



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 345

VOICE OF BRANCH 1477

November, 2009



NOTICE OF ELECTIONS



In accordance with Article 5 of the National Constitution and Article 4 of Branch 1477 By-Laws, official notice is hereby given that **nominations of delegates to the 2010 National Convention in Anaheim, California** will be taken at the regular order of business at the **November 12, 2009 Regular Branch Meeting**.

In accordance with the will of the 1998 National Convention, all members being nominated must signify they have not served in, nor applied for, a supervisory position for the past twenty-four (24) months.

The **election** of the nominated delegates will take place on **December 10, 2009 at the Letter Carrier's Hall 5369 Park Boulevard, Pinellas Park, Florida by secret ballot**. **NOTE:** Article 4. Section 3.(F) of the By-Laws provide that the President & Executive Vice President, by virtue of their office, shall be paid delegates.

NOTICE OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS

In accordance with Article 4, Section E of the Branch 1477 By-Laws, any member may, **upon written request**, vote by absentee ballot. **Absentee ballots must be requested no later than two (2) weeks prior to the election. NO verbal requests will be granted.** All request for an absentee ballot should be sent to: **Attention of Election Committee Chairman, Branch 1477, 5369 Park Blvd, Pinellas Park, FL 33781-3421. The absentee ballot must be completed and mailed so that it will be received no later than 1:00 p.m., December 10, 2009. Any absentee ballot received after this dated and time will be invalid.**

Any member wanting to vote by absentee ballot must make a **written request**, clearly printing their name, home address, and signing such request. **The request for absentee ballot must be received no later than November 26, 2009.**

**ALL ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUESTS MUST BE INDIVIDUALLY REQUESTED AND MAILED
OR HANDED TO THE SECRETARY OF THE BRANCH**

NEXT BRANCH MEETING Thursday, November 12, 2009 at 7:00 PM at the Letter Carrier Hall



**Les Stroup
President**

Stewards Represent All Workers

Throughout the years a legal principle has been developed by the National Labor Relations Board called “the duty of fair representation” (DFR). The legal principle quite simply states that a union must represent all workers equally and without prejudice. A union cannot refuse to represent or improperly represent a worker due to the worker’s age, sex, creed, nationality, race, religion, political beliefs, union status or personality.

The legal obligation of DFR requires an exclusive representative to represent the interests of all bargaining unit employees: 1) without discrimination; and 2) without regard to whether the employee is a dues paying member of the exclusive representative. DFR is grounded in the principle that when a union attains the status of exclusive representative, it must use that power to fairly and equally represent all members of the unit.

First, let’s look at the aspect of DFR which involves the alleged disparate treatment by the union of an employee based on union membership. This usually concerns situations where a non-dues paying bargaining unit employee claims disparate treatment from that received by dues paying union members. In other words, an employee alleges he/she was treated differently just because he/she was not a union member.

Basically, an exclusive representative may not treat non-union members differently than dues paying union member in matters over which the union has exclusive control. Thus, the duty not to discriminate based on union membership attaches only when an employee has not right to choose a representative other than the union to represent employees in the underlying dispute.

A second aspect of DFR concerns situations where either a union member or a non-member in the bargaining unit claim the union was ineffective in its attempt to represent an employee in a dispute with management. Under the law, a simple mistake is not grounds for a failure in your duty to represent employees, but failure to act in good faith is.

The duty to represent all workers is especially true in cases where non-members or anti-union workers present a complaint which could be a grievance. Personal feelings or the feelings of the membership cannot be allowed to interfere with the processing of that person’s grievance.

The key factor in a “failure to represent” case is that the union knowingly commits these acts because of prejudice or hostility towards an individual. If an honest mistake is made, that is not considered to be “failure to represent.” If basic principles in grievance handling are followed there should not be a problem with “failure to represent” charges.

Activist



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MAKE THE CALL!
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IN SOLIDARITY

DELIVERY OF MAIL AFTER DARK



**Joe Henschen
Executive Vice
President
Twitter@JaHel**

Once again, we are at that time of year when, due to the shortened daylight hours, Carriers often find themselves faced with the prospect of delivering mail after dark, the mere fact of delivering mail after dark, may not automatically be unsafe. Whether or not it’s unsafe to deliver after dark has to be determined on a case by case basis and has to include common sense reasoning.

For instance, if the only delivery is to well-lighted neighborhoods, it might be difficult to prove to an Arbitrator that delivery in such circumstances would be unsafe. On the other hand, dismount or park and loop deliveries after dark would almost certainly be unsafe. If you find your self in a situation where you might find your self delivering after dark here are a few things that you need to do:

- * Complete a PS Form 3996 in the a.m. and request street assistance.

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- * Inform your Supervisor before leaving for the street if your reel you won't be able to finish before dark.
- * If the area and circumstances would make such delivery unsafe, tell your Supervisor it is unsafe for you to deliver after dark.
- * If the matter is still not resolved, call your Supervisor in the afternoon, and again tell him/her you won't be able to compete delivers before dark and that you feel it would be unsafe to deliver after dark. Again, request assistance. If you are ordered to finish your route, tell our Supervisor that you will follow the order until you determine it is unsafe to continue.
- * If it has become too dark for safety, under the circumstances and where you are delivering, call your Supervisor again and advise him/her that you have determined the conditions to be unsafe to continue and that you are returning to the office.
- * Upon your return, if your Supervisor is there, inform him/her of any curtailed mail.
- * DOCUMENT ALL CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR.
- * If you are discipline, see your Steward and grieve it.

