the District Lead Teams will compile the results of the Evaluation and Adjustment Process by delivery unit, installation, and district, and forward this information to the Area/Regional and National Oversight Teams.

The District Lead Teams will participate in training District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams on the Evaluation and Adjustment Process.

The District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams for Branch 1477 consist of Ray Handville, Chris Hubble, Jim Bumbul, Larry Gaskin and Susan Chavez. The District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams are responsible for data analysis, route evaluation and adjustment, and oversight of jointly conducted carrier consultations.

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**NEXT BRANCH MEETING Wednesday, June 10, 2009 at 7:00 PM at the Letter Carrier Hall Branch 1477,
N.A.L.C. (727) 531-1477**

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The teams are responsible for communicating with local office contacts to obtain information needed to evaluate and adjust the routes. District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams review all available information for anomalies and potential data integrity issues.

Once a District Evaluation and Adjustment Team has been assigned delivery units, the team should immediately advise their Local Office Contacts that they need current representative PS Forms 3999 for the purpose of moving territory, if necessary, during adjustments.

District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams will consider all information provided including actual times, base time, PS Form 3999s, fixed office times, mail volumes and carrier comments to come up with an evaluated time and adjust the routes if needed. Should a District Evaluation and Adjustment Team be unable to resolve any issue, the matter must immediately be referred to the District Lead Team.

Copies of all data and adjustments will be forwarded to the District Lead Team, who will then monitor the implementation of the agreed to adjustments and the accurate recording of route data.

Branch 1477 Local Office Contacts consist of Les Stroup, Joe Henschen, Glenn Fagan, Chuck Cavicchio, Bob Meeks, Oswald Antonetty, Bonnie Baldwin, Robin Gillette, Lori Bell, Brenda Mavretic, Frank Patti, Maurine Bibens and Brian Andrews. The Local Office Contacts will be the Postmaster or designee and the **Branch President** or **designee**. The Local Office Contacts are responsible for communicating any local issues, current or anticipated vacancies, or any potential data integrity issues to the designated District Evaluation and Adjustment Team. They will provide seniority lists and information regarding replacement carriers. The Local Office Contacts will also advise the District Evaluation and Adjustment Teams if there is some reason the selected review periods should not be used. The Local Office Contacts will use a prepared script to conduct both the initial and the proposed adjustment consultations with the carriers. The Local Office Contacts may provide comments regarding the feedback received from the carrier during consultations.



IN SOLIDARITY



Joe Henschen
Executive Vice
President

The Postal Service is obligated contractually to make every effort to assign limited duty work to employees who have not fully recovered from an on-the-job injury.

As you have heard over the past year The Service, with the development of a program called National Reassessment Process (NRP), is ignoring that obligation.

With NRP, the Service is reducing the effort it makes in offering limited duty work from the effort it made since 1979.

Depending on whether or not management deems an injured worker's limited duty is productive, that injured worker may be "Sent home, no work available" under NRP.

If this happens, the injured worker should fill out a CA-2a and CA-7 to ensure receipt of wage loss compensation for which he or she may be eligible. The injured worker should also contact the union hall to file a grievance regarding the withdrawal of limited duty.

Over the past several months management has taken Letter Carrier's with stable work restrictions and offered them the routes or assignments they have. In few cases Carriers with modified positions were offered other positions that management alone deems as necessary work.

In recent meetings with injured workers management has changed the nature of the meeting to that of an informational meeting. Carriers are being informed by the time a job offer is made to them there may not be work available.

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Management points to the 546 provisions of the ELM. 546.14 specifies the steps that must be taken in seeking limited duty work in order to ensure the assignments are minimally disruptive to the ill or injured employee. Ultimately once a required lengthy pecking order is researched looking an assignment is done the USPS has plans to tell the injured worker there is no work available and ask them to leave.

