

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, Gloucester, Haddon Hts., Hammonton, Lawnside, Magnolia, Mantua, Maple Shade, Marlton, Mt. Ephraim, National Park, Paulsboro, Penns Grove, Pennsville, Pitman, Riverton, Salem, Sewell, Somerdale, Stratford, Swedesboro, Voorhees, Wenonah, Westville, Williamstown, Woodbury, Woodstown



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Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com February 2017

Presidents Report

Well Brothers and Sisters, I have more good news to report for our Deptford/Woodbury Steward who I informed you of last month. Thanks to the work of our National Union and the case file put together by our Stewards in the Deptford Installation, and a **non-biased** advocate from labor relations, our steward has returned to work in Deptford with full back pay and benefits. The union advocate felt strongly in getting this case overturned in its entirety, but agreed to settle it before the arbitration hearing with basically a 7-Day Suspension removed in 4 months. We constantly told the local manager this case was not a removable offense, but the postmaster refused to look at this case with a clear and unbiased head, and decided to risk all the money of the postal service in moving this case forward. I am not sure how much money the postmaster cost the postal service, but the hours of just the union time involved was immense. I wonder if the postal service held their managers accountable for all of this wasteful spending, they would think differently? I can't imagine how the manager's bosses can just accept this loss of time and money with no repercussions! I constantly hear the POOMS telling their managers to keep pressuring the carriers to work harder because they are "stealing" from us! How about start policing your own incompetent managers who are the real thieves in this company. After this decision was rendered we had hoped the incompetence would stop in this office, but I guess there are sour grapes that still remain. It amazes me how they want to blame labor for not taking this case to hearing! We finally got someone in labor that saw this case was a loser and decided it was time to stop the bleeding! The people involved from the beginning made this a personal case, and got their vision blurred because of who was involved. Justice has been served, even though we had to wait for over 6 months to get it. I hope the district starts to look at their managers who take things personal and refuse to manage without bias! In an installation this size, there needs to be someone who wants to work with us and not manage in a covert way. Stay tuned for more nonsense from Deptford because it isn't over.

On another front, we continue to be in Article 12, but again, hopefully it will be ending shortly. Also, many of you have heard of the Trump edict on freezing new hires. Fortunately, the Office of Management and Budget has clarified the edict. Among the clarifications – hiring by the US Postal Service is *not* included in the freeze. So hopefully we can get our offices fully staffed.

Speaking of the contract, I attended Branch 38's training seminar last month and President Rolando stated he was hoping on having an answer to the agreement by the end of January. He still remained very positive an agreement was imminent, but was just ironing out a few details.

One last item I must mention is the treatment the district is showing to our craft. The POOMS in their daily telecoms are constantly berating offices who are not issuing discipline to carriers for everything possible. Miss an MSP, discipline the carrier. They state there is, "no excuse and it is an easy win for us!" They are stating the carriers aren't working and are "stealing time!" This disrespect is the core problem of why the morale is at an all-time low. The stuffed shirts and skirts better start focusing on letting us do our job and go out on the street and find new work for us to do, not look for carriers who wheels may not be curbed enough.

Gary DiGiacomo – President

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, February 15th @ 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, February 8th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now at \$50

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday January 18, Reggie Harris**, a member out of the Bridgeton Office would have been the recipient of the **\$25** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$50** and will increase **\$25** per meeting, up to a maximum of **\$250**, until a member in attendance has their name drawn.

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Calling all CCA's. Keep abreast of your benefits, options, and rights. It's easy to do by downloading the NALC member app, and opening the CCA resource guide. Any CCA's converting to career I urge you to look at the NALC HBP High Option as it is very competitive with premiums, outstanding coverage, and low out of pocket expense. Call me anytime for more info, or questions at 856-304-8665. You only have 60 days from date of conversion to make changes. You must have your PIN number to access your file. If you don't have one call shared services to request a new one ASAP. Anyone having problems with accessing their account to make changes in your health benefits, I do have paper copies to do it the good old fashioned way.

The HBP has released a list of new changes for 2017 for all plan options. They can be found at nalchbp.org. Click on Directors message to see the changes. Although few, do yourself a favor, and check to see how they may affect you.

Any needs for additional life insurance, retirement savings, hospital plus insurance go to nalc.org. Under member benefits click on Mutual benefits. Here you can find any plans to suit your needs. I urge CCA's to look at the savings offered to you to help plan retirement. All funds are easily transferable to your TSP when converted.

Any member of NALC Br. 908 in good standing is entitled to one per family per year optical reimbursement of \$20. To receive you reimbursement mail a copy of your optical receipt with your name, and mailing address on it to me at: George Greenwood, HBR, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021. Be safe brothers, and sisters. Be healthy. Hope to see you all at the meeting.

George Greenwood, HBR 856-304-8665

Phone Numbers to Remember

President - **Gary DiGiacomo** - 856-906-2838
Vice - President - **Mike Powell** - 856-906-2026

Trustee Report

Hello Brothers and Sister. The April Litty fundraiser held on January 15th 2017 was a great success everyone had a good time and we were able to raise a considerable amount for April's ever growing co pays and medical bills which are in the tens of

thousands. April would like to thanks the branch and all the members for all their help. Just a quick note there will be a Trustee meeting February 23rd if anyone is interested in coming to observe, time will be 7:30 pm at the hall. In the branches never ending desire to keep all our officers well trained, we budget funds to send 2 officers a year to NALC headquarters training but not always held in Washington DC. Last year we sent two officers to the latest grievance training given by NALC Vice President Lew Drass. This coming year we are sending two officers to officers training with Secretary/Treasurer Nicole Rhine for financial and branch operations. Education is necessary to keep the strongest branch in New Jersey ahead in every area that is consistently changing. As always, you the membership provide the necessary funds by approving the branch budget every year. The 2017 budget was passed at the December 2016 meeting. In addition, the branch continues to look for a place of our own, anyone that knows of a hall/building for sale please contact me with the info. Finally, these are tough times at work, any member being harassed or bullied and feeling stressed out at work or just feeling overwhelmed please seek help. There is EAP which first visit is on the clock and there is always your health plan, which provides help. Do not go in alone. And we, the branch shop stewards and officers are always here for you. So please do not hesitate to contact us. The branch president and vice presidents numbers are on the newsletter, and mine is as follows 609-932-9913.