Part 666.51 of the ELM requires that employees obey the instructions of their Supervisors, and if the employee feels the instructions are improper, to protest it (grieve) through the appropriate channels, after following the instructions. Generally, Arbitrators will uphold an employee's reason for disobeying a Supervisor's instructions **ONLY IF** the instructions placed the employee or others in an immediate unsafe situation or if the instructors were to violate a law. There are numerous Arbitrators who have awarded that "delivery after dark, in and of itself, is not unsafe", and that "whether or not delivery after dark is unsafe depends on the circumstances such as delivery area, type of delivery, etc."

Karen and I would like to wish you and your family a safe and happy Thanksgiving.



Larry Gaskin
First Vice
President

Beware of wearing **Red Shirts** on Fridays. Apparently, they are detrimental to the health of the USPS. The word from district is ... **No More Red Shirts**. As we all know, **Red Shirt Friday** is just a harmless way to show respect and appreciation for our men and women in the armed forces. What a great idea. Every person in this great country has been affected by the current war in some way. Fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, and neighbors have all voluntarily put

themselves in harm way to protect us from outside threats and terrorism. **Red Shirt Friday** was started many years ago and has spread all over the country. The local management eagerly authorized us to wear **Red Shirts** and joined our efforts to honor these heroes. All participants volunteered to purchase their shirts and wear them proudly.

To put this in perspective, this past year our branch sold approximately 200 tee shirts in support of the annual food drive. We all know the outstanding support our postal employees provide to make this a success. Before the district put a stop to the **Red Shirt** madness, over 800 shirts were bought or ordered. We wore these shirts with the utmost respect and dignity for our military friends. Customers welcomed our efforts and many asked if they could purchase shirts for themselves and family members.

Red Shirt Fridays were a tremendous morale builder within the offices. Our customers loved them and not one negative remark was received. So what went wrong? Someone in district found harm where none exist. What a shock! Once again a ruling was made from the throne, the madness must stop. I can't help but wonder, would our political leaders share the thoughts of district or would they be as appalled as we are at such a ridiculous decision.

Changing subjects, at the November general meeting nominations will be taken for delegates to represent our branch at the National Convention in California next year. Please remember, your vote should be for someone who will best represent you and our branch. This is not a personality contest. Your vote is important, don't waist it. If you don't vote, you have no right to complain about the results.

Stay Safe



Harry Strzyzynski
Secretary

BRANCH 1477, N.A.L.C.
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING
October 8, 2009

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

Invocation by Greg Welsh.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Les Stroup.

Introduction of St. Pete Election Candidates by Leo Murray.

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Resolution – President Emeritus – Johnny W. Bourlon Let the minutes reflect that on September 10, 2009, the membership approved this resolution.

Motion to accept minutes by, MaryAnn Gavin, seconded Chuck Cavicchio.

Reading of Official Correspondence by Harold Strzyzynski: 4

NEW MEMBERS: None.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

TREASURER: - **Tom Phillips** — Excused. Les Stroup read Treasurer Report. Motion to accept by O.D. Elliott, Seconded by Gene Carroll.

DIRECTOR OF RETIREES: **Thom Hart** – Excused

HEALTH BENEFIT DIRECTOR: **Ken Grasso** – 22 applications for reimbursement for a total of \$829.00. Joe Henschen and myself will go to Las Vegas for a Seminar on Health Benefits.

TRUSTEE REPORT: **Glenn Fagan** - Books audited all in order.

EDITOR: **John Bourlon** – No Report.

MBA DIRECTOR/DRT Representative: **Greg Welsh** – No Report.

POLITICAL DISTRICT 10 LIAISON: **Gene Carroll** – H.R. 22 was approved in the House on Sept 15. The measure was passed by a 388 to 32 vote.

H.R. 22 was passed on Sept 30 in the Senate by a vote of 61 to 39. The “Poison Pill” amendment where arbitrators are to consider the Financial Status of the Postal Service during contract negotiations has been stricken.

23,000 Postal Workers Opt for Buyout.

Approximately 5,000 full time employees eligible for retirement ended their career, accepting the \$15,000 buyout. Another 18,000 full-time workers have accepted the offer but have until Oct 31 to complete the paperwork or opt out.

Have placed Candidate Petition for Senator Charlie Justice on the tables and would appreciate if anyone would like to fill out one and hand it in to me.

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT/POLITICAL DISTRICT 16 LIAISON: **Lori Bell** — Eric Siegel from EAP was in Punta Gorda, as well s Joe Henschen after the loses of a Union Brother and friend. EAP is extremely important. Please use EAP.

STATE LEGISLATIVE LIAISON: **Leo Murray:** AFL/CIO screening committee for Mayoral race. Ford attended, Foster did not.

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT: **Larry Gaskin** – I was not able to go to the RAP Session. I stayed behind and took over for Les and Joe.

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

David Castro, Debbie DeCastro, St. Pete – Father Seriously Ill.

Theresa Shea – St. Petersburg – Surgery

Melanie Fick – Seminole – Back Injury

Sheldon Jones – Palmetto – Father passed Away

Sharon Brewster – Dunedin – Mother Passed Away

John Strohm – Retiree St. Petersburg – has relapsed and is ill

Bob Miller – Retiree Largo – Seriously ill

John Sipos – Seminole – Surgery

Joe Clark – St. Pete – 2 incidents (1) appendix (2) heart problems

Jim Cook – Palmetto – Surgery

Damian Cervantes – Punta Gorda – Passed away he was 34 years old leaving behind a wife, Mady, who is expecting their 4th child in February and three young children.