Once on the roles of OWCP, the possibility exists that vocational rehabilitation will be offered to the employee. The purpose of the OWCP vocational rehabilitation program is to assist disabled employees who are covered under the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) to minimize their disabilities and return to gainful employment. Vocational rehabilitation is controlled completely by the Office of Workers' Compensation. OWCP may, at its discretion, provide vocational rehabilitation services to injured carriers following vocational rehabilitation services, employees generally continue receiving the same benefits, except that wage-loss compensation benefits are reduced. If a disability is partial, compensation is paid based on the difference between monthly pay and monthly wage-earning capacity. OWCP will determine the loss of wage-earning capacity. Normally, if an employee is placed in new employment for more than 60 days, the actual wages of the new employment will be deemed to fairly and reasonably represent the employee's wage-earning capacity. If the new job or constructed position pays less than the letter carrier position, there will be continuing compensation payments from OWCP. In these cases, OWCP will continue to pay health benefits and life insurance premiums and subtract the employee's portion of the premiums from the compensation checks.

How contractually sound are these attempts to reduce the number of injured employees is the subject of a pending National Level Case filed by the NALC.



Larry Gaskin
First Vice
President

Once again, route inspections are upon us. They are going to be part of our lives for a while. This newest process will affect all the routes in the country. Don't panic, we will survive. Your NALC representatives have your back and make every effort to assure a fair adjustment.

Another Food Drive is history. Everyone worked very hard, long hours to make it a success. We enjoyed the cooperation of management, craft employees and civilian volunteers.

Just imagine what could be accomplished if this cooperation existed year round. The cooperation starts with each one of us. We must continue to display unity in our every day workplace. Management will always take advantage of any weakness that they perceive.

If you have undertime on your route, do you try to cover it up or advise management of your situation? Trying to cover it up only puts a target on your back. Be honest. Help out a fellow carrier. Until the next series of route adjustments are complete, most of us are stuck with taking pieces. Don't expect others carriers to do your share. We are all in this together and we will survive together. Every carrier in your zone, or unit, knows who is doing their share and who is not. Your fellow carriers are your team, don't disappoint them. **DO YOUR SHARE.** If you don't do your share, you have no right to complain when they point it out to you. Unity makes us strong.

Stay Safe



Harry Strzyzynski
Secretary

**BRANCH 1477, N.A.L.C.
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
May 9, 2009**

Meeting called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Les Stroup.

Invocation by Greg Welsh.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Les Stroup.

Leo Murray asked that the minutes in the Twig for 4/9/09 be amended. Minutes accepted as amended. Motion to accept minutes by Leo Murray, seconded Elis Pujouls.

Reading of Official Correspondence — 5

NEW MEMBERS: 1 new member Theresa "Terri" Graham from Englewood.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

TREASURER: - **Tom Phillips** - Motion to accept Gene Carroll, Seconded Tom White.

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES: **Thom Hart** - J. Bishop - Euclid Station, Joe Foster - Crossroads, Wade Daugherty - Crossroads, - Ron Eichelman - Seminole, Ron Hanisch - Punta Gorda, Jon Lund - Seminole.

Well-Care has agreed to pay 80 million dollars for Medicare Fraud. Bob Miller in Largo Medical Hospital, he will receive 7 weeks of chemo. John "John Boy" Strohm is at H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center.

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HEALTH BENEFIT DIRECTOR: Ken Grasso - 25 applications paid out \$793.99, There was 26,080 new members in the Health Plan, Region 9, 4th highest in members average age of member 2009 is 54.9 years.

TRUSTEE REPORT: Patricia Meeks - Books audited all in order.

EDITOR: John Bourlon - No Report.

MBA DIRECTOR/DRT Representative: Greg Welsh - Mutual Benefit information is listed in the Twig. You can get on the computer and learn of all our programs. nalc.org. District is expanded.

POLITICAL DISTRICT 10 LIASON: Leo Murray - Read 2 letters from Bill Young thanking him for his continued effort on Bill HR 235 and HR 1203. For those that live in St. Pete there are 9 candidates running for Mayor in September. The AFL/CIO will be looking at them for possible endorsement.

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT/POLITICAL DISTRICT 16 LIASON: Lori Bell - Alex Sink has announced she is running for Governor.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT: Larry Gaskin - 204-B's Route going up for bid. Postal Service tried to circumvent the Contract and failed. Food Drive a success.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT: Joe Henschen - **Sad Report:**

John Strohm - Retiree Crossroads - Ill and at Moffitt Cancer Center.

Pat Trudeau - Crossroads - Surgery.

Gary Weber - Retiree Largo - Father of Tammy & Vicki Weber - Seriously Ill.

