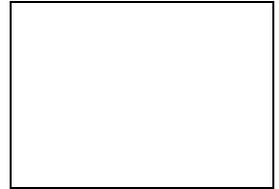


# 908 News

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, Palmyra, Paulsboro, Penns Grove, Pennsville, Pitman, Riverton, Salem, Sewell, Somerdale, Stratford, Swedesboro, Voorhees, Wenonah, Westville, Williamstown, Woodbury, Woodstown



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## Presidents Report

I would like to make everyone aware on what is going on in the district, as the brain trust is at it again. First, the district is resurrecting the infamous “**demonstrated performance**” nonsense that I mentioned back in May when the eastern area vice-president, Josh Colin, introduced his Performance Enhancement Tool. I guess they wanted to wait until after prime time vacations to bring back this useless measurement harassment device, since they don’t need everyone as much as they did during the summer months. They must really mean business, since they sent 60 managers out to Pittsburgh to get a new chip put in their head to bring back and train the rest of the sheep on how to squeeze more blood from the carriers! If you noticed managers counting your mail with an 1838-C and then doing a 3999(street walk) their reason is to try and use these numbers in the coming weeks to try and ram their demonstrated performance down our throats. My advice to everyone is simple. The manuals state how you are to perform the functions of your job, so I suggest everyone begin brushing up on the M-39 and M-41 manuals, which can be found on our website. As long as you are giving 8 hours’ work for 8 hours pay, you have nothing to worry about. Don’t be intimidated by your manager with phony expectations he throws at you from a garbage in garbage out report. You assess your workload each day and determine how much time your route will need on a daily basis. If you aren’t sure what management is telling you is correct please talk to your steward or call one of your branch officers as they have been instructed on how to handle these situations.

The next issue we are again seeing surface is management changing clock rings on carrier’s time cards. We just returned from the State Seminar in Atlantic City where National Business Agent Larry Cirelli gave a very informative class on how to monitor clock rings. We have this situation in our branch as well, where we are once again investigating a possible serious violation of this method of manipulating clock rings. It seems management is never held accountable for these violations, but they always want to hold us accountable for bad swipes! We are now going to start filing grievances if we find managers partaking in this illegal way of managing their offices. We will be asking for the same remedy management wants to issue us, which is severe discipline, up to and including removal. The district is aware of this practice and continues to turn their head to it when we alert them to it. We can no longer rely on them taking action to correct this situation, so we will take it to an arbitrator, if necessary, to fix this problem. If anyone knows of any manager doing this without notifying the local steward why they are changing clock rings, please let me know so I can take it to the next level. Hey, if they want to play by the books, we will be happy to oblige them.

I will have more information at this month’s meeting, hope to see you there.

Gary DiGiacomo – President

## Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, October 19th @ 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, October 12th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

## Attendance Prize Now at \$200

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday September 21st, Norm Task**, a retired member out of the Haddon Heights Office would have been the recipient of the **\$175** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$200** 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

An issue that has come up over at the Camden Annex is carriers receiving discipline and not notifying the Union. It cannot be stressed enough, that you are responsible for notifying the Union, **not management**. The clock starts once you receive any type of discipline; we have 14 days to address it. So please notify your steward immediately upon receiving discipline. One last thing I would like to mention. Branch 908 will be participating in an Angel Tree for underprivileged children. The way it works is, tags are placed on the tree representing these children’s wishes. Donors pick a tag from the tree and then shop for the gift for the child selected. If any member has any questions, contact Vice -President Mike Powell @ 856-906-2026 or 856-287-8768. If you believe every child deserves a Merry Christmas, please help! Proud to be Union

Mike Powell - Vice President

## Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello again Brothers and Sisters. The Big News! **Open Season for health benefits runs from Monday Nov. 14 through Monday Dec. 12.** The bigger news! Rates for 2017 have been released by OPM, and can be found at OPM.gov. Specific information on individual plans will be released by the plans themselves at a later date. Unfortunately, premiums across the board are averaging a 4.4 percent increase on all plans. Hopefully our COLA will cover the increase, but at this point not likely.

Retirees approaching Medicare age please give me a call (856-304-8665), NALC retirement department (**Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10 a.m. to noon & 2 to 4 p.m. Eastern: 1-800-424-5186**), or Medicare (**1-800-MEDICARE**) before choosing parts of Medicare. Please don't sign up for something not needed, or miss signing up for something that is needed. There are time guidelines in this process too.

CCA's I can't stress it enough please see what is available for you regarding HBP, retirement savings, life insurance etc...either visit [nalc.org](http://nalc.org), or give me a call. Don't miss your opportunities. Optical reimbursements are available to members of branch 908. All members are entitled to a one \$20.00 reimbursements per member, per year for optical expenses. Send your claims to me at: George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021.

On a final note, I just wanted to touch on life planning. I attended the seminar at the convention through MBA for life planning, and it really opened my eyes to many things. Do yourself and family a great favor by planning now for life's events such as disability, education, marriage, divorce, retirement, and death. We plan for the probable, but not the inevitable. Start now. A call to MBA (202) 638-4318 is a good start....

Any questions on any of the above matters just give me a call anytime. 856-304-8665. See you in October. Be safe all.

**George Greenwood – Health Benefits Officer**

### **Trustee Report**

Hi Brothers and Sisters, it is happy Halloween month. We have a list of events up and coming. First, in November is the annual Jack Bittner free turkey drawing at the regular monthly meeting, you must be present to win turkey donated by yours truly. Then on December 11th from 1-3 at the union hall we have the annual kids Christmas party. Always a good time, free food and drink and there are free toys and pictures with Santa Claus given out. Then in late February, we have the region 12 rap session in Atlantic City for all stewards and officers. Next in April, actually the first from 7-11 pm at Colleens Catering in Gloucester City, NJ we have the annual branch social and retirees banquet, tickets are 25.00 per person and includes all the food and drinks, including top shelf liquors. Our very own DJ Jake Evison from Deptford office will be on hand to provide great music for the evening.

