

# 908 News

NALC Branch 908  
AFL-CIO  
PO Box 150  
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# South Jersey Letter Carriers

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## Presidents Report

The big question all of our Brothers and Sisters are asking is “do we have a contract yet?” After attending Branch 38’s training seminar in January, President Rolando stated he expected to have an answer by early February. We now are heading into March with still no word, but I would think we should be hearing something any day. Hopefully, by the time you receive the newsletter we will be talking about voting on a new agreement.

With a large number of our member’s contemplating retirement, and some already with a date, I am pleased to announce a retirement planning seminar being given by our National Union out of Region 12. The seminar will be held on March 13, 2017 from 6:30pm - 9:00pm. The place it is being held is **28 Creekview Road, Willingboro, NJ 08046**. The seminar is being given by retired Branch 157 officer Geary Wertz who has extensive training by National Officer Ron Watson. All shop stewards have received this information to pass along so talk to them to get the information if you plan on attending. Please let them or me know ASAP if you plan on attending so I can have a seat reserved for you. Hope to see you there.

I have just been notified from the District that there will be long awaited formal route inspections on all of the routes in the Deptford/Woodbury installation. The inspection dates start March 25 and end April 14<sup>th</sup>. Considering we have had DUO offices in this place for over 3 years, it is about time someone woke up and saw the office base time is a disaster and hopefully will be there to correct all of the route times. My only concern is the integrity of the data that will be looked at! This office for years has been manipulating the time cards of many of the routes to satisfy the POOMS, so it should be very interesting to see if the current regime ever stopped this blatant misrepresentation of the routes. All we have ever asked for was a fair evaluation of the routes so the carriers would stop being harassed on a daily basis. The other concern I have is this is a management directed inspection with no union assistance! We all know how those types of examinations ended up in the past. I will be involved in monitoring compliance of the contract as I will be there to observe the inspection. I will keep everyone updated on how this turns out.

I would also like to take this opportunity to give a big congratulation to our **Letter Carrier Political Fund Chairman, Ozzie Lecky**, on his continued hard work and dedication in signing up members for this most important fund. If you checked the February issue of your Postal Record, you will see all the contributors from our branch, which totals 23.78%. This time last year, we were hovering around 15%, which shows the amazing increase on those who understand the importance of this endeavor. With a brand new President and control of both the House and Senate by the Republican Party, we are all faced with a new landscape we must deal with. This is why it is important for all members to convince both parties’ representatives that the postal service is a partisan organization and shouldn’t be divided by a party affiliation. As of now, we do have bi-partisan support on postal reform, which means we may finally see some movement on the hard work our members put in over the last 10 years. Stay tuned your e-activist for all updated information.

Gary DiGiacomo – President

**Proud To Be Union**

## Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, March 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, March 8th @ 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 February 15th, Mike DiGiacomo**, a retired member out of the Gloucester 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

Let me begin my article this month with addressing a few of the many reasons **moral is at an all-time low and working conditions** suck in the Hell Hole known as the Camden Annex. First is the use of the Pet program, which is based on one 3999 to establish a demonstrated street performance. The use of this “so called” tool is causing extreme stress and pressure. It is a violation of Art 5, 19, 41 and M-01769 when this tool is used as the carrier’s sole projection for his/her leave or return time, or daily workload. I want to remind all carriers that you are the one that gives the estimate of your workload not the supervisor. Another issue that is occurring is the requirement for any carrier calling out sick for less than 3 days to bring in documentation in order to be paid. Please inform me if this happens to you. We will grieve this practice all day long. There is more, management is blatantly ignoring medical restrictions that some carriers have in place that limit them to an eight-hour day. This practice was addressed in **M-01807** issued by Megan Brennan, which states in part, **a decision was issued against the Postal Service in an EEOC complaint based upon a finding of disability discrimination and retaliation. The EEOC Administrative Judge awarded the employee, a letter carrier, \$200,000 in compensatory damages, 39 days of back pay, \$12,420 for Psychological treatment, and \$118,659 in attorney fees.** The carrier’s restrictions in the above case were a limitation that she could work no more than 8 hours per day and a requirement that she be granted a ten-minute stretch break every hour. If any carrier is being instructed to violate their Medical Restrictions my advice is that you don’t do it, it is a safety and health violation, and please document the incident and inform me so the proper grievance can be filed. There are way too many issues to list in this article, however the above issues do constitute harassment and intimidation which is a violation of the Joint Statement. Last, it seems that the Camden Annex has the best retention of CCA’s in the District. I think I can offer some insight as to why. First, the CCA’s in the Camden Annex are harassed and intimidated to make the ridiculous 6 o’clock window. This leads to some of them to throw away and bring back any 3<sup>rd</sup> bundle that they may have ex. Redplums, pizza menus, etc. Some of them hide mail in tubs with notes and leave for the regular carrier. These issues have

been brought to the postmaster and supervisors attention many times, the result **NOTHING**. It gets better, I was told that the Office Manager took credit for training these CCA's. Lets sum up the training. Throw away mail, mis-deliver parcels, hide mail in tubs and its ok as long as you make it back by 6pm. She sure is doing a great job. What a joke. If any active or retired member needs my assistance on any issue, please contact me anytime at **(856)-906-2026** or **908vp@comcast.net**. Proud to be Union

