

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 March 2019

Presidents Report

Hopefully the weather will cooperate this month, as we had to cancel last month's meeting. I hope we got the word out to everyone in time to notify you of the cancellation. Well brothers and sisters, it appears the postal service may be implementing some new initiatives this year, so I wanted to keep everyone updated as to what they are planning. The first item deals with collection boxes assigned to collection routes that have a scheduled pick-up time prior to 3:00 pm. I am not sure how many of our offices have some type of collection routes, but I know there are a few that this may affect. The postal service will be reviewing these boxes to determine the feasibility of reassigning the collection boxes to a route in the immediate vicinity. Prior to implementing a change, local management will discuss the potential impact with the carriers involved. This is a study which will conclude at the end of April. If this is occurring in your installation, please let your steward know or contact me directly if they are doing this study in your office. The next item deals with a program the postal service plans on implementing and **IS NOT A TEST!** It is called the "*The Arrow Key Initiative*" This initiative places new responsibilities on letter carriers when they return to the office. The orders state the carriers are to deposit their keys and gas card into an envelope or bag. The directive then has carriers placing the envelope into a designated receptacle in their office. The Plan also includes a **Non-Postal Form** that management will try and have a carrier sign. Please be advised this process puts all carriers in a very dangerous situation in that no one will be verifying that you have completed the accountable clearance process. The consequences of this non-verifying process are the carriers will be blamed for loss of keys or gas cards, which could become a removable offense. I ask everyone to be vigilant in monitoring this process if it is brought into your installation. This is another violation of their own Handbooks and Manuals, and I ask you to do not sign anything in regards to this process. Please ask for union representation if they try and coerce you into signing anything. It amazes me on the constant programs this company tries to implement to catch carriers allegedly not doing their job! They need to concentrate on trimming the "Fat" of their managers, not constantly attacking the hardest working craft in the service! We are used to it, and we shall overcome their nonsense once again. The next issue I want to address once again deals with managers trying to have disciplinary interviews with carriers without the union being present. This information is for all those newer employees who may not know what your rights are when it comes to having pre-disciplinary interviews with a manager. I am sure some of your managers have said to you that "you don't need your steward, this is only an informal discussion" am I right? Please don't be fooled by this "nice gesture." There is a right called "**Weingarten Rights**." This right gives you the right for union representation during any investigatory interview. The supervisor **MUST** tell the employee and the steward the purpose and subject of the meeting before the meeting begins. We have many uneducated managers who think they can have an interview without telling you or the steward the reason for the interview. Please don't be fooled by this incompetence on the managers part. If they refuse you this information, please ask them to end the meeting immediately and contact me directly. This meeting also allows the steward to be an active participant and not just an observer. If this occurs, please end the meeting and contact me ASAP. Hopefully, this doesn't occur in your office, but I have been told

it is going on in some installations throughout our district. Please read up on your rights and responsibilities in Article 17 of the JCAM so you can avoid any possible discipline by saying something you didn't know could hurt you. Hope to see you 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, March 20th @ 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 13th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Comments From the VP

The Annual Branch Retiree and Award Banquet will be held on Saturday April 6 from 7 pm - 11pm at Elizabeth's Ballroom located in Gloucester City. This year we will be honoring eleven retirees. There will be no tickets sold at the door, so if you plan to attend please see your steward or call me for tickets.

I want to remind everyone of a few things. First, management is required to maintain an atmosphere of dignity and respect when dealing with you, and if they don't, please request to see a steward and file a grievance. The second thing is, CCA's are not on call as stated in **M-1870 - #25. Can CCAs be required to remain at home for a call in on days they are not scheduled to work?** NO. If any active member, 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

Attendance Prize Now at \$50

Due to the cancellation of the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday February 20th**, the prize still stands at **\$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

Hello brothers, and sisters. I have a few items I'd like to bring to your attention this month. With spring right around the corner, and new life blossoming when, but now is a great time to get to your Doctor for an annual checkup. Get a thorough tune up to make sure everything is running smooth within you. Plan now for the rigors of summer coming up.

The Mutual Benefit Association (MBA) is revising its life insurance products offered to letter carriers and their family members. These revised products include: MBA Whole Life, MBA Whole Life Paid-Up in 20 Years, MBA Whole Life Paid-Up at Age 65, Independence (Single Premium) Whole Life, and MBA 10 Year Renewable and Convertible Term Life. Also available through MBA are Hospital Plus, MBA Retirement Savings Plan, MBA Family Retirement Savings Plan, City Carrier Assistant Retirement Savings Plan, and MBA Immediate Annuity. For applications and brochures, contact George Greenwood MBA representative, or call the MBA office at

202-638-4318.

