

908 News

NALC Branch 908
AFL-CIO
PO Box 150
Pennsville, NJ
08070

South Jersey Letter Carriers

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Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com September 2019

Presidents Report

Well brothers and sisters, this summer had to be the most eventful one I can remember in a long time. So many things have happened in our branch that I cannot mention them all here. I will highlight the most significant things that occurred while we were away. First and foremost, before we left for the summer, I mentioned how our shop steward in Stratford was improperly issued a Notice of Removal by the postmaster for an alleged offense that occurred some 60 days prior. That time lapse in itself would tell even the most uneducated person that you can't wait that long to issue such a severe piece of discipline! Not in Stratford. The postmaster after conversations with me and the steward representative would not hear our reasoning on why a removal was not appropriate in this instance, and proceeded anyway. Lo and behold after moving this case through the grievance procedure, and giving our steward off for 2 months, it finally took the work of our Business Agent and the Area Labor Relations Rep to resolve this case and get our steward back to work. As a remedy, our steward was given a lump sum payout of \$3300.00 for managements action in keeping him out of work. The problem I have with this entire situation is the way this entire case was handled by the postmaster. Not only did she pay our steward for not working, but also cost the postal service thousands of dollars in union time to process this grievance when it wasn't necessary. I have a hard time buying into the District Managers concern about cutting costs when this type of behavior is allowed to exist. We tried to minimize the cost in this case by trying to resolve this case at the lowest level, but the postmaster wanted nothing to do with it! I hope someone in the district pulls all the (613) time used just on this case alone to see how much this postmaster costs the company. If the USPS wants us to help cut cost, then they need to move managers who constantly waste the company's money unnecessarily.

Speaking of Removals, and incompetent managers, we had another case in our Camden Annex where one of our brothers wasn't given his proper appeal rights, and had his removal expunged by the Step B team. Thank God for the process, as managers continue to rush to judgement instead of trying to correct deficiencies before seeking the "death penalty!"

This summer also had an enormous amount of safety blitzes throughout our area, which has led to a lot of discipline being issued for carriers not following safety guidelines. Many of the deficiencies found were carriers walking with earbuds, not wearing seatbelts, driving with the door open, not carrying a satchel, wheels not curbed and not in proper uniform. We have tried communicating to everyone the importance of working safely but it seems to go on deaf ears. I can't stress the importance in this day and age of doing your job safely and properly. The district will be out on the street daily to check on you, since our district is one of the worse, if not the worse, when it comes to accidents. PLEASE follow the proper safety procedures so you can get home to your family safely and to avoid unnecessary discipline.

Another issue we were waiting on dealt with the consolidated casing initiative that was to start in Marlton and the Camden Annex. It appears this has been put on hold for now as our National has filed a lawsuit against the postal service to wait for the arbitration hearing before moving forward. Hopefully, I will have an update at our September meeting.

We also have route inspection this month in Sewell where the postal service is looking to capture time based on their numbers.

We will have training for those carriers to prepare them properly on what to expect and how to handle the stress of a route inspection.

Lastly, we are still looking at what our next move will be in possibly taking over the legion hall. I will give everyone a more detailed explanation at our meeting.

Hope to see everyone at this month meeting

- Gary DiGiacomo – President

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, September 18th @ 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, September 11th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now at \$150

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday June 19th, Louis Evans III**, a member out of the Stratford Office would have been the recipient of the **\$125** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$150** 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

Welcome back Brothers and Sisters. I hope everyone had a safe and fun summer. I'm going to start this month's article with the description, in my opinion, of the minions running the Camden, Hell Hole, Annex. **A bully is someone that struggles with feeling insecure, is afraid of appearing weak in front of others. So, to hide their own weakness they do their best to find a weakness in someone else that they can expose. The need to control is another one of the top reasons why people bully. There can be many reasons why a person needs to feel in control. Those who bully may have no control over the way they are treated at home, and this can trigger bullying, or it may be an issue with anxiety."** **Does the above sound like any of the minions managing in the Annex? Hell Yeah it does!!!** During the many 90+ degree days these bullies continued to use false numbers, harass and push the carriers to the limit no matter what the weather forecast. I want to remind everyone that in these episodes of bullying, it is your responsibility as a carrier to inform management with a 3996 in the morning (**request a copy**) and a phone call in the afternoon when you can't complete your assignment in 8 hours or make it back to the **Hell Hole** by 6pm. Management will try to argue the contrary, but **they cannot give you an instruction that you cannot follow and then try to discipline you for failing to follow that instruction.** Let your steward know if management has put you in the **"Catch-22"** situation above and has issued you discipline. When and if you are issued discipline please give it to your steward at once, so we can file a grievance in a timely manner. Also, if you are issued discipline sign for it. We have had some instances here in the Hell Hole in which discipline has popped up and the only signature is refused to sign. Signing for discipline only means you received it and in no way does it

mean you are admitting guilt to anything. On a good note, I successfully defended one of our members who was put out of work on Removal by these bullies. The member was returned to work and the Removal Notice was expunged. I want to encourage all our active members, retired members and CCA's to try to attend our monthly meetings. It's not only your chance to get some important information on things happening in the branch but more importantly to ask questions or voice your concerns to your elected officers. You can also grab a bite to eat, have a beverage of your choice and meet and mingle with new and old friends. 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

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) officially announced the dates for the 2019 Federal Benefits Open Season which will run from **Monday, November 11 through Monday, December 9, 2019**. This open season is for the 2020 plan year of federal benefit programs. Now is the time to start researching for your health needs in the upcoming year. It'll be here fast. For detailed information on the NALC Health Plan visit <https://www.nalchbp.org/> or see/contact me.

