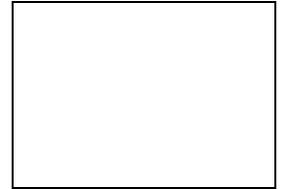


908 News

NALC Branch 908
AFL-CIO
PO Box 150
Pennsville, NJ
08070

South Jersey Letter Carriers

Atco, Barrington, Bellmawr, Berlin, Blackwood, Bridgeton, Clayton, Deptford, Egg Harbor City, Gibbsboro, Gibbstown, Glassboro, Glendora, Gloucester, Haddon Hts., Hammonton, Lawnside, Magnolia, Mantua, Maple Shade, Marlton, Mt. Ephraim, National Park, Paulsboro, Penns Grove, Pennsville, Pitman, Riverton, Runnemede, Salem, Sewell, Somerdale, Stratford, Swedesboro, Voorhees, Wenonah, Westville, Williamstown, Woodbury, Woodstown



Return Service
Requested



BUY AMERICAN - BUY UNION



Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com April 2019

Presidents Report

I want to update everyone on a few things that are happening as we head into the summer months. First and foremost, we continue have a few of our offices being inspected this month and next, with most recently our Stratford, Somerdale and Magnolia office inspections just completed. As is usual, the mail volume was a little below average, but that is to be expected, as this time of year is normally a lighter period. As I have stated to the carriers in these offices as well as to the next round of offices scheduled to be counted, we would rather be counted with light mail volume, because if you can make your street numbers in low volume periods, your route will need assistance or overtime when the volume increases. We must be realistic with mail volumes as the trends show the letter mail volumes are definitely dropping and with the package volume expected to drop off due to the Amazon pull-out in many of our offices, we may see some route changes with less street time now being needed due to less packages. Management is well aware of this and has decided to amp up its route inspections, so expect those offices who have lost its Amazon contract to be targeted. I haven't been given any offices in our branch as of yet, but I would guess if there isn't some sort of joint process implemented, we can expect to see them back in our offices sometime later this year or early next year.

Another issue we must stay on top of is what is happening in Washington. I know many of you are too busy to stay on top of the issues that may be affecting your job, but I will be constantly reminding you of what is happening in case you missed it. As many of you are aware the 2020 budget proposal was released and there are items in it that could affect our pay and benefits. The proposal wants to raise contributions we make to our pensions, reducing pension benefits for new retirees by basing annuities on workers high 5 years instead of the high 3 we now use, and a few other items that if enacted would slash our take home pay immensely. All these proposals hit us right in our pocket and is a real threat if we don't stay on top of our elected officials. Please take a minute and go on our national's website @ nalc.org or download the NALC app to get more detailed information. These cuts could destroy everything we negotiated for if we don't get proactive.

The next issue deals with our sister union, the APWU, who will be heading to arbitration based on the USPS ridiculous proposals to their next contract. In case you are interested, as we should since the USPS has now shown us their cards on what we will be looking at next month as we open our negotiations on a new contract. Here is a summary on what they have offered the APWU. **Eliminate COLA's, give lump sum payments in lieu of pay raises, eliminate the no lay-off clause, increase the percentage of non-career employees, remove the FERS supplement, make retirement calculations a high 5 instead of the high 3, and raise retirement contributions 1% a year for the next 6 years.** All of these proposals are a disgrace and we now know how they feel about the APWU members. Hopefully, we won't be disrespected by management when we open our talks, since we are the backbone of this organization and do the hard work for these stuffed shirts. It should be interesting to see their approach!

One last item to mention came out of our regional training seminar in Atlantic City last month where President Rolando spoke to the members in attendance. He stated since the postal service is over their cap of CCA's nationally, he expects to possibly be seeing another one-time conversion of CCA's again.

I haven't heard anything as of yet, but hopefully when I return from our Congressional visit in DC this month, I will have some good news to report.

Hope to see everyone at this month's meeting.

- Gary DiGiacomo – President
856-906-2838

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, April 17th @ 8 p.m.**, at the American Legion Hall, 502 Colonial Ave., North Woodbury. The regular monthly meetings of the Branch are held on the Third Wednesday of each month @ 8 p.m. The Executive Board and Shop Steward meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. The Executive Board meets @ **7:30 p.m.**, and the Shop Stewards @ **8 p.m.** The next meeting of the Executive Board and Shop Stewards will be on **Wednesday, April 10th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now at \$75

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, March 20th, William Wilson**, a member out of the Elmer Office would have been the recipient of the **\$50** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$75** and will increase **\$25** per meeting, up to a maximum of **\$250**, until a member in attendance has their name drawn.