Cliff Trask - Punta Gorda - 20-year-old nephew killed in a Car Accident.

Brad Woolsey - Northside Grandfather passed away.

John Blackand - Retiree Seminole - Wife Heart Surgery.

Marie Audet - Port Charlotte Annex - Surgery.

Margie & Tony Colucci - Seminole/St. Pete - Margie's Mother Passed Away.

Keith Northup - Retiree Seminole - Surgery.

Lee Gustafson - Retiree St. Pete - Father Passed Away.

Suzette Llorens-Singson - Pinellas Park - Brian Smith Gateway - Mother Passed away (Brian Smith (T.E) also of St. Pete - Grandmother).

Bob Miller - Retiree Largo - Receiving Chemo at Largo Medical Hospital.

Jack Raulerson - Retiree St. Pete - Father Passed Away.

David Lockhart - Mother suffered a Stroke.

Eileen Cooper - Gateway Station - Passed Away.

Glad Report:

Ray Handville birth of his first Grandchild (little boy).

Alex Toth birth of his 7th Grandchild.

Congratulation to David Lockhart and Magaly Morales

Newly Married.

Congratulation go out to Maria Bartocci of Central Stations son Alexander Weddle won the William C. Doherty Scholarship he will receive \$4,000 a year for 4 years.

Food Drive another successful year.

The Postal Service is contractually and legally obligated to make every effort to assign Limited Duty work to employees who have not fully recovered from an on the job injury.

With National Reassessment Process, the Service is attempting to reduce the effort it makes in offering Limited Duty work from the effort it made since 1979.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: FSALC State Convention. Regular Branch Meeting will be held on Wednesday June 10th. Motion to accept changes O.D. Elliott, Seconded John Bourlon Motion Passes.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

GOOD OF THE SERVICE: by President Les Stroup

- ◆ Christy Carr (Arsylin Uniforms) was made an Honorary Member of Branch 1477. Presented a Membership Card by President Les Stroup.
- ◆ Clerks being transferred to Carrier Craft. File grievance and inform Business Agents Office.
- ◆ Greg Welsh's workload has increased. Because District Expanded.
- ◆ Jim Bumbul, Chris Hubble, Susan Chavez, Larry Gaskin, headed up by Ray Handville were appointed to District and Adjustment Team by President Stroup.
- ◆ Branch FMLA Forms are no longer accepted.
- ◆ President from Fort Myers will be transferring to Englewood.
- ◆ Convention Delegates Meeting June 4, 2009. Per Diem, Vest, Confirmations numbers will be handed out.
- ◆ Lori Bell and Susan Chavez have been appointed to Committees at the State Convention.
- ◆ Tom Phillips raised \$2,218.00 for MDA with the Fun Run.

WINNERS OF DRAWINGS:

50/50 — \$51.00 won by Maria Bartocci

Lotto/Power Ball — won by Jim Hatch

Elaine DeFelix of Brookfield Uniforms donated Boots won by Sheldon Jones

Christy Carr of Arsylin Uniforms donated gift cards won by Willie Cochran, Tom White, and Rick Renshaw

Rain Gear Drawing: Won by Jim Hatch

No - VOE Winner

\$10.00 Gift Certificate to Fergs Sports Bar won by Wayne Cameron

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Auxiliary Drawings:

1. Ozzy Antonetty
2. Tricia Meeks
3. Bob Meeks
4. Stan Witham
5. Joe Henschen
6. Rick Renshaw

Motion to adjourn



**John Bourlon
Editor**

NOT OFTEN SAID.

There are several jobs in the Union that are extremely important. Some more than others. Those holding office seldom, if ever get an “atta-boy”. I have been involved in the Union since 1969 and have had the opportunity to observe the performance of most. The position less appreciated is one appointed by the President. “The Legislative Liaison” there has been many people appointed to this position. All have done a great job. Some more so than others. I have been observing brother Leo Murray, the current representative for the past few years and am thrilled about how involved he is on all subjects relative to bills being debated that could have an impact on the ranks of the Letter Carrier craft. Each month at the Union meetings Leo gives an in-depth report concerning these matters. He is **LONG** Winded but gets the job done. Thank Leo. Keep up the good work.