**Mike Powell - Vice President**

### **Grievance Log** **Pre-Arbitration Settlement**

**Deptford-** The parties agree that the Notice Of Removal, dated 7/20/2016, issued to the grievant will be reduced to a 14-Day Suspension and will remain in the employees file for one year.

#### **Step B Decisions**

**Deptford-** Management **DID NOT** have just cause to issue the grievant a 7-Day Suspension for Failure to Follow Instructions and Unsatisfactory Job Performance. As a remedy the 7-Day Suspension shall be rescinded immediately.

### **Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical**

Did you fill out a health assessment this year? Even if you did it last year, filling another entitles you to one of the free gifts for doing so. Choose between a discount dental program, waiver of two \$20 copayments, or an activity tracking device. I got mine. Again!

CCA's I can't stress enough to please contact me, or your steward to make sure you are getting all benefits you are entitled to. Too many are not aware that after the first year you have more HBP, vision, and dental options. Also, when a qualifying life event takes place you have options. Don't miss your chance. The Mutual Benefits Association (MBA) has just announced that the interest rate for retirement savings is now 3.25%. CCA's this is a great way to get started for retirement. When you are converted to regular career, you simply transfer all funds over to your TSP account. They've also announced they are working on changes to MBA Life products. Once changes are in, I'll report it to the members asap. Folks early in their career should give a good hard look at these offerings, and not be shocked as I was at the price of life insurance when I retired. Go to [nalc.org](http://nalc.org) under member benefits to see what's right for you.

Optical reimbursements are available too for all 908 members in good standing. Members are entitled to one per year per family/member \$20 reimbursement for optical expenses. Send a copy of your receipt to me with your name, mailing address, and office/retired on it. Send to: George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021...Any questions on all matters feel free to give me a call at 856-304-8665...See you in March..Be safe Brothers, and Sisters...

**George Greenwood, HBR**

### **Trustee Report**

Hello Brothers and Sisters, I would like to take this time once again to remind everyone of some of the benefits the branch offers our members. We have the retiree banquet and social on April 1<sup>st</sup>. We have the branch scholarship, which is drawn each May at the regular meeting, which this year is May 17<sup>th</sup>. Trustee Jim Boyle is in charge of this and can be reached at (856) 952-6107 for any information you may need. You can also access the forms on our website as well. The branch picnic is September 10<sup>th</sup> at Clementon Lake Park and Sergeant At Arms Officer Phil Haas is running this event. And last not but not least is the Children's Christmas Party which be held on Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup>. Trustees April Litty and Pete Desimone are in charge of this event. As always, anyone wishing to help out on any of these events are always welcome. Finally, we have a large assortment of uniforms for all of our new CCA's at the union hall that we urge you to take advantage of, since it takes a while to compile enough clothes. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

**James Comuso Sr – Trustee Chairman**

### **Ozzie's Corner**

As I opened the pages to February's Postal Record and scrolled down to New Jersey's LCPF state contributions, I couldn't help but be damn proud of each and every Brother and Sister in this great union that was on that list. Branch 908's numbers listed 172 total contributors for almost 24 percent. Remember, the NALC created this legislative pact to help boost and strengthen City Letter Carrier platforms (6-day delivery and door to door

delivery). I want to personally thank the 172 members listed and those who have given since I've been the Legislative Director since 2015. In addition, when you support the LCPF, you have a voice and you are delivering a message to Washington. Also, I want to thank **Elwood Leftridge** for being our latest contributor to the LCPF. Finally, I will be attending our Region 12 2 day training seminar in Atlantic City on the 27th and 28th of February, look for a report on my visit in March's newsletter. 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.)*

### **In Memoriam**

**Robert M Fraley**, on February 4, 2017, age 82, Branch Gold Card member who retired out of the Somerdale Post Office.

### **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.

### **Branch Scholarship Drawing**

We will be drawing the winner of this year's Branch Scholarship at the regular monthly meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup>. 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.

### **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 \$ _____