Comments From the VP

I would like to inform everyone, that management over here at the **Camden, aka Hell Hole, Annex** has finally begun to treat all employees with Dignity and Respect. Gotcha, April Fools. Let's get serious, the minions here at the Hell Hole have decided to pretend that they are concerned about safety and security. They recently posted a Memo concerning workroom floor security- personal belongings. Basically, what the memo says is that backpacks, coats, and tote bags must be placed in lockers and carriers cannot have any personal items, which includes pictures of their family at their case. Managements theory is that those items and especially the pictures are distracting and preventing carriers from making their office time. What a joke. Managements unreasonable expectations is the only reason that the retention rate here at the **Hell Hole** is horrible, sick leave has increased, and mail is being delivered later than normal every day. On a positive note, we will be honoring the following retirees at Elizabeth's Ballroom in Gloucester City on April 6th. Kenneth Chojnaci, Reggie Harris, Loretta Morris, Clinton Proffit, Walter Palczewski, Bruce Shelton, Stephen Marino, Sue Peterson, Albert Kuttruf, Charles Cobb, Stephen Morse. I want to encourage all our members and especially our CCAs to try to attend our monthly meetings. It's your chance to get some important information on things happening in the branch and most importantly to ask questions or voice your concerns to your elected officers. If any active, CCA or retired member needs my help on any issue please contact me anytime at **(856)-906-2026** or **908vp@comcast.net**. **Proud to Be Union**

Mike Powell – Vice - President

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello brothers, and sisters. With March being Mental health awareness month, I just want to bring to your attention what the NALC HBP offers you. Please take advantage of any/all of these

when you feel life is getting you down. These services can assist you in managing a wide range of mental health, and substance abuse conditions such as: Abuse and domestic violence, Depression, Phobias, Addictions, Eating disorders, Alzheimer's and dementia, Obesity, Schizophrenia, Anxiety, Obsessions and compulsions, Autism, Personality disorders, Traumatic brain injury, and Bipolar disorder. Do it for yourself. Do it for your family.

Mutual Benefits Association: The unknown department of the NALC. Do yourself a favor and go to www.nalc.org/member-benefits/mutual-benefit-association to see all that the NALC has to offer you in life insurance, hospital plus, and retirement savings. CCAs the retirement savings is a great way to jump start your retirement. Plan ahead while you're young.

Optical Reimbursement: All members of Branch 908 in good standing are entitled to one per member/family per year \$20 reimbursement for optical expenses. Please submit to me a copy of your receipt with name, address, and office/retired to receive your reimbursement. Send receipt to: George Greenwood 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021.

Any questions or concerns always feel free to give me a call at 856-304-8665. Happy spring all. Be safe....

- **George Greenwood, HBR**

Easter Ham Drawing

At the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, April 17th**, there will be a drawing for an Easter Ham, donated by branch retiree **Joe Foreman**, in honor of former Branch COLCPE Chairman **Norm Task**.