James Comuso Sr – Trustee Chairman

Ozzie's Corner

On January 22nd, President Trump issued an executive order to all federal agencies to freeze hiring new employees, however NALC President Fred Rolando said on January 28th's e-activist report that he and his staff are still getting answers through the postal service about the language of the statement Mr. Trump addressed. Also, President Rolando said if he hears any new developments on this matter, he will let us know immediately. In other news, the latest House Resolution bill tracking update was issued in this same e-activist report. HR-15 (6-day delivery) has 50 cosponsors, HR-28 (door-to-door delivery) has 84 cosponsors and HR-31(service standards) has 28 cosponsors. A cosponsor represents an individual in the senate who is for us and supports a particular bill. Remember, we have not only a brand new president, but a brand new senate too. As we get to know these new faces and names, we cannot stop fighting and we need to continue to push our strong Letter Carrier platforms to every corner in legislation. Finally, I want to thank our latest contributors to the LCPF, Eric Burgess, Ryan Dixon, Ray Fuller, Gary Maneely and Mike Rofrano. I can be reached day or night if you need assistance in contributing to LCPF or signing up to e-activist by calling (856) 220-8658. I hope to see you all at February 15th's meeting.

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.)*

Phillies Ticket Chances

Once again the Branch is raising money for NALC's National charity, MDA by selling chances for a pair of tickets for the Philadelphia Phillies Sunday Game Plan (lower level seats). Tickets are \$2 each and can be obtained from your Shop Steward. The winning ticket will be drawn on April 5, 2017.

GOP Bill Would Eliminate Union Representation and Other Protections For New Postal Workers

A bill introduced by GOP congressional representative Todd Rokita of Indiana would eliminate civil service protections, including the right to union representation for all new federal employees, including new postal workers.

A key provision of Rokita's "Promote Accountability and Government Efficiency (PAGE) Act" states:

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any employee in the civil service (as that term is defined in section 2101 of title 5, United States Code) hired on or after the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act shall be hired on an at-will basis. **Such an employee may be removed or suspended,**

without notice or right to appeal, from service by the head of the agency at which such employee is employed for good cause, bad cause, or no cause at all.

10th Annual Branch Banquet-April 1st

The 10th Annual Branch 908 Banquet will be held on **April 1st, 2017** from **7:00 – 11:00pm** at **Elizabeth's Ballroom** located at **Highland Blvd. & Sylvan Ave. in Gloucester City N.J.** This is a great night to eat, drink, dance, and socialize with good friends and to honor those members who have retired in the past year as well as those who have been selected to receive Branch Awards. If you have retired since the last banquet or you will retire before **April 1st** contact Branch Vice-President, **Mike Powell @ 856-906-2026 or 908vp@comcast.net**. All Branch Members, family and friends are encouraged to attend at a cost of **\$20pp**. **The cost for current Branch retirees is \$10**. Tickets may be picked up from Branch Vice- President **Mike Powell** at any Branch Meeting, or by mailing the form below with check or Money order by March 18th made out to NALC Branch 908, to 136 New Jersey Road Brooklawn, NJ 08030.

Name: _____
Print
Check One: Honoree () Retiree () Other ()
Total number attending _____
Total remittance \$ _____

If you have retired since the last Banquet or you will retire before April 1, 2017 and your name is not on the list below, please contact the Branch Vice President, Mike Powell @ **856-906-2026 or 908vp@comcast.net**.

Charles Wehrle Jr – Voorhees
William Blazer – Williamstown
Janice Metzger – Swedesboro
Steven Smith – Williamstown
Isaac Thompson III – Bridgeton
Linda Burrington – Marlton
Robert Marsh – Woodbury
Dave Jacobson Jr – Pennsville
Charles Amicone – Stratford
Thomas Danaher – Gloucester
Shannon Falls – Swedesboro
Ronald Babli – Blackwood
Cristito Tadeja – Stratford

Nominations for Shop Steward of the Year

The Shop Steward of the Year Award will be awarded at the Branch Retiree's Banquet. Simply write on a piece of paper the following information: Name of Steward being nominated, Office, Person making nomination (must be from Steward Office), and statement including accomplishments, knowledge of contract, ability to deal with co- workers and management, and dedication to the NALC and 908. All submissions must be received by March 8th, 2017. The winner will be selected by the Awards Committee and kept confidential until the presentation at the Banquet.

Thanks Branch 908

I wanted to thank the Branch for providing refreshments for the beef & beer Sunday night. And thank you to any Brothers and Sisters that helped out in any way and came out to the event. Everyone had a great time. You all have been such a great support through this whole ordeal and now because of all the generosity I will be able to take care of a good portion of my medical bills. Thank You! – **April Litty**

During a time like this we realize how much our friends and relatives mean to us...Your expression of sympathy will always be remembered. – **The McCormick Family**

Thank you for your generous donation in honor of Jack McCormick. He was a good man ad greatly loved. We keep you in our prayers. Gratefully – **Your Poor Clare Sisters**

Proud To Be Union