

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



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Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com November 2018

Presidents Report

Brothers and sisters, it seems the district has decided to take a new approach when it comes to asking our members for medical documentation while out sick or what they now deem for the protection of the employees! We have two cases as I speak, and I understand it is happening in other branches as well, where management is requesting specific highly sensitive medical information from our members. They are asking carriers to have their physician submit medication lists, how often you take them, if there are any side effects and if you are getting any treatment for your condition. If this isn't a blatant violation of the HIPPA rights, I don't know what is. We have filed grievances on these matters, contacted our National Union as well, to find out why the South Jersey district believes they have this right to ask for this personal information. Our members have submitted sufficient documentation to return to full-duty, but the district isn't accepting it! It galls me the district is taking this position, and is hurting our members financially by keeping them off the street. They have no right requesting this information, but our only option at this stage is to grieve these violations in order for a neutral party to put them in their proper place. If you run into this situation where management isn't accepting your physicians note because it isn't specific enough, please let me or your steward know ASAP. They are violating their own manuals with this approach, but don't seem to care.

There are a few things I want to go over with everyone, since we have many new members coming on board, as we approach the holiday season. First, I am not sure many of the new members and even some seasoned carriers are aware of the rules on servicing curbside boxes. I am putting it in the newsletter so everyone knows their rights, as some of your managers won't explain them to you for obvious reasons. These guidelines go back some 40 years, and are still in force today. Employees performing curbside delivery, from right-hand drive vehicles, shall follow the procedures listed below:

1. **Level streets or roads: Place the vehicle in neutral** (N), place foot firmly on brake pedal while collecting mail or placing mail in mail box.

2. **On hills: Place the vehicle in park** (P), place foot firmly on brake pedal while collecting mail or placing mail in mail box.

Employees performing curbside delivery, from left-hand drive vehicles, shall follow the procedures listed below:

1. To serve each box, the left-hand drive vehicle will be brought to a complete stop.

2. The gear shift lever will be placed in park; the operator will serve the box and then continue to the next box.

Employees shall not finger mail while driving, or hold mail in their hands while the vehicle is in motion.

These are the rules, so please follow them, and you won't have to worry about being disciplined for failure to follow safety practices. I know you are saying, that it is going to take a lot longer on the street, but these are the postal service's policy on delivering the mail. Remember, you can never be written up for doing your job the proper way.

The next item I want to go over deals with wearing seatbelts. I get many questions about the real rules, so I wanted to give everyone the proper answer. If you don't follow these rules, you risk being disciplined. This policy has been in effect since 1987. The lap belt, shoulder belt and shoulder harness policy for the Long-Life Vehicle is as follows: **The driver must wear the lap belt and shoulder belt at all times the vehicle is in motion.**

Exception: In instances when the shoulder belt prevents the

driver from reaching to provide delivery or collection from curbside mailboxes, only the shoulder belt may be unfastened. **The lap belt must remain fastened at all times the vehicle is in motion.** All passengers must be seated and wear a lap belt and shoulder harness at all times the vehicle is in motion. Only authorized passengers may be carried in the vehicle. Seems simple enough right? Always have the seatbelt fastened while the vehicle is in motion and you will never have a problem. Remember, as the holiday season approaches you will be tempted to try and save time by skipping some of these safety procedures. Please don't. Take the time necessary to do your job safely and let management deal with the extra time you may need. Hope to see you at this month's meeting.