May is Mental Health Month



**Ken Grasso
Health Benefit
Representative**

Social relationships have a great influence on mental health. It’s important to recognize and show support for the well-being and mental health of those you care about.

As children grow, their self-esteem and mental health is often shaped by the relationship they have with their parents. It’s important to have realistic expectations for children and to show them unconditional love. This doesn’t mean to give them carte blanche to do whatever they want; children also need guidelines.

Adults and teens need support from social relationships too. Don’t be afraid to communicate. If you avoid talking about mental health needs, it can foster feelings of isola-

tion. Sometimes just knowing that someone is available to talk helps.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call our Mental Health and Substance Abuse line at 1-877-468-1016. You can also visit our website, www.nalc.org/depart/hbp and visit our “Optum Health” page under the “Network Providers” tab.



Spotlight on Stress

Research has proven that too much stress can negatively influence your health, your mood and even your relationships with other people.

According to the National Institutes of Health, the majority of illnesses can be traced back to stress.

It is possible to decrease stress in your life. Here are a few tips:

Eat Healthier

Foods loaded with fat, sugar and salt only serve to make you feel more lethargic in the long run. When you eat healthier foods like fruit, vegetables and lean proteins, you feel more energetic.

Exercise

Like eating right, exercise gives you more energy. It also increases your overall physical health, which isn’t bad either!

Sleep Well

Too little sleep can make you feel irritable and overwhelmed. Getting the right amount of sleep (7 - 8 hours for most people) is a crucial part of keeping stress at bay.

Drink Less Caffeine

Most people drink caffeinated beverages to feel more awake. Consuming lots of caffeine over time can actually lead to health problems like insomnia, headaches and ulcers. Even if you don’t want to completely cut caffeine from your diet, try to alternate it with healthier options.

Think Positive

Positive thinking almost sounds too simple, but it really works! Just a few minutes of positive thinking can change your whole outlook. Try to devote a few minutes a day to reflecting on the good in life.

Breathe

When we get stressed or upset, we tend to take fewer breaths. Concentrating on your breathing can make you feel calmer.



What Do I Do Now?

I have been getting a fair number of phone calls regarding retirement this past month.

Thom Hart
Director of
Retirees

The number 1 question of course is “How much will I get each month?”

Your Postal Record for May 2009 on page 36 has a summary for CSRS Annuity Payments. Then on page 37 you will find the FERS Retirement benefits... as well as Social Security and Thrift Saving Plan (TSP).

Please take a moment to clip these out, review them, and save for future use. (Note they are not published each month.)

When your High-3-Average is figured it is whenever during your career it is earned. Of course you do realize that Overtime is NOT a part of his calculation.

As you contemplate retirement you should ask yourself, “Can I live on a 50% reduction in income?” Be sure to look at all your monthly costs to wit: House (taxes, utilities, insurance, upkeep); car(s) (tags, gas/oil, insurance, repairs); food (include any pets); health care (premiums, co-payments); clothing; entertainment (tickets for movies, ballgames, concerts) gifts (birthdays, holiday, graduation); charitable donations; vacation; and finally your funeral expenses.

Why retire and then go to work for \$7 or \$10 an hour so you can make ends meet. No – the grass really is not greener at another workplace.

Remember that you must examine all the components of your retirement not Sally, Fred, or Ralph’s. Each of your needs are different so choose carefully.

You can call the NALC Retirement Department on Monday – Wednesday – Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon and 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. this is a toll-free number only answered on these days at these times. By all means you can also phone me and I will be happy to assist you.

Please keep Bob Miller, “John Boy” Strohm and Keith Northup in your prayers as they endure medical problems.

St. Pete Retirees Breakfast

The following happy Retirees attended this month’s meeting

Denny Elliott, Dale Pope, Lanny Quinn, Don Kosior, Bob Trimble, Thom Hart, John Tschupp, Gil Migliano, Don Goble, John Raisler, Mike Morcillo, Ed Schenk, Ron Cherry, Richard Compher and still carrying mail **Tom White, and Patricia Meeks.**

The St. Pete Retirees met on the 15th of April.

How bout joining us in June – we meet on the 3rd Wednesday.

See You Then.