- George Greenwood, HBR

Ozzie's Corner

13 years ago, under what was then the Bush Administration, started a disastrous policy that each year since has been standing tall like an elephant in the room, The Prefunding Mandate. The Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) authorized that The United States Postal Service be the lone government agency in the country to require prefunding years of future retiree health insurance premiums in advance. The policy originally was to be an affordable short term account, but it became a long term problematic financial hurdle. In 2007, 1 year after the guideline was implemented, The Postal Service recorded a loss of 5.1 billion dollars, however 8.4 billion was deposited in the prefunding register. However, the net income (without the prefunding) collected was 3.3 billion. The numbers are similar each year after that and by the end of 2018 the agency showed a 6.8 billion dollar negative in net income. The bottom line is this, because we created this quick fix, ridiculous, money saving scheme, we are behind the 8 ball with no logical solutions in sight or is there? In the spring of 2019, Con. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) cosponsored H.R.2382. Under this House Resolution (the bipartisan USPS Fairness Act) it wants to repeal the prefunding mandate. 92 percent of the USPS losses over the last 12 years have come under the form of this policy, therefore cancelling the mandate would save billions annually for USPS. Since August 27th, we have 220 cosponsors on the bill. In other news, I want to thank our LCPF contributors for September: Megan Anderson (Williamstown), Charles Foley (Hammonton), Angela Schultz (Atco), Yova Scully (Bellmawr) and Mike Rofrano (Gloucester City-Retiree). Remember, for as little as a buck per pay, you are investing in your Letter Carrier job. My phone number is (856) 220-8658.

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.)*

Grievance Log

Pre-Arbitration Settlement

Stratford - The Notice of Removal issued to Grievant on May 21, 2019 for Alleged Improper Conduct is hereby **reduced to a Letter of Warning**. Furthermore, the grievant shall receive a one-time lump sum payment of **\$3300.00** for management's improper issuing of severe discipline.

Step B Decision

Camden Annex -The Notice of Removal issued to grievant for failure to be regular in attendance shall be **expunged** from the record since management did not afford the grievant his proper appeal rights. The grievant had been held in a pay status during the process so no additional remedy is required.

Camden Annex - Management **did not** have just cause to keep the grievant in an off-duty status, without pay, for nine (9) days under the emergency placement procedure of Article 16.7. As a remedy, the grievant shall be compensated for the lost work hours and benefits that resulted from this action.

Camden Annex - Management violated the National Agreement when they failed to pay grievant court leave when the grievant was required to appear in court as a witness for the prosecution. As a remedy, the grievant be paid an additional **56 hours** of court leave.

Sewell - Management violated Article 8 of the National Agreement when a non-overtime desired list carrier worked overtime on his/her route in lieu of being provided auxiliary assistance. As a remedy, an ODL carrier will be compensated

.91 units at the overtime rate

Sewell - Management violated Article 8 of the National Agreement when a non-overtime desired list carrier worked overtime on his/her route in lieu of being provided auxiliary assistance. As a remedy, an ODL carrier will be compensated

.49 units at the overtime rate

Sewell - Management violated Article 8 of the National Agreement when a non-overtime desired list carrier worked overtime on his/her route in lieu of being provided auxiliary assistance. As a remedy, an ODL carrier will be compensated

.42 units at the overtime rate

Stratford - Management **did not** have just cause to issue grievant a Letter of Warning for Unsatisfactory Job Performance. As a remedy, the Letter of Warning shall be reduced to a discussion.

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 2020 thru 2021 shall take place at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, October 16, 2019**. Elections shall be by secret mail ballot of the eligible Branch membership and 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 (19) 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).

New Gold Card and 60-Year Members

We are honored to congratulate all of our new 50 and 60-year members: New Gold Card Members: **William Alcott, Theodore Allen, Harold Alvord, Robert Anderson, Michael Bolton, William Bradford, Robert Chew, Franklin Cole, Alfonzo Davis, Frank De Sordi, John DeSant, Mike DiGiacomo, Patrick Doran, Joseph Eivich, James Farrell, Mario Flamini, Douglas Flood, George Graham, Kenneth Hager, Gabriel Haliburton, George Hampton, Charles Homeyer, Alfred Hulme, Vincent Iannuzzi, Philip Juhring, Louis Kammer, James Kemp, Joseph Keown, Thomas Kochler, Philip Lech, Juan Lopez, Leonard Maddox, John Mader, Robert McClane, Joseph Natale, David Neushafer, William Randolph, John Rigby, Raymond Seitzinger, Dale Smiley, Anthony Sposto, Bob Stoltz, Aundrie Suthard, Michael Webb, William White, Andrew Whitton, William Young.** 60-Year member: **Norm Haas.**