Mark Henwood – Pinellas Park – Father is hospitalized

Kathy Vitrano – Pinellas Park – Ill

Marlene Markey – Ladies Auxiliary – Congestive Heart Failure

Glad Report:

Ryan Scavnicki son of Gary & Janice Scsavnicki central station graduated from boot camp.

Bernie Baxley is scheduled for a Bone Marrow transplant on October 28, 2009.

The Last Mile Project

Postal Service should experiment with using its “last mile” advantage in areas beyond traditional mail, whether that means conducting the Census or national polling, delivering medications or helping law enforcement. **“There are endless opportunities for the Postal Service, but it will never be “Short-term savings that undermine the Postal Service’s capacity to offer new services and to take advantage of future growth opportunities such as Vote by Mail, e-commerce deliveries, and other potential uses of our incomparable delivery network would be self defeating,”** around the country, President Rolando has stressed the USPS should be developing innovative programs and new products that capitalize on what we do best - deliver the best service over the nation’s most extensive network to every business and home in America. In short, we own the “last mile.” Rolando spoke of Government incentives for the development of greener vehicles and the opportunities for the USPS to capitalize. What better force to test new technologies than the largest fleet of inner city vehicles.

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On Consolidation:

“Cutting back isn’t the way to go. The NALC’s Last Mile Project is a way for you to share your ideas on how to exploit the Postal Service’s incomparable transportation network— a network that shines above all others thanks to the union letter carriers who dominate the last mile of the delivery chain.

At the Committee of Presidents, President Rolando spent two days at the podium laying the groundwork for a format change in these meetings. Rolando opened up topics like MIARAP, Step B, Withholding, COP, Rural Boundary Disputes and solicited input from the NALC’s network of Branch Presidents. Rolando made notes of discussion from the floor on every topic to take back to the committees for evaluation. President Roland promises to support The Committee of President Meetings as a resource.

Positive postal commentary: During Sunday’s edition of commentator Andy Rooney extolled the importance of the Postal Service and argued against cuts in delivery service and closing of offices.

Andy Rooney Has Gotten Wind of Potential Changes To The Postal Service And He’s Not A Fan

The postal service is a government agency but it’s supposed to operate like a business. Most people don’t realize that - I know I didn’t realize it - but the post office doesn’t get tax money. It has to pay for itself.

In 1900, there were 77,000 post offices around the country. Today with four times as many people, there are only 37,000 post offices - 40,000 fewer post offices for 230 million more Americans. No wonder it wasn’t in the mail. We have a lot of things that need cutting, but post offices are not among them.

There’s something special about a letter. We all like to get one. An e-mail, on the other hand, has all the charm of a freight train. When I was growing up we all knew when the mailman was coming and we waited for him even though we hardly ever got a letter.

The entire text of the spot can be viewed on the NALC site. Unfortunately as with most internet postings blogger’s wage war of words most of which are aimed at bosses, clerks and miss-information regarding how hard the Letter Carrier works.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: John Bourlon was named President Emeritus of Branch 1477. John was presented with a plaque and a cake his family was in attendance. (see proclamation elsewhere in the Twig)

NEW BUSINESS:

GOOD OF THE SERVICE: by President Les Stroup

Les could not go to Detroit Joe took his place. The Combined Federal Campaign is now underway throughout the nation and this union encourages all of our active and retired members to pledge donations through payroll deduction in the coming year. One of the charities that should be considered by all letter carriers and other postal employees is the Postal Employees’ Relief Fund CFC # 10268. This fund, created in 1990 when a devastating hurricane along the East Coast was quickly followed by the California earthquake, provides outright grants to active and retired postal employees who are victims of major natural disasters and home fires.

The NALC and the Postal Service have reached a settlement of a national level dispute over management’s responsibility to provide retirement counseling to letter carriers. The NALC had protested the discontinuance of the practice of providing in person counseling to letter carriers on postal premises. Instead, the Postal Service amended the Employee and Labor Relations Manual to permit that counseling to be conducted primarily by telephone with a retirement specialist at the Human Resources Share Services Center (HRSSC). The settlement provides that employees may request counseling on the clock, and that the local management will arrange reasonably private space for this purpose. The employee’s spouse and/or advisor may be with the employee during this process. In addition, employees who cannot begin or complete the process of obtaining counseling from HRSSC without assistance will be offered assistance by local management.

The Finance Committee recently met to review the state of the Branch Finances and Convention Fund. They have made a recommendation to send twelve (12) paid delegates to the 2010 Nation Convention in Anaheim, CA. 12@ \$1,694 for \$20,328. Motion to accept, John Bourlon, Seconded by Greg Welsh.

Their recommendation was based on the funds available. On October 1, 2009, the Executive Board recommended that we purchase eight hundred and fifty (850) 2010 rotating days off calendars at a cost of \$1,289.09.

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Motion to except by Harry Strzyzynski, Seconded by Ann Przetocki.

The Executive Board is empowered to expend funds not in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

Clarence Keller's Birthday.

Glenn Fagan spoke on the MDA Golf Tournament 4-somes needed donations and hole sponsors needed.