Keith Northup
The Original
Retiree Breakfast

The **(Original) Largo Retiree Breakfast** was held on May 7, 2009 at Boris Family Restaurant on Ulmerton Road at 09:00 hours. The following Retired Letter Carriers were present and or accounted for: **Thom Hart, Ed Joyner, Bill Guenther, Richard Rink, Bill Koutney, Bruce Davis, Rufus King, Wayne Moore, John Blackard, Dave Bennett, and John Hammock.**

The total number of Postal Experience years setting around the table totaled 285. That is a lot of years working for the man. Some of it was even good. There was no picture taken, those looking for it will be disappointed.

Director of Retirees **Thom Hart** informed all that there would be no cost of living increases this year, due to the large increase for last year. This was not a happy point for all those attending. Retirees rely on their retirement benefits for living day to day. They cannot work a few hours overtime to increase their take home payment.

John Blackard reported that his wife is doing well after having open-heart surgery in April. We all wish her a very speedy recovery.

Keith Northup pulled a **Dane Bigley**, had to go to the VA for medical tests pending surgery on Tuesday May 12th at the VA. I think I made the appointment as the surgery went as scheduled. I am home doing well, I think.

Dana Bigley was also at the VA for a scheduled
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appointment according to a reliable source. He broke his string of attending the Thursday breakfast at Boris's. Sorry for that fact.

There was no drawing THIS MONTH as **Keith Northup** had run off with all the money. He said he gave it to Thom to present but Thom knew nothing of this. We will have to have an investigative Interview to locate the funds.

The next scheduled breakfast of the **Largo Original Retired Letter Carriers** will be held on June 4, 2009 at 09:00 hours at Boris Family Restaurant on Ulmerton Road. We hope to see you there as a retired Letter Carrier. We welcome active carriers to visit and see old friends. See ya!

**FIRST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH BUNCH
PINELLAS PARK**

The following happy Retired Carriers attended this months Breakfast:

Bill Butler, Johnny Wagner, Max Wannike, Brian Britt, Ron Hearon, Ray Lee, Denny Elliott, Bob Trimble, Lynn Phillips, Jim Long, Tony Klepac, Nils Holmquist, Willie Santiago, Lester Ray, and Thom Hart.

The next Breakfast will be on June 2, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., DeMills Family Restaurant on Park Blvd.

**All Craft Retiree Breakfast:
Bernie Ososky**

Largo's All Craft Retirees Breakfast was held on May the 6th at Denny's on Missouri. Attendance was about average for the summer months with a total of eighteen and they were: **Kathy McGuiness, Neal Williamson, Mike Pizzorusso** (Mikeeeee), **Rudy Lang, Brad Wells** (Our only representative from the custodial engineer craft), **Don Cox, Dorian Sobat, Jim Leonhardt, Dana Bigley, O.D. Elliott, Thom Hart, Ann Brown, Frieda Pickering** (Who came all the way from Inverness, FL), **Sandy Carter, Peggy Eichelman, Ron Eichelman** (The newest retiree present), **Joe Blanchette** (came even farther away from North Carolina), and yours truly.

Ron and **Peggy** surprised everyone by riding their Harley's to breakfast. **Peggy** has learned to ride now and let me tell you, those bikes look real nice!! **Sandy Carter** was talking about maybe moving to Louisiana some day

to be near her kids. **Pat Grant** and his wife **Laura**, who recently retired, have moved to North Georgia. We will see him occasionally when he comes to visit his family. It was nice to see **Joe Blanchette** and **Frieda Pickering**. **Joe** was here to see his mom for Mother's Day and his daughter and grandson. **Frieda** looked great!!!! Looked like she could still deliver mail not!!). So, our breakfast was really represented by all the crafts; carriers, clerks, supervisor and custodian. No sad news to report this month, which is always good. Gold and Silver prices are on the increase as well as gas prices. Economists predict that the recession will start to recover by the first or second quarter on 2010. NOW is the time to buy that new car or house. Prices are at all time lows and bargains are to be had. We probably won't see these levels ever again in our lifetime. OK, that's a rap from where I sit and how I see it! Now circle this date on your calendar, June the 3rd, Denny's on Missouri. Yes, you guessed it, our next breakfast gathering. See Ya There! Be Safe & Enjoy Life!