Ozzie's Corner

One of the most frequently asked questions I receive from Letter Carriers is why we give to The Letter Carrier Political Fund? The history behind this special pact started in 1975 through the NALC. The pact then was called COLCPE (Committee On Letter Carrier Political Education). Because labor unions are prohibited by law to use dues money politically, the NALC started this separate entity. The NALC educates and informs pro-letter carrier politicians and candidates who support our platforms and issues. Therefore, the pact covers all political affiliations (Democrat, Republican, Independent). 6-Day delivery, Door to Door Delivery, Service Standards, Collective Bargaining Rights and Privatization are a few examples of Letter Carrier platforms and issues we are facing right now. On the Congressional side, when a HR Bill (House Resolution) is placed on the senate floor, it needs to be signed by that congressman/congresswoman. The signature on the bill to support that particular Legislation is called a Co-Sponsor (THAT IS A GOOD THING WHEN THAT HAPPENS). HR 15 (6-day) and HR 28 (Door to Door) have had over 220 Co-sponsors on each of those bills. However, because we have many new faces in Congress, it is important to reach out to these individuals and talk to them about why we need them to support us. Job loss and pay decrease to our craft and pension system continue to be a great threat to our side, but because we have this pact, we've continued to prevail time and time again. In the United States, we currently have 300,000 Letter Carriers that are members in the NALC and currently 8% nationally contribute...that is a total disgrace!! Local branches and State Associations must do a better job in educating each and every member about the risks with our jobs because it can all go with one stroke of the pen. In next month's newsletter, I will talk about the latest proposed budget (The Risks). In other news, I want to thank Digna Townsend from Con. Norcross's office (District Representative) for the branch banquet retiree certificates and April's LCPF contributors: Felix Bocchicchio (Mt. Ephraim), Stacia Cheeseman (Pennsville), Paul Krajewski (Bellmawr), Krenar Lena (Deptford), Alyssa McConnell (Blackwood) and retirees Joanne Lamplugh (Riverton) and John Visgil (Blackwood) (Thanks President DiGiacomo). Remember, for as little as a \$1 per pay you are joining the fight and having a voice in Washington, D.C. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 if you need my assistance in LCPF or any other matters in our branch. Finally, me and two of our officers (Gary DiGiacomo and Shawn McBride) will be going down to Washington D.C for our state association congressional visit April 10th-12th. I will do a report on the trip at April 17th's meeting.

In Solidarity,

Ozzie Lecky - Letter Carrier Political Fund Chairman

**(By making a contribution to the LCPF, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the NALC or of employment by the USPS, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The LCPF will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other*

political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the LCPF are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the LCPF from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administration staff, or their families.)

Branch Scholarship Drawing

We will be drawing the winner of this year's Branch Scholarship at the regular monthly meeting on **May 15th**. The winner of the Scholarship will receive a fund of \$2000.00 (\$500.00 a year for four years). Applications are available at every monthly meeting, on the Branch web site, or you can contact Trustee **Jim Boyle**. All previous winners that still receive Scholarship payments must submit any updated info to Jim by the May monthly meeting. This would include the student's current college and where he or she will be attending in the upcoming fall semester. Remember all students must be a full-time student. All payments for the upcoming fall semester will be sent to the colleges in June. If you have any questions, Trustee **Jim Boyle** can be contacted by phone at 856-952-6107

Grievance Log Step B Decision

Stratford - Management was in violation of Article 15 of the National Agreement when they did not comply with the previous Step B settlement when a special route inspection was not completed by February 1, 2019 on the grievant's route. Management is instructed to conduct a special inspection by March 31, 2019. Additionally, the grievant shall receive **\$250.00** as compensation for management's failure to abide by the Step B decision and the delay in granting and conducting the special inspection.

Blackwood - The notice of removal issued to grievant for "Unsatisfactory Performance-Safety" **shall be reduced to a 14-day suspension**. Management will return the grievant to his CCA position upon receipt of this this decision.

Maple Shade - Based on the facts in the case file, management has not shown that a debt to the USPS in the amount of \$470.75 exists. Therefore, management was in violation of Article 28 in the JCAM by issuing the Letter of Demand. As a remedy, the Letter of demand issued to grievant shall be rescinded.

Gold Card Member News

Congratulations to **Michael Cullinan**, retiree from our Voorhees office on becoming our latest Gold Card member.

Per the NALC Constitution: when a member reaches 50 years of membership in the NALC, he/she shall be given a Life Membership Card of Gold which shall entitle him/her to all privileges of membership in the NALC without the payment of dues.

Congratulations are also in order for two of our Gold Card members who have earned their **60-year pins**: **Bill Debes**, from Williamstown and **Jack Lex**, from Somerdale.

The NALC Constitution provides for the awarding of suitable lapel pins for every five years of NALC membership commencing with the 25th year. For example: 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and so forth. If you feel that because of your years of NALC membership, you are eligible for the award of a suitable lapel pin, see Branch Recording Secretary Norm Spence or send a letter to the Branch (PO Box 150, Pennsville, NJ 08070). Include your Name, Office, approximate date you became a member of the NALC and what pin you believe you have earned.

In Memoriam

Gil Curran, on March 24, 2019, age 73, Gil retired from the Haddon Hts. Post Office.

Branch Attorney

Free consultation and reduced rates for all Branch 908 members.

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