

908 News

NALC Branch 908
AFL-CIO
PO Box 375
Gloucester City,
NJ 08030

South Jersey Letter Carriers

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Newsletter Com: Powell, Comuso, Lipski Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com September 2011

President's Report

I hope everyone had a good summer and survived this crazy weather the last few months. As we head into the fall season we will be facing a lot of issues as we go forward. I guess the main topic of concern is our negotiations of a new contract. As everyone is aware of by now, we began officially negotiating our contract on August 18. It appears we will have a difficult time in trying to bargain for a new agreement as witnessed by the PMG's stance in trying to lobby Congress to violate our collective bargaining agreement. Our National President has sent a letter to all carriers explaining our position and disgust in what is transpiring at this time. We must all stay focused and together during this time and get active in getting out the facts. I know a lot you have issues with family matters, etc, but it is time to step up and get involved in your job and the future of this great organization. Our National President will be asking all of us to do our part in the near future to fight this battle to save our jobs and the Postal Service. We must all take the initiative to learn the truth and facts about what is actually going on, not the garbage the PMG is spewing to the press and Congress. It amazes me how he has amped up his attack just as we try to begin to negotiate a new agreement. All I can say is I hope he is ready for the fight of his life, because we will bring it to him! Another thing that has happened while we were away is the DUO process of a couple more of our Offices. It appears Runnemede and Glendora will be going into the Deptford Office effective October 22. This means we will have those Offices being combined with Deptford to form one large Office. As I get more info on this DUO, I will keep everyone informed.

It appears the grievance activity was light this summer, which is a good thing. However, we still are having issues with the management in Paulsboro who continue to keep our Steward busy with grievances. It utterly amazes me how one small Office can generate so many grievances! Why the District allows this to continue boggles my mind. What it tells me is they don't care a thing about the employees in this Office and have no respect for them. Not to go into details in this forum, however, I must mention one issue that is still in the grievance procedure in Paulsboro. Management had wrongfully issued a removal to an employee back in March with what we contend had no basis and were just waiting to go to arbitration to prove our case. This case was scheduled to go to arbitration in September but management knew they had a loser so decided to unilaterally rescind the removal and make it a 7-Day suspension. This behavior was unprecedented so we now are going to arbitration on the 7-Day suspension. The funny thing is they agreed to give full back pay for the 3 months the grievant was out. They then issued another removal for the same charge as the first removal. The bottom line is this is nothing more than harassment and intimidation of an employee who was standing up for her rights when she felt she was being mistreated by the local Managers. Hopefully this case will be resolved shortly and she can return to work in a stress free environment.

Another interesting development occurred at the State Convention in Atlantic City in June. There was an election for the entire Executive Board of Officers for the state. In an unprecedented showing, the slate of Branch 38, who has tried to and always had control of the state positions, were defeated by a slate of Branch Presidents from all over the state. I was one of

those Presidents who was asked to run on this slate and got elected to this position of the Executive Board for the state. I know we have not been involved with the state for many years and for some very good reasons, but after talking to our Officers and Stewards, I got positive feedback to run for this position. I think it can only help our branch to have a voice on the state level, and now we will have that voice. I will have more information to share with everyone at the regular meeting in September, and hopefully will see you there.

Gary DiGiacomo, President

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, September 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 at 8 p.m.**, **The Branch Board of Officers and Executive Board meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.** The Board of Officers at **7:30 p.m.**, and the Executive Board at **8 p.m.** The next meeting of the Board of Officers and Executive Board will be on **Wednesday, September 14th, 7:30 and 8 p.m.** respectively

Trustee Report

Welcome back brothers and sisters. I Hope your summer was relaxing, God knows we needed it. Just want to remind you all that we have two Branch Attorneys who are the best at what they do, Hal Crass of Person and Crass, and Uliase and Uliase. Do not hesitate to contact them if you need them. They are both on retainer by the Branch and initial consultations are free. I recently saw Tom Uliase, of Uliase/Uliase, who is our OWCP attorney. He asked me to pass along some advice to all who are on light duty, limited duty or are out for any period-of-time, that the Postal Inspection Service along with the OIG are out in numbers checking on anyone who is in that position. Secondly he recommends that you ask your doctor if you can do anything, and make sure it's within your restrictions, including something as simple as going to a Phillie's game. He advised me that he will back you up on whatever your doctor advises you can do. Some additional, reminders, the Branch has clean uniforms for free at the hall, (see me). Please do not block or park in front of the building, behind the hall, handicap people reside there. Be ready for the Branch Retirees Dinner Banquet, April 14, 2012. To those who have asked in the past, in 2012 we are having a Branch Picnic at Clementon Park this year. It will be in September so try to keep Sundays open. Finally the Branch Trustees audit of the books and bills will be the last Thursday of the month at 7pm at the hall. Any member who has questions and would like to see any bill, please come to our meeting. If there is a particular month or year you need or want to see, please contact Trustee Chairman Jim Comuso at 609-932-9913.