Bernie

**MBA Paid Up at Age 90
Whole Life plan**



**Greg Welsh
Director of MBA**

The MBA Paid Up at Age 90 Whole Life plan is an affordable lifelong whole life insurance plan that covers the life of the insured up to \$100,000. NALC members may apply for this policy to cover their own life, a spouse, child, grandchild or great-grandchild between the ages of 0 and

70.

The NALC member will be the owner of the insured's policy unless MBA is advised otherwise. Ownership can be transferred to another person of legal age at any time upon written request.

The plan offers all the advantages of traditional whole life insurance, but rather than paying premiums to age 100, payments end on the policy anniversary date after the insured's 90th birthday. You pay the same premium amount until this time. After the insured's 90th birthday, the policy coverage continues in full, unless the owner decides to surrender the policy for its cash value.

Premiums may be paid directly to the MBA office annually, monthly or they may be paid through biweekly payroll deduction from the Minneapolis Payroll Data Center. The policy owner may change the method of pre-mium payment at any time by contacting the MBA office

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to request a change.

A portion of the premiums on this policy is allotted to build up a cash value that earns interest. The rate is determined annually by the Board of Trustees.

**Need emergency cash?
With the MBA Paid Up at Age 90**

Whole Life plan, you may borrow against the policy's value at the low loan rate of 8 percent. To request a loan against your policy, you simply write or call MBA. Upon receipt of your request, MBA will send a completed loan note of the amount requested.

A policy owner may repay the loan at their convenience. There is no time limit on the repayment amount. The minimum loan payment is \$25; however, the MBA urges its policy owners to repay their loans as soon as possible. This saves interest charges and recreates an emergency cash fund a member can borrow against should the need arise again.



Tricia & Bob Meeks
Trustee
Shop Stewards

She Said:

Management is beating Carriers up with B.S. numbers. I was told..... Parcels are not added for time. DPS does not matter. Express and certified are not inputted and route maintenance is part of the allied time (that seems to no longer be there).

By the way, Red Books are done on office function. Do these on 722 time, if you are told otherwise, file a grievance. If you start using your office time clocked over to any other time, Management will start shorting that time.

Just a reminder, if you are over 55 years of age and have been employed for 25 years or more, you have no standards, you give the best you can and cannot be harassed over DOIS!

C.Y.A. everyday. Just ask the Carrier who received a 7-Day Suspension for running out of gas.

Remember how much you used to love this job?
Remember how much customer service you were allowed to give?
Remember when employees could smile and joke with

each other? Remember when Supervisors and Managers were capable of thinking for themselves? Without being told when they could eat, sleep, crap and sneeze by "the higher ups".

*Just something to think about:
Intelligence is knowing what needs done, courage is doing what needs done.*

Will all courageous members please stand up.

See ya at the Hall.

He Said:

Thank you DEE!!!! As always you have shown your great organization and dedication towards this years Food Drive. You had numerous volunteers to help sweep routes to reduce the load on the Carriers. Picking up drop spots at Mobile Home Parks, Apartments and oh yes, the Mainland's. It was nice to see recent retirees John "Pac-Man" Pakalns and Ron Herron with his wife on their free Saturday. Dee talked to businesses and the Mayor and received funds to have lunch provided to feed the Carriers and volunteers. It was neat to see the Food Drive Advertisement on the City Digital Sign on 49th Street and Park Blvd. This year Pinellas Park brought in over 29,000 pounds of food to help out local families in need.

Thank you to everyone for all their efforts in this years Food Drive!

As I write this it is National Dog Bite Prevention Week. I read an Article about this in the newspaper but was reminded later that afternoon by my Letter Carrier who knocked on my door. He informed me that I have been targeted because I have a **BEWARE of DOG** sign on my fence. There has never been any issue with my dogs. I understand issues with aggressive dogs, especially on the route I do. But my Carrier told me that Management (someone in District) had made the decision that any house with a **BEWARE of DOG** sign must either take down the sign, get a curbside box or sign some kind of agreement if not my mail would be put on hold and I may have to get a P.O. Box. After my Carrier left, I wondered how other customers had felt after being told this not knowing the daily idiotic decisions made by Management. Is this how we keep up customer satisfaction when loosing millions a year? I think NOT! Although, I have to stress to every Carrier to be alert and prepared out there with aggressive dogs. It is a very dangerous part of our jobs.