WINNERS OF DRAWINGS:

50/50 - \$57.00 won by Dave Walker
Lotto/Power Ball – Jim Bumbul
Christy Carr Arsylin Uniforms donated two gift certificates to Applebee's
Won by Fred Armstead? Ed Richards.
Drawing for Rain Gear: Nick Rynberg, Daryl Peterson, Shelley Brown, Nicole Olmstead. There were no winners.

Auxiliary Raffle:

O.D. Elliott
Glenn Fagan
Les Stroup
Dave Walker
Christy Carr won twice
Lori Bell won twice
Fred Assidy

Motion to adjourn



**Ken Grasso
Health Benefit
Representative**

I am getting ready to attend the NALC Health Benefit Seminar being held in Las Vegas, Nevada from October 18th to October 21st. I intend to gather as much information about the 2010 Health Benefit Plan benefits and rates and relay that information back to the branch members as soon as I'm able to do so. At the next Branch General Membership, hopefully I can give a report on the most important changes to the Plan. Also attending the seminar with me will be Executive Vice President Joe Henschen who will be attending his first Health Benefits Seminar. It's never a bad idea for someone other than myself to know the inner workings of our Health Benefit Plan. Many classes are being offered to those that attend and it is geared to your level of experience as to what classes that you will be at-

tending. They hand pick your classes for you so as to get the latest and best information available for you. All the latest information about benefits, changes in the plan as well as the rates for 2010 is given at these seminars so I will be absorbing a lot of information to give back to the branch members. I still feel that our own Union owned Health Benefit Plan is the best of all the Federal Health Plans available. I thank the Branch for the opportunity to attend this years Seminar and looking forward to seeing some familiar faces from the past seminars. I do know that the Health Benefits Open Season is from November 9, 2009 through December 14, 2009 so I'm sure that's enough time for everyone to get all the information they need to make a decision about their Health Benefit needs. It's never good news to hear of increases but the rates have increased for 2010. For active carriers: High Self \$44.57 High Family \$ 86.11 these are biweekly premiums. For Retired carriers: High Self \$147.00 High Family \$ 299.74 these are monthly premium rates. All of the Federal Health Benefit Plans increased which is no surprise do to the current economy that were in. I'm confident even with the increases that the NALC Health Plan is still the best for 2010.

GIVE THANKS



**Thom Hart
Director of
Retirees**

Yes!! It is November and it is the month for which we as a nation give thanks for all we have!

First and foremost we should always be thankful we are Americans with ALL the freedoms, rights, and privileges that no other country on earth enjoys.

As NALC members we are fortunate to have eight (8) hours work or pay in lieu of, at a very nice hourly rate.

We earn overtime after eight (8) hours of work not forty (40) hours.

Our contract gives us not only Annual Leave but Sick Leave too. This is all at our current level of pay...not at what level we earned it.

By law we have the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) that allows time away from work when we or our family are undergoing serious medical problems.

While we are talking about sickness let us not forget that we, as Union members, have the finest health plan available to us and our families at a reasonable cost.

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We should be thankful that we have a decent retirement system that allows us to live a worry free life after the years at the Post Office.

There is a life insurance plan in place that while we are working allows us to select extra amounts of coverage (for an additional fee) and the basic amount follows us into our retirement.

We have the strength of the Union – Local and National to defend us if the USPS tries to discipline us.

Each of us has the right to apply for a transfer to another city or state if we so desire.

If you so desire, you as a NALC member can be elected to any position from Shop Steward to the National President!

You get a clothing allowance to aid you in purchasing uniforms for work.

The list goes on and on as to why you should give thanks for the NALC.

Why not add our own to the list?



Keith Northup
The Original Retiree Breakfast

The (Original) Largo Retiree Breakfast was held on October 1, 2009 at the Boris Family Restaurant located on Ulmerton Road at 09:00 hours. The following Retired Letter Carriers were present and or accounted for: **Thom Hart, Bill Guenther, Bruce Davis, Gene Wainscott, Bill Koutney, John Blackard, John Hammock, Richard Rink, Mike Pizzorusso, Dorian Sobat, and Wayne Moore.**

The amount of Postal Experience setting around the tables was 258 years. Many interesting stories were shared; it seemed like old war stories for some present.

Director of Retirees **Thom Hart** again reminded all present that there would be no cost of living adjustment for either Social security or your Postal Retirements. This was not met with any sort of enjoyment by those present. It seems the cost of Part B is still going up next year to \$104.00 and change. This will rise in 2011 to \$120.00 and change. This is even harder to take as there will be no increases to cover it this year and maybe next year.

The brothers present asked **Thom Hart** about Brother **Bob Miller's** health and wished him well. They all signed a get well card for him; he is dearly missed at this breakfast.

All agreed that **Keith** and **Dana** were missed this month..., not for their good looks, but rather the way they keep asking the over worked waitress for special orders and more coffee. Their being gone sure helped in getting better parking spaces too.

The next scheduled breakfast of the Largo Original Retired Letter Carriers will be held on November 5, 2009 at 09:00 hours at Boris Family Restaurant on Ulmerton Road. We welcome all fellow Largo Letter Carriers (Retired or active) to join us for hearty discussions. It is always nice to see fellow carriers and enjoy great discussions concerning then and now. Hope to see you there.

All Craft Retiree Breakfast:
Bernie Ososky

Largo's **All Craft Retirees Breakfast** was held on October the 7th @ Denny's on Missouri. Attendance was our lowest so far this year with only nine retirees present and they were: **O.D. Elliott** (Past President of the Branch), **Keith Northup** (Past Trustee of the Branch), **Dorian Sobat, Ivan Davidson, Don Pellegrino** (Here for the winter from Las Vegas), **Rudy Lang, Bill Nilsson, Mike Pizzorusso**, and yours truly, **Bernie**.