- Gary DiGiacomo - President

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, November 21st @ 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, November 14th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now at \$225

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday October 17th, Mike Boston**, a retired member out of the Marlton Office would have been the recipient of the **\$200** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$225** 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

Brothers and Sisters please take the time to vote on November 6, it doesn't matter if you vote blue, green, red or purple, or whatever your preference is, but if you don't vote you have no right to complain about the legislation that could affect you personally down the road. Veterans Day is November 11 please take the time to thank anyone who you might know was/is a veteran. Next, I would like to wish all our regular and retired members and their families a Happy Thanksgiving. I have a few things that are disturbing to me. The first occurred on October 15, when our very own Ozzie Lecky was denied entrance to a luncheon hosted by Congressman Donald Norcross, because Ed Morgan, from the NALC's Legislative and Political Department, did not send back a response to notify the organizers that Ozzie was attending the event. How in the hell can you forget to send back a response, no matter how big or small the event, with such an important election upon us in two weeks. It boggles my mind, not to mention the time and effort Ozzie put in not only to attend and prepare for this affair, but the time and effort he puts forth throughout the year. Maybe, Ozzie should be considered for one of these NALC Legislative positions. I for one say, Thank You! for all your hard work Ozzie. The second disturbing thing is over here at the **aka Hell Hole** (Camden Annex). What disturbs me is that back in August of 2012 five of our offices were part of what was called a DUO in which our offices were forced into the **aka Hell Hole**. The whole idea of this DUO was to put all the carriers from all the

branch offices within a certain proximity into one building, that being the **aka Hell Hole**, to eliminate Postmaster and Supervisor salaries, or at least that's what we were told at that time. Well, a trusted source has informed me that we have **two supervisors at level 22 and one at level 24** running the **Hell Hole**. Hello, is anyone in the District watching this waste of money. From what I understand these supervisors make at least \$75,000 a year and probably more. These high salaried henchmen/women have done nothing to improve the quality of work or environment here at the **Hell Hole**. It's the same old things at the deplorable **Hell Hole**, Harassment, Fake Numbers, Intimidation, Low Morale etc. The Postal Service should do the right thing and send us all back to the branch offices. Moving on to other matters, As I said last month, daylight savings time ends on November 4, which means some of us will be working in the dark. I want to remind everyone that if management instructs you to finish your assignment in the dark then try to follow that instruction until you feel that an unsafe condition exists. You, the carrier, are the one that makes that determination. If you determine the conditions are unsafe then inform your supervisor that you will be returning to the office. We deserve and have the right to a safe working environment as provided under Article 14 of our National Agreement. Any member who wants to take part in the Angel Tree for under privileged children, please let me know. If you believe every child deserves a Merry Christmas, then please help! If any active member, CCA 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

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Well Brothers, and Sisters I hope you did your homework. It's here. Open season. Open season for health, dental, and vision plans will run from Monday November 12, through Monday December 10. All plans, rates, and comparison charts are available to view online at opm.gov....When it ends only qualifying life changing events will allow you to make changes. The NALC Health Benefit Plan which is owned by you, and run by NALC is one of the best yet affordable plans out there. Give it a good hard look, and see if it's right for you too. Hard to beat the low premiums, low co-pay, and top notch coverage. Full brochure, and 2019 rates can also be found at NALCHBP.com.

CCA's I still strongly urge you to go to NALC.com, and look into CCA Retirement Savings Plan. Under member benefits click on Mutual Benefit Association..Don't waste your CCA time with nothing to show for retirement. All funds you save can be converted to your TSP retirement upon conversion to career. Life insurance, hospital plus, and savings plans are also available to all members.

Optical reimbursements is also coming down to the wire. Get yours in before the new year. Any member in good standing is entitled to one per member/family reimbursement for \$20 for any optical expense you may incur. Two members in the same family qualifies you for 2 reimbursements. Simply send me a copy of your receipt with your name, address, and office/retired on it to George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021...

Any questions please feel free to give me a call at 856-304-8665. See you at the meeting. Be safe all.