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In the next couple of weeks school will be out and kids will be leaving doors and fences open. Hey, a **BEWARE of DOG** sign may help in reminding us to stay alert.

THEY SAID:

Remember your Stewards works for you; don't hesitate to go to them if you have a problem, that's what you elected them for!

**Chuck Cavicchio
Steward
Dunedin**

Greetings to my fellow members of Branch 1477! My name is Chuck Cavicchio. I have been the Shop Steward in Dunedin for almost 3 years. During my time in Dunedin many financial changes have taken place in the world. A few of those changes include: real estate values falling dramatically, retirement funds dropping substantially, consumer debt rising, and unemployment figures skyrocketing. Changes have also occurred within the Postal Service as well. With all the changes it is nice to know the National Association of Letter Carriers has remained unchanged. The NALC is always there when they are needed. I truly believe all Carriers should be members.

I know everyone has their reasons for not belonging to the NALC. I would like to share some reasons of why I belong. Each pay period I pay \$25.38 in Union dues. This amounts to \$659.88 annually. That may seem like a lot of money these days. Let's take a look at what you get for your Union dues of just 31 cents an hour. Since the beginning of the current contract, my hourly wage has increased by \$2.17. In addition, there are five more Cost of Living Allowances (COLA) increases. There are also two 2 more raises, which are both worth approximately \$1000 each.

The thirty-one cents an hour dues also allows me 208 hours of Annual Leave worth approximately \$5500.00. In addition to Annual Leave, I receive 104 hours of Sick Leave worth just over \$2700 annually. Along with those benefits I get a matching 5% into my Thrift Savings Plan, which is worth about \$100 a pay period. That adds up to or \$2600 a year.

If those figures are not enough to convince you, I am also entitled to the Postal Service paying more than 80% of my health care. My family and I find this benefit priceless. Speaking of Health Benefits, if I get my eyes examined Branch 1477 will reimburse me up to \$45. My de-

pendants receive individual reimbursements up to \$35 annually.

So what do I get for my annual Union dues of \$659.88? If you add up the benefits mentioned above, not including health benefits, over the next 6 years the benefits equal approximately **\$75,635!** Wow that is incredible! TEs who are not Union members, your pay is about \$400 a week more than a casual. TEs also enjoy 13 days of Annual Leave worth \$2741.

A benefit I forgot to mention above is the hundreds of years of knowledge and experience from our members that stand behind the contract, EEO, and OWCP. This knowledge helps to represent you in all aspects of your postal career. While other companies are cutting work forces and benefits, we should be thankful for our negotiators in the NALC. Contact your local Union office or Steward and find out how to sign up. I am proud to be an American and a member of the NALC.

**Auxiliary 181:
Dottie Tutt-Hutchinson**

Pat O'Donnell made the Auxiliary so proud of her for such a great job arranging the Mothers' Day luncheon

at Kally K's in Dunedin on May 2nd. The restaurant was worth the drive for us 'Southerners' from lower Pinellas County. Individual place settings of beautiful vases with silk flowers adorned the tables. We had a scrumptious soup and salad bar before our seafood and steak dinners. Some, mostly the grandchildren, had room for dessert. After the meal, Pat organized games and prizes for everyone. Lucky Margaret Perkins won the most prizes! Pat must have shopped for days before the event and probably had to do some last minute buying for the late RSVPers because she had chosen age-appropriate gifts for each child. Beautiful miniature porcelain flowered jewelry boxes were given to each of us as souvenirs of the day. Thank you, Pat, for all your hard work in making a memorable Mothers' Day celebration for us.

We missed Pat's granddaughter, Shannon, who has come to so many of our socials. She was celebrating an important birthday with friends on the beach for the weekend. But, I did get to sit with Pat's daughter-in-law Kathy, a kindergarten teacher, who was lovely and loved to laugh--great company. My daughter, Carolyn, caught up with Sally Madden's news about her daughter, Kelly, a principal at Oakhurst Elementary School and fellow Junior League member.