Several factors for low attendance could be attributed to; overslept, forgot, doctor appointments, some are actually working or perhaps just doing what retirees do daily - whatever they want! Nevertheless, those who were there had a great time. Rumors were floating around that the Postal Service was going to offer a \$30,000 incentive to retire or else involuntarily move those who did not take the offer to FERS. WHAT!!! Don't worry active carriers, that's just bulls__t according to O.D. Elliott. The clerk craft has some worries due to automation. The carrier craft will probably not see cash money as an incentive because routes across the nation are still being created so they need carriers. Anyway, retirees relax, this will never affect you ever again! Also, rumors that the Suncoast District will be the test site for, yah you guessed it, GPS in vehicles. Big brother will definitely have a death grip now on whatever move you make. Supervisors will never have to leave the office to SPY on you. I knew it was coming **BE AWARE and BE PROFESSIONAL .**

Johnny W. Bourlon



“PRESIDENT EMERITUS”

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, John W. Bourlon entered the Postal Service in 1968, and
WHEREAS, soon after entering, he became angered at the mistreatment of Letter Carriers by Postal Management, and
WHEREAS, he became proactive in the Union and began serving the members of Branch 1477, first as a Steward, then as Chief Steward, and then as President from 1974 until he retired at the end of 1996, and
WHEREAS, through his personal dedication, hard work and foresight, he was instrumental in forging the merger of the ten cities which currently comprise branch 1477, and
WHEREAS, the merger of these cities provided Branch 1477 with the resources to make Branch 1477 one of the largest branches in the State of Florida and one of the strongest and most respected branches in the NALC, and
WHEREAS, these mergers enabled Branch 1477 to have two "full-time" officers "on call" "24/7" to handle problems and represent Carriers without first getting permission from Postal Supervisors/Managers, and
WHEREAS, the resources provided due to these mergers provided Branch 1477 with the means to provide continuing education to the Officers and Stewards which, in turn, has contributed to Branch 1477 being highly successful in representing the members in grievances at all levels (from the initial grievance through Arbitration), EEO cases, and Workers' Compensation claims, and
WHEREAS, John W. Bourlon was most responsible for the purchase of land and building of our former Union Hall at 66th St. N., Largo which served the members of Branch 1477 from 1976 through 2001, when it became the centerpiece of a negotiated deal which brought us to the present Hall mortgage free, and
WHEREAS, since his retirement as President in 1996, John W. Bourlon has continued to serve the members of Branch 1477 in numerous ways, i.e. as delegate to both State and National Conventions, Chairman of the Entertainment Committee, Editor of the Branch Newsletter "The Twig of the Branch" and other ways when called upon by the Branch President, therefore, be it
RESOLVED that the members of Branch 1477 extend to John W. Bourlon the HONOR And TITLE "PRESIDENT EMERITUS".

SUBMITTED BY: O.D. Elliott Harold Stypczyske
Lee Stoup Gregory Webb
Joe Hengcha [Signature]
[Signature] Will [Signature]
Larry W. [Signature] Lou Ebell
[Signature] Tom Phillips
[Signature] [Signature]

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Now for retiree news, some good some not so good. **Brad Wells** is battling cancer in two places, receiving both chemo and radiation. Needless to say, he is pretty sick-from these treatments and has lost all of his hair and 20-lbs. Please keep him in your prayers. **Ed Sax**, one of the original retirees who help start this breakfast, called me the other day to say that he is doing just fine and is living in Port Charlotte, Florida. He still is filing workers comp claims and still getting scheduled awards. I don't know how he does it! He should be the posted child for Workers Comp! **Dorian Sobat** has been retired the longest 1992 and Keith Northup the shortest 2007. A National Health Care Plan seems to be closer to reality than ever before. Thanks God we all have a good health plan whether it be NALC, BC & BS, or some other plan of your choice. Premiums are going to rise next year with probably no COLA increases.

OK, that's about it from where I sit. Now, some information I hope that you can use. Our next breakfast will be on **November the 4th, Denny's on Missouri @ 9 a.m.** Please try an attend and by all means bring a friend. If for some reason you can't make this one, be sure to mark your calendar for the **Christmas breakfast on December the 2nd** where we will be giving out prizes and other surprises. And finally, a reminder to all of you, hug your kids, kiss your wife or significant other and make amends with those who have drifted from the fold. Life is short so make the very best of it for you never know. Just ask **Brad!** Be safe...**Bernie**



**TRUSTEE:
Ralph Brown**

2009 Regional Rap Session

I was privileged to attend the NALC Region 9 Rap Session held in Charlotte, N.C. on September 24th - 27th. To cut cost, we chose to travel by automobile instead of flying. Spending nearly 9 hours (each way) in an automobile was mentally tiring but it gave Joe, Greg, Glenn and I plenty of time to "male bond." Over the miles we talked about

a lot. Most of it I choose not to repeat but if you're curious, yes... it was union - related. Our vehicle was equipped with a GPS which we appropriately nicknamed DORIS. I've always thought that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line but occasionally (she) said otherwise, not to any of our dismay of course. Convincing Glenn that our navigational aid was "just a tool" was like dealing with the supervisor who walks the floor with the clipboard every morning proclaiming DOIS

as gospel. Ultimately, we had a safe trip there and back so let's give Glenn the old letter carrier salute. By the way Glenn, where are we and why are we not there yet???