The NALC Health Benefit Plan has made a few changes for 2019 in the High Option, Consumer Driven, and Value Option plans. The biggest change would be in the high option plan covering speech generation devices. Please see page 18 of the 2019 brochure for these changes or go to nalchbp.org, click on 2019 brochure, and go to page 18.

Optical Reimbursement Account: All NALC Br. 908 members in good standing are offered one per family/member reimbursement of \$20 for optical expenses annually. To receive your reimbursement, send a copy of your receipt with your name, mailing address, and office/retired to me at George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021.

Any questions or concerns regarding any of the above topics please feel free to give me a call anytime at 856-304-8665. Be safe. See you at the next meeting...George Greenwood HBR.

- George Greenwood, HBR

Ozzie's Corner

On February 4th in Washington, D.C., U.S. Representatives Joe Courtney, Suzan DelBene, Mike Kelly, Elise Stefanik along with New Jersey Congressmen Chris Smith and our very own Donald Norcross introduced House Resolution 748. H.R. 748 is about repealing 40% of excise tax on certain employer sponsored health insurance plans known as the "Cadillac Tax". The "Cadillac Tax" would affect employers and families whose health insurance plans cost more than \$11,100 for an individual and \$29,750 for family coverage. 300 members of Congress from both parties have cosponsored legislation to repeal the 40% tax. Con. Norcross is no stranger to negotiating worker health benefit packages and fighting for hard working families, he did that for many years as a former IBEW and SJ AFL-CIO leader. By the way, from day 1 since he has taken office, he is a fighter for Letter Carriers too. Con. Norcross has signed on to all of our House Resolution Bills (6-day, Door to Door, Service Standards and most recently Privatization). In addition, I have seen him take part in our postal rallies and he is a strong supporter of our veterans. The legislation on H.R. 748 has gained support from many organizations including International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), American Postal Workers Union (APWU) and our own NALC. I want to personally thank you Con. Norcross for the job you continue to do representing hard-working blue-collar people.

In other news, I want to thank March's LCPF contributors of Branch 908: Active Member Joe Townsend (Gloucester City), Retirees Rick Bacon (Bridgeton), Don Connelly (Bridgeton) and Gary Stevens (Voorhees). Also, we had Life Member Howard Foxwell Jr. (Penns Grove). Remember, contributing for as little as a dollar per pay helps protect Letter Carrier jobs, pay, benefits and pensions. Lastly, I want to thank each and every member who contributed to LCPF in 2018. In February's Postal Record, once again we went up for the fourth year in a row in branch percentage (26.9). My phone number is (856) 220-8658 if you need my assistance in any matters in our branch. Because February's general meeting was cancelled, I will be covering many things at March 20th's meeting. I hope to see you all there. 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

12th Annual Branch Banquet - April 6

The 12th Annual Branch 908 Banquet will be held on April 6th, 2018 from 7:00 – 11:00pm at Elizabeth's Ballroom located at Highland Blvd. & Sylvan Ave. in Gloucester City, NJ. 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 in 2018 after the last banquet 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 \$20 pp. 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 a check or Money order made out to NALC Branch 908 by March 23rd.

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

The following Branch members have retired since the last banquet up to the end of 2018. Those members retiring beginning with pay period 1 – 2019 through pay period 26 – 2019, will be honored at the 2020 banquet.

- Loretta Morris – Gibbstown**
- Kenneth Chojnacki – Riverton**
- Stephen Marino – Maple Shade**
- Sue Peterson – Maple Shade**
- Bruce Shelton – Woodbury**
- Albert Kuttruf - Maple Shade**
- Clinton Proffitt – Pennsville**
- Stephen Morse - Sewell**
- Walter Palczewski – Voorhees**
- Charles Cobb – Pennsville**
- Reggie Harris - Bridgeton**

Trustee Report

On January 31, 2019 the Trustees performed a complete audit on the branch accounts. All your monies were accounted for and the checking account had no issues. The branch and your money are in excellent condition. Any questions, or if you would like to review any bill, please contact me. Also, remember the branch has new and clean used uniforms at the hall feel free to come out to a meeting and help yourself to anything you need. Meetings are third Wednesdays of each month. Please try to attend, it's important. Thank You,

James Comuso Sr, Trustee Chairman – 609-932-9913

Dates To Remember

- April 6 – Branch Banquet**
- April 10 – 12 – NJ State Congressional Reception**
- September 8 – Branch Picnic**
- September 15 – 17 – NJ State Convention**

Branch Attorney

Free consultation and reduced rates for all Branch 908 members.

PLATT & RISO, P.C.	Stuart A. Platt
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