- George Greenwood, HBR

Ozzie's Corner

On October 8th, the NALC had a national rally day titled: "The U.S. Mail Is Not For Sale". The NALC organized this day of action to let postal customers know that privatizing the Postal Service would be detrimental to the American public. 200 Letter Carriers (N.J. AND P.A.) and Politicians marched from The Benjamin Franklin Post Office on Market Street to Independence Hall three blocks down. During our protest, many special guests addressed our brothers and sisters with fire, passion and conviction. NALC Branch 157 President Joe Rodgers emphasized, "We need to continue to fight like hell for our wages and jobs". Congressman Bob Brady thanked all Letter Carriers for being the eyes and ears in all our neighborhoods. In addition, Congressmen Brendan Boyle, Dwight Evans, Brian Fitzpatrick and Donald Norcross gave inspiring and supportive speeches. I want to thank Jim Boyle (Trustee and Stratford Shop Steward) for being the other 908 representative at this event. In other news, and it's great news too...HR 993 (The Privatization Bill) shot up to now 219 co sponsors. The Letter Carriers are speaking loud and clear to Congress and Washington is listening loud and clear. Therefore,

we need to keep up the fight and not lose the war. I want to thank each and every active and retired member in 908 who is helping me deliver the message to Washington, D.C. The message is keeping 6 day delivery, door to door delivery, protecting our raises and benefits and not losing our retirement package. For as little as a dollar per pay period, you are showing you are ready to fight and give a damn. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 if you want to contribute or if you need my assistance in any other matters. I want to thank Paul Fowler (Gloucester City) and Loretta Morris (Gibbstown) for being November's LCPF contributors. Also, I want to thank George Greenwood and April Litty for their assistance at October's general meeting. Finally, the midterm elections are on November 6th, please go out and vote for pro Letter Carrier candidates. I hope to see you all at November 21st'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.)*

Penalty Overtime Exclusion

As referenced in Article 8, Sections 4 and 5 of the National Agreement between the NALC and the USPS, the December period during which penalty overtime regulations are not applicable consists of four consecutive service weeks. This year, the December period begins Pay Period 25-18-Week 2 (Dec. 1, 2018) and ends Pay Period 01-19-Week 1 (Dec. 28, 2018).

Trustee Report

For our new members, the Branch is constantly been getting uniforms donations for both male and female carriers. Come to a meeting and check them out, they are free for all members! This month will be the 11th annual Jack Bittner free turkey give away. Jack was our previous long time Chief Trustee who passed away in 2007. As a tribute to his long and dedicated service to the branch, every year I purchase a turkey and chance it off at the November meeting! This is free to all members in good standing you only need to be in attendance to win.

- James Comuso Sr - Trustee Chairman

Grievance Log

Step B Decision

Hammonton - Management failed to comply with the Step B decision where it found management violated Article 25 when the grievant was assigned to a higher-level Carrier Technician position and was to be compensated **\$905.30** and failed to pay the grievant in a timely manner. As a remedy, an additional **\$50.00** will be paid to grievant for management's blatant failure to process this payment. A total of **\$955.30** will be paid by the DRT.

Sewell - Management was in violation of Article 10 and 19 of the National Agreement, ELM Sections 513 and 865, as well as M-00553, when they refused to allow the grievant to return to duty on May 31, 2018. As a remedy, the grievant shall be compensated for any leave that was used and/or LWOP charged beginning on May 31, 2018 continuing through June 18, 2018, resulting from management's inaction.

Step A Settlement

Marlton - Management shall cease and desist falsely editing letter carrier clock rings. To ensure future compliance of proper time-keeping practices, management will provide clock rings upon request to the union. Such auditing of clock rings will be performed on the clock and at no cost to the union.

Marlton - Management failed to maintain an atmosphere which assures mutual respect as required by section 115.4 of the M-39. As remedy, management is instructed to cease and desist. The 204-B will be permanently removed from all supervisory positions at the Marlton, NJ Post office.

Hammonton - Management violated Article 1 of the National Agreement when a 204-B performed bargaining unit work. As a remedy, the affected carrier will receive a lump sum payment of \$50.00 for the violation.

Hammonton - Management violated Article 41 of the National Agreement when they removed a CCA off their opted hold down assignment. As a remedy, the affected carrier will receive a lump sum payment of \$50.00 for the violation.