On a serious note, the four of us went up a day in advance to participate in a golf tournament. The proceeds were donated to the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). The MDA is the NALC's only official charity. There were approximately ten teams participating in the tournament. It was well organized and thoroughly enjoyed by all participants. For the golfers in the audience, the tournament was best ball... .thankfully. Team Henschen had to cover me on occasion(s) when I failed to stay focused. Truthfully, we all had some shots we'd like to forget but most important was the cause for which we were playing. **GRIP IT AND RIP IT!!!!**

In attendance at the RAP Session were NALC President Fredric V. Rolando, National Business Agent Region 9 - Judy Willoughby and F.S.A.L.C State President Matthew (Matty) Rose notably. Other national and state officers were present as well. They all spoke on the state, region and national level on those subjects concerning the NALC as well as the Postal Service. President Rolando spoke on MIARAP, 5-Day Delivery, DOIS, 5. 1507 and H.R. 22 just to name a few. He also fielded questions from the membership about subject and non-subject matter. If you think our problems here are serious, you should have heard some of the issues that branches in the state of Georgia and South Carolina are having. This caused me to develop a greater appreciation for the leadership that we have at the state level.

Friday and Saturday were reserved for the training sessions. Four sessions were being run simultaneously from 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Because of this I was not able to attend all of the sessions that I would have liked, however, I did attend the Fiduciary Responsibilities and the Trustee Workshop given by the Department of Labor. These two focused on recordkeeping requirements, LM report filing and trustee responsibilities and duties. Also I attended a session titled "I Did Not Know That Either". The name had me unsure as what to expect, but this training session was excellent. It was well crafted and covered technical and troublesome questions that advanced stewards are expected to know. Imagine the experience of 140 people who do not know as much as they think. Don't say it Trish!!!

The 2009 Regional Rap Session was very educating as well as informative. The opportunity to fellowship with members of other branches in Region 9 was welcomed.

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I appreciate this and all opportunities given to me by Branch 1477. By the way Glenn, Where are we and when are we getting home???

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

The following happy Retired Carriers attended this months Breakfast:

Nils Holmquist, Johnny Wagner, Bob Trimble, “Col” Ron Haglund, Bill Butler, Max Wannike, Willie Santiago, Ron Hearon, Denny Elliott, Lester Ray, Brian Britt, and Jim Long.

The next Breakfast will be on November 3, 2009 at 9:00 a.m., DeMills Family Restaurant on Park Blvd.

**CONGRESSIONAL LIAISON
DISTRICT 10
Gene Carroll**

During the week of September 21, the Senate Committee on Finance began considering over 500 amendments to their health care reform bill, including two, which threaten the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP).

First, Senator Charles Grassley, R-IA, proposed that federal workers and Members of Congress be required to join state-based health exchanges to purchase health insurance instead of FEHBP. The amendment was approved but was changes to make enrollment in the health exchanges optional-rather than mandatory for federal workers and legislators.

Second, Senator Ron Wyden, D-OR, may offer an amendment, which would open the FEFBP to certain low-income non-federal civilians. Without the opportunity to study non-federal enrollees in a separate FEHBP risk pool, the introduction of any new community into the FEHBP could result in unanticipated premium increases. Contact Senator Bill Nelson and voice your opinion.

Health premiums will increase by 8.8% on average in January, according to the Office of Personnel Management. This increase will include both the employee’s share and the government’s premium share. This will be the largest increase since 2004, when premiums rose 10.6% on average.

The open season, during which employees can change their health, dental and vision insurance plans, will run from November 9, 2009 to December 14, 2009. Fed-Ex Plans to raise their rates 5.9% in January 2010.

**AFL-CIO
Central Labor Council**

2009 City of St. Petersburg Municipal Elections
General – November 3, 2009
Endorsement Recommendations

Recommend endorsement of Kathleen Ford for Mayor and campaign contribution of \$250.

Recommend endorsement of Steven Kornell for District 5 and campaign contribution of \$125.

Recommend endorsement of Leonard Schmiege for District 8 and campaign contribution of \$125.

**AUXILIARY 181
Dottie Tutt-Hutchinson**

John Bourlon, henceforth known as John Bourlon, President Emeritus of Branch 1477 West Coast Florida Letter Carriers, was bestowed with this distinguished title in honor of his many years of leading this union with unprecedented courage, stamina, and belief in the righteousness of the cause--his fellow carriers, the contract, and keeping the union strong. His style was singular; he could “BS” with the worst in management, and he let them know his opinion of them, but always with professionalism and humor. He called a spade a spade. He took his job and the lives of those he represented very seriously. He was outraged by some of the things he had to fight. He didn’t suffer fools gladly. He presented himself meekly, didn’t brag of his accomplishments, but reveled in the fight won. He taught style and substance to everyone who listened. He certainly knew the contract better than anyone in management, much to their chagrin and loss. I especially loved his “chutzpah”; when he led an unsuspecting supervisor right down the path of entrapment. My husband said to be sure to mention that he was thrown out of more offices than any other union leader because management feared him. John would take pride in that! He enjoyed the chase, and we love him for everything he did for us as our president, and now as our editor. This honor is well deserved, and our auxiliary is proud of him.

(continued on page 12)

(continued from page 11)

The October meeting was held in Joyce and Clarence Keller's home, hosted by me. Plans were made to help at least two carrier families for the upcoming holidays. Our Christmas party will be held Monday, December 14th at Joyce and Clarence's home. Be sure to bring any gifts for our families to the party.