I'd like to commend our Sgt at Arms and Branch picnic chairman Phil Haas for another excellent job on running the picnic. Everyone had a great time and we had over 200 branch member's attend.

On a personal note for those of you who did not attend the September 21 regular meeting, we would like to let you know that our Branch Treasurer of over 40 years Tom Barnett turned 85 on that day and he is still going strong! Happy Birthday Thomas! I would also like to shout out to Riverton shop steward Shari Owens for making Tommy a cake for his birthday, thanks Shari. See you all at the meeting

**James Comuso Sr – Trustee Chairman**

### **Ozzie's Corner**

Happy October Branch 908 family, on September 26th and 27th, we just completed our 2 day NJSALC conference In Atlantic City where we had Ed Morgan (NALC's National Legislative Coordinator) talk briefly about our presidential election. As you already might have heard, the NALC has endorsed Hillary Clinton for the election. Mrs. Clinton is for Letter Carriers (including door-to-door delivery and 6-day delivery), supports unions and is for the working class. In addition, Brother Morgan continues to stress the importance of contributing to the Letter Carrier Political Fund and getting on E-activist. By contributing to both of these Letter Carrier foundations, you are doing your part in the fight and caring about what is at stake. Also, all of the good things we have as Letter Carriers (6 day delivery, door-to-door delivery, wage increases, etc) can go with just one snap of congress's fingers. I can be reached anytime for any active or retired member in 908 at (856) 220-8658 if you have legislative questions or if you need help signing up to LCPF or E-activist. I hope to see you all at October 19th'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.)*

### **The Hatch Act**

What is the Hatch Act? Some background.

Until 1993, active letter carriers were barred from taking any significant volunteer role for any political campaigns. The primary sentiment behind the law was to protect federal employees from being strong-armed and intimidated into helping their bosses run for re-election. But as times and campaigns changed, many recognized that federal employees were being wrongfully left out of the political process.

So, in 1993, Congress amended the Hatch Act to allow federal employees to take an active part in political campaigns for federal offices. While there are still some restrictions on what federal employees (including you and your fellow active carriers) can do, there is much greater latitude for letter carrier political participation in campaigns for president, the Senate and the House of Representatives, as well as for state and local elected officials. **Remember:** Retirees, spouses and family members (including NALC Auxiliary members) are not bound by the Hatch Act.

If you have questions regarding the Hatch Act, contact the Office of Special Counsel by e-mail at hatchact@osc.gov or by phone at 800-85-HATCH.

Do's (while off the clock, out of uniform)

Active letter carriers may—on their own time, away from work, out of uniform and without using a postal vehicle:

- Be candidates for public office in non-partisan elections (that is, elections in which none of the candidates are to be nominated or elected are representing a political party).
- Register and vote.
- Sign and circulate candidate nominating petitions and ballot initiative positions.
- Assist in voter-registration drives.
- Speak and write publicly and otherwise express opinions about candidates, ballot measures and issues.
- Attend political rallies, meetings and other events.
- Attend fundraisers and contribute money to political organizations and campaigns.
- Volunteer for political campaigns and encourage others to volunteer.
- Participate in phone-banking and precinct-walking for candidates and ballot measures.
- Display bumper stickers, lawn signs and other campaign paraphernalia.
- Raise money for the Letter Carrier Political Fund from other NALC members. (Note: Letter carriers while detailed to 204b or other higher level assignments should not solicit contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund from postal employees who may be viewed as their subordinates.)
- Volunteer, run for and hold an office in a local or state political party or club.

Don'ts (while on the clock, at the workplace, in uniform or in a postal vehicle)

Active letter carriers may not—while on the clock, at the workplace, in a postal uniform or in a postal vehicle—engage in any of the otherwise permissible political activities listed in the “Do's” above. For example, while on the clock, at the workplace, in a postal uniform or in a postal vehicle, you may not:

- Send or forward a partisan political e-mail.
- Wear or display any political or campaign material, even as a computer screen-saver or desktop wallpaper.
- Circulate partisan political materials to co-workers.
- Sign up electronically to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund or solicit other letter carriers to contribute.

Don'ts (ever)

Active letter carriers may not—even on their own time, away from work, out of uniform and without using a postal vehicle:

- Use their official titles or positions when engaging in otherwise permissible activities.
- Raise money for partisan political groups or campaigns (except for the Letter Carrier Political Fund), including phone-banking, letter-writing, selling tickets, hosting a fundraiser, inviting people to attend a fundraiser, or allowing your name to be used in a fundraising appeal.
- Otherwise solicit, receive or handle contributions for a partisan political group or campaign.
- Run for elective office in partisan (party-label) elections (even if you report “No Party Affiliation”).
- Raise money for the Letter Carrier Political Fund from non-NALC members (except from their immediate family members in the same household).

### **NALC Smart Phone App**

As technology increases our ability to communicate, NALC must stay ahead of the curve. From websites to email to social media, this union has continually developed the tools to put the most up-to-date information and resources into the hands of our stewards and members. We've now taken the next step with the NALC Member App for **iPhone** and **Android** smart phones. The app was developed at headquarters with the needs of the average member in mind.

The app contains links to workplace resources, including the National Agreement, the *JCAM*, the MRS, CCA resources and more. It also includes legislative tools, such as a bill tracker, an individualized list of your congressional representatives and PAC information. And one of the coolest features: an Interactive Non-Scheduled Days calendar.