James Comuso, SR Trustee Chairman

Phone Numbers to Remember

President-Gary DiGiacomo - 856-906-2838
Vice- President- Steve Rutkowski- 856-906-2026

Notice Of Nominations And Election Of Branch Officers, Shop Stewards And Convention

Delegates

This is to provide official notice that nominations for the election of Branch Officers, Shop Stewards and Convention Delegates for the term 2011 thru 2012 shall take place at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, October 19, 2011**. Elections shall be by secret mail ballot of the eligible Branch membership held as soon as possible after nominations at the October regular monthly meeting. Nominations shall be made from the meeting room floor or in writing to the Branch Recording Secretary, mailed or presented to him/her prior to or at the October regular Branch meeting. Each eligible member of the Branch nominated for office shall accept or reject nomination in writing prior to the adjournment of the October regular monthly Branch meeting. Failure to accept nomination for Branch office prior to adjournment of the October regular Branch meeting will invalidate the nomination. Shop Stewards shall be nominated by an eligible Branch member from the office at which the nominee is employed to represent the Branch membership. Installation of Branch Officers, Shop Stewards and Convention Delegates shall take place at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch in January. Offices up for election include that of the Branch President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Assistant Recording Secretary, Trustees' Chairman, Trustees (4), Health Benefits Representative, Housing Chairperson, Sgt. at Arms, Shop Stewards (37) and approximately (36) Convention Delegates. The number of Convention Delegates to be compensated for their attendance at a State or National Convention, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for such compensation, shall not exceed two and one half (2.5) percent of the total Branch membership, (which is approximately 18).

Attendance Prize Now Stands at \$175

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, June 16th**, **Edward Schopf**, retiree from our Paulsboro Office would have been the recipient of the **\$150** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$175** and will increase **\$25** per meeting, up to a maximum of **\$250**, until a member in attendance has their name drawn.

Delaware Park Trip

We will be running a trip to Delaware Park Racetrack on Columbus Day, October 10. We will have access to Delaware Park's Grove from 12:30 to 5:30 which includes an all you eat barbecue. The barbecue consists of Dogs, Burgers, Ribs, Chicken and all the Wine and Beer you can handle. The cost of the affair is \$20 and money MUST be in by September 21. NO MONEY can be accepted at the door due to advance cooking requirements of Delaware Park. Anyone interested in attending please see Steve Lipski at any Regular or Executive meeting.

Grievance Log Step A Decisions

Marlton- Management violated Article 8 of the National Agreement for the events of May 31, 2011. As a remedy **2 carriers** to each receive **1 hour** at the overtime rate.

Marlton- Management violated Article 8 of the National Agreement for the events of August 5, 2011. As a remedy management agrees to pay **5 hours** at the overtime rate to OTDL carriers of the union's choice.

Grievance Log Step B Decisions

Runnemede- Management violated Article 8.5 of the National Agreement when a non-Overtime Desired List carrier was required to work overtime on a route other than his own. As a remedy **2 carriers** will receive lump sum payments of **\$26.70** each.

West Berlin- Management violated Article 19 of the National Agreement, specifically the AS-353 Handbook governing the privacy of information relating to employees, when information regarding a pending disciplinary action against the grievant was disclosed to another craft employee. As a remedy management is directed to cease and desist from this practice.

Branch Scholarship Winner

The drawing for the annual Branch Scholarship of \$500 for each of 4 years, or **\$2000**, for continuing education after high school, took place at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, June 16**. The winner was **Kaitlyn Grossick**, the daughter of Paulsboro carrier, **Walter Grossick**. The alternate winner was **Carl Pankok**, the son of Deptford carrier, **Janette Vollmer**. Congratulations and good luck to the winners!

Ninth Contract COLA: \$978 annually

The ninth and final cost-of-living adjustment as negotiated under the 2006-2011 National Agreement is \$978 annually, based on the July Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) announced Aug. 18 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is effective in Pay Period 20, which begins Sept. 10 (pay date Sept. 30). The COLA was based on the increase in the CPI-W between January 2011 and July 2011. The COLA is equal to just over 47 cents per hour, or \$37.60 per pay period.

2012 Retiree COLA: 3.3%

The projected accumulation for the 2012 retiree COLA was **3.3 percent** following the release of the July CPI. Because there was no retiree COLA for 2010 or 2011, the 2012 retiree COLA will be determined by comparing the average CPI during the third quarter of 2011 and the average during the third quarter of 2008.

Eagles Season Tickets Winner

Angela Harris, a senior at Gloucester City High School, won the Branch's annual fundraiser of raffling off a pair of Eagles season tickets. Next up will be the raffle for two tickets for the Phillies 16 game Sunday plan. Donna Ville won the tickets last year. The Branch made \$750.00 from this year's raffle a big thank you to our Fundraising Chairman, Donna Ville. **Congratulations Angela Harris and GO EAGLES!**

National Interpretive Dispute

The National Association of Letter Carriers filed a National Level Interpretive Dispute with the Postal Service pursuant to Article 15 of the National Agreement. This dispute concerns the Postal Service's use of a DOIS "Office Efficiency Tool Form" "to determine letter carriers' leave and return time, and daily workload. When completing the form management uses data derived directly from DOIS projections as the sole basis for determining leave and return time for carriers. Additionally, the use of this form creates a unilateral daily letter carrier performance standard. The union posits this practice violates the DOIS settlement (Q01N-4Q-C 05022610) and Articles 3, 15, 19 and 34 of the National Agreement. Branches should contact their **National Business Agent** if such an event occurs in order to pursue filing an appropriate grievance.

Attention

Please remember to give any changes of address to your **Steward** so that you can continue to receive the Branch Newsletter and other important information or send changes to Mike Powell, Recording Secretary at: **908Recordingsec@comcast.net** or **P.O. Box 375, Gloucester City, NJ 08030**

Name: _____
Current Address: _____

New Address: _____

Phone Number: _____
E-mail: _____
Post Office: _____

The Officers and Shop Stewards of the Branch would like to take this opportunity to personally welcome all our Brothers and Sisters back from our summer recess!

PROUD TO BE UNION!