More information will be in next month's Twig. Sally Madden and Alice Wannike both won cat-in-the-bag prizes. Thanks to Joyce and me for baking for the union raffle, and to Margaret Perkins and Joyce for cooking. Margaret and I will bake next month, too. Joyce will cook for the union, and Margaret will host the November 10th auxiliary meeting in her home. We ended the meeting with a nine-person production line stuffing nutritious goodies in Halloween treat bags for Diana Keller's Lakewood High math students.

They sent such a lovely thank you note for the little breakfast bars we sent them last time that we felt we had to do it again. We ate apple and pumpkin pies with apple cider with hopes of encouraging cool fall breezes to visit us. Sue and Denny Elliott are going to North Carolina for Thanksgiving to be sure of the autumn weather.

Please keep Marlene and Gene Markey in your prayers. Marlene has been getting chemotherapy treatments at Moffitt hospital for leukemia, and then suffered congestive heart problems. She's been in and out of the hospital, while Gene has had to remain home most of the time. We wish them the best.


Happy November birthday to Sue Elliott on the 14th. Happy November anniversary to Kathy and Keith Northup on the 22nd.


Shop Stewards Meeting for October:

Chris Hubble, Suzette Dombrowski, Tom Phillips, Jim Bumbul, Andre McCalla, Tricia Meeks, Glenn Fagan, Ralph Brown, Zulma Ortiz, Rudy Betancourt, Ray Handville, Randy Jackson, Ken Bushery, Fred Assidy, Bob Meeks, Bonnie Baldwin, Susan Chavez, Oswald Antonetty, Liz Arnold, Randy Holman, Susan Vandervliet, Larry Gaskin.

Our South Members that attended the October Meeting:

Jamie White, Susan Chavez, Kim Kieck, Pat Seul, Maruine Bibens, Lori Bell, Don Lyerly, Mike Novak, John Sweeney, Bill Murray



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In Memory of a Fallen Brother



Misael "Damian" Cervantes
6/17/75 - 10/1/09

**2009
Branch 1477
MDA
GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Date: November 8th

Time: Shotgun Start 8 AM

***Place: The Eagles Golf Club
16101 Nine Eagles Drive
Odessa Florida 33566***



Deliver the Cure
Bowlathon
To Benefit MDA
Sunday, November 1, 2009



C.W. BILL YOUNG
10th District, Florida

COMMITTEE ON
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND
VETERANS AFFAIRS
SELECT RECURRENT OVERSIGHT PANEL
www.house.gov/young

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Washington, DC 20515-0910

2607 Rayburn House Office Building
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(202) 225-6961

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SAINT PETERSBURG, FL 33701-5606
(727) 893-3191

9210 143RD STREET
SEASIDE, FL 33472-2600
(727) 934-0910

September 23, 2009

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

Dear Mr. Murray:

Because of your ongoing concerns for the long-term solvency of the United States Postal Service (USPS), I thought you might be interested to learn of recent events in this regard.

You will be pleased to know on September 16th, with my strong support, the House overwhelmingly approved H.R. 22 by a vote of 388-32. This legislation, which I also agreed to cosponsor earlier this session, was introduced to provide immediate financial relief to the USPS by allowing it to refinance its retirees' health benefits payment. This is particularly important given the current economic conditions and the circumstances of the agency's largest customer, the financial services industry.

Specifically, H.R. 22 seeks to alter the cost burden imposed by a statutory requirement that the USPS prefund the employer's premium for the health benefits of future retirees, while still continuing to pay health care premiums for its current retirees. This bill would simply accelerate by seven years a provision to pay the health premiums for current retirees from the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund, which already holds in excess of \$32 billion and will continue to grow. H.R. 22 would not require an appropriation or use of any taxpayer monies. Given the recent history of enacting massive federal bailouts without proper oversight and funded solely by taxpayer dollars, this is a much welcomed intragovernmental transfer of funds proposal that will provide necessary financial assistance without increasing the national debt.

H.R. 22 will now be referred to the Senate for further consideration by the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. In an effort to be of all possible assistance to you, I have taken the liberty of sharing our mutual support for this legislation with my colleagues in the other chamber. As they prepare to review H.R. 22, you can be sure they will keep our views in mind.

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

Very truly yours,


C. W. Bill Young
Member of Congress

CWY: bs

E-Mail: branch1477@tampabay.rr.com

Webb: branch1477nalc.org

(727) 531-1477

OFFICERS OF BRANCH 1477

| | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| President | Les Stroup | 608-6678 |
| Exec Vice Pres: | Joe Henschen | 608-6772 |
| First Vice Pres: | Larry Gaskin | 544-7651 |
| Sec. Vice Pres: | Lori Bell | 941-815-6042 |
| Secretary: | Harry Strzyzynski | 563-0453 |
| Treasurer: | Tom Phillips | 579-1981 |
| Editor: | John Bourlon | 593-5508 |
| Dir. Of Retirees: | Thom Hart | 397-7587 |
| Dir. Of MBA: | Greg Welsh | 596-6239 |
| Health Benefits Rep: | Ken Grasso | 397-9737 |
| Sgt-at-Arms: | Rick Renshaw | 384-6077 |
| Trustee: | Ralph Brown | 557-8225 |
| Trustee: | Trish Meeks | 560-8405 |
| Trustee: | Glenn Fagan | 741-2006 |