(continued on page 10)

(continued from page 9)

Margaret told my granddaughters, Madelin and Emma, how she used to fly a crop duster on her family's farm, which impressed them as much as I had been the first time I heard Margaret was a pilot. It's hard to get Shirley Moran to brag about herself, but if you mention grandbabies, she lights right up!

Poor Joyce Keller, who usually has a dozen or so family and friends in attendance, was surrounded by only 7 of the usual gang of hers. Illness kept Diana and Carol away. We missed Sue Elliott, Gerry Bourlon, Marlene Markey, Kathy Northup, Mary Richards, and Alice Wan-nike who was in Wisconsin visiting with her daughter.

The May 12th meeting was hosted by Pat O'Donnell in her beautiful home in Clearwater. Not much business was necessary because we're not meeting until September 8th, at which time we'll plan the Teacup Exchange Tea on September 13th. So, summer travel plans, health issues, and grandchildren were discussed. Clarence won the cat-in-the-bag prize. Margaret still needs baked goods for the raffles at the Union meetings this summer, so please give her a call if you can bake something.

It'll be hard to reach our president, Joyce, because she and Clarence will be on the road for 10 weeks beginning in June. Daughter Tina and family will be camping with them from Denver to South Dakota for one week, and then they are going on to Arizona, Oklahoma, and finally to Branson, Missouri where Marlene and Gene will join them. Sue and Denny have already left for North Carolina, and Alan and I will be attending his family reunion and sightseeing in St. Louis.

Everyone seems to be reasonably well. Sally needs more physical therapy for her back, and my doctor thinks my knees are going to need more surgery in the near future. It could be worse.....

Happy late May birthdays:


Mary Richards 4th and Bill Moran 5th.

Happy June birthdays:

Sally Madden 18th, Pat O'Donnell 21st, and Shirley Moran 25th.

Shop Stewards Meeting for April:
 Ray Handville, Larry Gaskin, Fred Assidy, Bob Meeks, Bonnie Baldwin, Susan Chavez, Chris Hubble, Jim Bumbul, Andre McCalla, Tricia Meeks, Bob Brown, Glenn Fagan, Justin Wilt, Ralph Brown, Willie Cochran, Dave Walker, Zulma Ortiz, Rudy Betancourt, Claudia Harvey, Tom White, Bernie Baxley, Ken Bushery, Pamelin Wildly, R.J. Nelson.


Our South Members that attended the April's Meeting will be in next's months Twig



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www.house.gov/young

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0910
April 23, 2009

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Mr. Leo Murray
National Association of Letter Carriers
6418 10th Street North
Saint Petersburg, Florida 33702

Dear Mr. Murray:


Because of your ongoing concerns with the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), I thought you might be interested to learn of recent events in this regard.

You will be pleased to know that I agreed to once again cosponsor the Social Security Fairness Act in this 111th Congress. H.R. 235, as you probably are aware, would repeal GPO provisions applicable to a husband's and wife's insurance benefits, a widow's and widower's insurance benefits, and a mother's and father's insurance benefits with respect to Old-Age and Survivors insurance benefit payments. H.R. 235 would also repeal the WEP with respect to computation of the primary insurance amount of an individual.

H.R. 235 has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee where it awaits further consideration. In an effort to be of all possible assistance to you, I have taken the liberty of sharing our mutual support for the Social Security Fairness Act with my colleagues on the committee. As they continue to review this vital piece of legislation, you can be sure that they will keep our views in mind.


As always, I greatly appreciate knowing of your support for my continued efforts on this matter of mutual concern. With best wishes and personal regards, I am

Very truly yours,


C. W. Bill Young
Member of Congress

CWY: bs

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	Important Deadline: <i>Please submit all items for Next Months Twig of the Branch Newsletter Articles</i>
<i>No later than June 19th.</i>	



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June 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Pinellas Park Breakfast	3 Largo All Craft Breakfast	4 Executive Board Largo Retiree Breakfast	5	6
7	8	9	10 REGULAR BRANCH MEETING	11 State Convention	12 State Convention	13 State Training
14 State Training	15	16	17 St. Pete Retiree Breakfast	18 Shop Steward Meeting	19 Deadline for Twig Articles	20
21	22	23	24	25 South Meeting 6:45	26	27
28	29	30	GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING HAS CHANGED TO JUNE 10 THIS MONTH.....			