BRANCH 1477 SHOP STEWARDS

St. Petersburg

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| Chris Hubble | Steward | Zone 1 | 643-8087 |
| Elis Pujols | Alternate | Zone 1 | 813-239-3150 |
| Suzette Dombrowski | Steward | Zone 2 | 726-5167 |
| Elizabeth Arnold | Alternate | Zone 2 | 726-5167 |
| Tom Phillips | Steward | Zone 3 | 579-1987 |
| John Wenk | Alternate | Zone 3 | 522-5213 |
| Jim Bumbul | Steward | Zone 4 | 864-6817 |
| Claudia Harvey | Alternate | Zone 4 | 545-7883 |
| Tracee Lawson | Steward | Zone 5 | 813-933-5459 |
| Willie Cochran | Steward | Zone 12/15 | 954-5240 |
| Ray McCarron | Alternate | Zone 12 | 813-685-6384 |
| Andre McCalla | Steward | Zone 6 | 543-1848 |
| Tanya Gillespie | Alternate | Zone 6 | 343-7146 |
| Tricia Meeks | Steward | Zone 7 | 560-8405 |
| Richard Ramos | Alternate | Zone 7 | 744-3369 |
| Bob Brown | Steward | Zone 8 | 365-6717 |
| Glenn Fagan | Steward | Zone 9/10S | 741-2006 |
| Justin Wilt | Steward | Zone 10N | 729-0890 |
| Ron Wahlers | Alternate | Zone 10N | 397-8516 |
| Glenn Fagan | Alternate | Zone 10N | 741-2006 |
| Ralph Brown | Steward | Zone 11 | 557-8225 |
| Ralph Williams | Alternate | Zone 11 | 813-728-8740 |
| Joe Henschen | Steward | Zone 13 | 531-1477 |
| R.J. Nelson | Alternate | Zone 13 | 204-9999 |
| Zulma Ortiz | Steward | Zone 14 | Unlisted |
| Joe Henschen | Alternate | Zone 14 | 531-1477 |
| Rudy Betancourt | Steward | Zone 16 | Unlisted |
| Dennis Jones | Alternate | Zone 16 | 563-9007 |

Dunedin

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|
| Chuck Cavicchio | Steward | 798-8506 |
| Chris Hubner | Alternate | 848-8828 |

Indian Rocks Beach

| | | |
|-----------------|---------|----------|
| Brenda Mavretic | Steward | 641-8467 |
|-----------------|---------|----------|

Largo/Seminole

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|------------|--------------|
| Ray Handville | Steward | Largo Main | 804-6500 |
| Denise Duffy | Steward | Unit 73/78 | 345-8086 |
| Ken Bushery | Steward | Unit 76/77 | 734-612-3355 |
| Susan Vandervliet | Alternate | Unit 76/77 | 418-1999 |
| Randy Jackson | Steward | Unit 74/72 | 595-1467 |
| Frank Pattie | Alternate | Unit 74/72 | 397-3952 |

Pinellas Park

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------|---------|----------|
| Fred Assidy | Steward | Unit 81 | 585-0115 |
| Bernie Baxley | Alternate | Unit 81 | 536-3737 |
| Bob Meeks | Steward | Unit 82 | 560-8583 |
| Randy Holman | Alternate | Unit 82 | 323-4322 |

South Cities


| | | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|
| Brian Andrews | Steward | Bradenton Bch | 941-748-5594 |
| Bonnie Baldwin | Steward | Ellenton | 941-722-0632 |
| Oswald Antonetty | Steward | Palmetto | 941-776-8726 |
| Sheldon Jones | Alternate | Palmetto | 941-580-1058 |
| Barbara Brooks | Steward | P.G. 80/83 | 941-624-0043 |
| Jamie White | Steward | P.G. 50 | 941-764-6238 |
| Robin Gillett | Alternate | P.G. 50 | 941-613-6885 |
| Mike Conrad | Alternate | Annex | 941-629-9918 |
| John Sweeney | Steward | Annex | 941-268-5063 |
| Susan Chavez | Steward | Englewood | 941-697-2423 |

Congressional Liaison District 16: Lori Bell 941-815-6042

Congressional Liaison District 10: Gene Carroll 727-742-1640

OFFICERS OF AUXILIARY 181

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|----------|
| President: | Joyce Keller | 541-2194 |
| Vice President: | Margaret Perkins | 544-3615 |
| Secretary: | Marlene Markey | 526-6707 |
| Treasurer: | Sally Madden | 391-8055 |
| Chaplain: | Alice Wannike | 546-3348 |
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| 3 - Year Trustee: | Gerry Bourlon | 593-5508 |
| 1 - Year Trustee: | Dottie Tutt-Hutchinson | 347-0371 |
| 1 - Year Trustee: | Shirley Moran | 584-4307 |



**Important
Deadline:**
*Please submit
all items for
Next Months
Twig of the
Branch
Newsletter
Articles*

No later than November 19th!



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| 1 Day Light Saving Time Ends Bowlathon MBA | 2 | 3 Pinellas Park Breakfast Election Day | 4 All Craft Breakfast | 5 Executive Board Meeting Largo Breakfast | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 Auxiliary Meeting | 11 | 12 General Membership Meeting | 13 | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 Shop Steward Down South Meeting | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 Thanksgiving | 27 Black Friday.... | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | Down South Branch Meeting is on Thursday the 19th Due to Thanksgiving. | | | | |