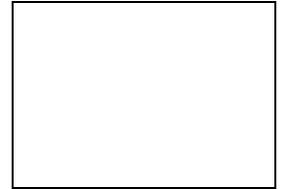


908 News

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 April 2021

Presidents Report

Last month I dedicated my article to our founding father, **Bill Revak**, and all he meant to me and this local. In keeping with our promise to do something to keep his memory alive, we have put together a proposed by-law change, that was read at last month's meeting and appears in our newsletter this month, where we will be adding Bill's name to our branch. It will come up for a vote at this month's meeting, and hopefully will be approved.

That brings me to my next bit of news. We are now able to go back to our union hall for this month's meeting, and hopefully for the future as well. Once again, we will be practicing all the social distance and safety protocol as required, so please be advised of this if you plan on attending.

On to some important issues we now face, the first one deals with the **American Rescue Plan Act-Emergency Federal Employee Leave**. It appears OPM was supposed to issue its guidance to the postal service by April 1, 2021, but that didn't happen. It looks like we will be in a month-to-month process until OPM can complete its ability to fully implement the EFEL. As of now, during this interim process, employees may submit requests to use EFEL. "However, supervisors and managers are only authorized to conditionally approve such leave requests for periods of up to two weeks: up to 80 hours for full-time employees and a proportional amount for part time flexible (PTF) and noncareer employees who do not have a 40 hour per week schedule. Employees must meet one of the eight qualifying reasons for the leave and must be unable to work as a result of that qualifying reason. At this time, requests for leave based on the EFEL qualifying reasons for dates after April 14, 2021, should not be approved or denied because we anticipate OPM's final guidance will issue before that date." These are the instructions your managers have been given until OPM finalizes their guidance on this Act. I will update your steward's when I get a final resolution of this matter.

With the ratification of the new contract, both parties are working on certain issues to expedite the terms of the new agreement. The first one deals with the conversions of **CCA's to career status**. I will highlight the progression here for those CCA's affected as contained in the memorandum (**M-01946**). CCA's with 24 months of relative standing on March 8, 2021 and those that reach 24 months relative standing after March 8, 2021, but on or before April 9, 2021, will be converted to part-time flexible career status effective May 8, 2021. CCA's that reach 24 months relative standing between March 9, 2021 and March 12, 2021 will be paid a lump sum of \$195.00. CCA's that reach 24 months relative standing between March 13, 2021 and March 26, 2021, will be paid a lump sum of \$98.00. And finally, CCA's that reach 24 months relative standing on or after March 27, 2021 will be converted to part-time flexible career status. It is a lot to digest, but hopefully, all will go smoothly with the implementation. There is also another memorandum (**M-01947**) which deals with Reassignment Opportunities, that I will not go into detail here. Please go to NALC website to read more about this if it affects you.

Also, all the former memorandums that were in place prior to their expiration on March 31, 2021, have also been extended until June 4th, 2021.

I know I am being asked when the back pay will be showing up in the paycheck, but as of now I haven't been given any firm date, but it usually takes anywhere from 8 to 12 weeks to get it figures out. I believe this contract has a lot of tedious work to be

done to get it right. As soon as I hear something you will be the first to know. Speaking of money, the 3rd COLA Of \$416 will be retroactive to February 27, 2021 and will also be part of the back pay when that gets settled as well.

There are a lot of other things that are happening, that I will go into more detail at this month's meeting. Hope to see you there. Stay safe!

Gary DiGiacomo – President
856-906-2838

Next Meeting

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

Attendance Prize Now at \$200

Had she been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, March 17th, Lisa Stauffer**, a carrier out of the Atco 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

At last month's meeting we made a proposal to amend the branch by-laws to name our branch and rightfully so, after our founding father, **Bill Revak**. I am still numb from Bill's passing and another branch brother **Joe Walder**. Joe was always giving to the branch and I feel that I could give back to the branch by personally donating a television in Joe's memory that will be placed in the bar area of the Union Hall. Joe was not only my union brother but my friend. In other matters, I was able to get another **Removal** overturned with the help of **Shawn McBride** here at the Camden, aka, Shit Hole, Annex. On a lighter note, we had one of our members, **Greg Solly**, nominated and chosen to be a Phillies Front Line Hero. Greg will have his photo on a banner, which will be displayed at Citizens Bank Park for the 2021 season. Greg is a carrier out of our Haddon Hts Office. Congratulations Greg! I was going through some boxes in my attic and found some old newsletters. Here is a tid-bit from April 1988. Mt. Ephraim Branch 5060 merger was approved under the date of March 1, 1988 by the NALC. Lastly, I want to thank all our brothers and sisters who have risked their health to deliver for the American people during this pandemic. As I have said before **YOU ALL ARE HEROES!!!** I will continue to say this till this pandemic is over. If any active, 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.
Be Safe and God Bless

We are in this together,

Mike Powell – Vice – President



Easter Ham Drawing Winner

At the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on Wednesday, March 17th, Vice President **Mike Powell** was the winner of the drawing for an Easter Ham, donated by branch retiree **Joe Foreman**, in honor of former Branch COLCPE Chairman **Norm Task**.

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello brothers and sisters. Hope everyone is well. With the new contract kicking in soon, and a conversion date of May 8, 2021, for CCAs with 24 months of relative standing on March 8, 2021 and those that reach 24 months of relative standing after March 8, 2021, but on or before April 9, 2021 you will have access to many career benefits. One of those being Federal Employee health benefits. Our union owns and operates a health plan just for us members. The plan offers low premiums, low co-pays, and an extensive network of physicians, and facilities. The rates for 2021 can be found at <https://www.nalchbp.org/>. Once you are converted to a career position you have 60 days to enroll in a FEHB health plan.

With warmer weather coming our way our children will be out, and becoming more active. This is great from a health stand point, and with that in mind the NALCHBP, and Cigna has created a Children's wellness checklist to help you keep up with your children's health, and wellness. To print out a checklist go to...[https://www.nalchbp.org/news/body/NALC_Vaccine_KidsC](https://www.nalchbp.org/news/body/NALC_Vaccine_KidsChecklist_v2.pdf)
[hecklist_v2.pdf](https://www.nalchbp.org/news/body/NALC_Vaccine_KidsCChecklist_v2.pdf)

NALC Br. 908 Optical reimbursement: Branch 908 has an account set up to reimburse one \$20 per year, per member, or family dependent for incurred optical expenses. To receive reimbursement send me a paper copy of your expense with your name, address, and office/retired to me at George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021. Any questions on any of the above feel free to give me a call anytime at 856-304-8665. Have a great Spring season and be safe all.

George Greenwood, HBR

Ozzie's Corner

As we begin the 4th month of the 117th Congressional term, I took the liberty of visiting Con. Donald Norcross's office on March 1st to drop off important information for him and his staff to read. The paperwork included a cover letter thanking him for supporting all of our past and current issues we have faced as City Letter Carriers. Furthermore, I urged him to please co-sponsor on this congressional term 4 important HR (House Resolution) Bills: HR 47 (Opposing Postal Privatization), HR 109 (Door to Door Delivery), HR 114 (Six Day Delivery) and HR 119 (Service Standards). Also, I enclosed NALC Fact Sheets with the letter to show in depth, additional support to each one of these 4 topics. Con. Norcross is no stranger to getting his hands dirty and understanding blue collar work. Before entering the political spectrum, he started out as an apprentice electrician and eventually became a leading voice for the IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers). The Congressman is for unions and labor 110% across the board. Because of other pressing matters going on in Washington DC, (The American Rescue Plan, The PRO Act, Etc.), I will wait about a month for a response and then contact his office for a follow up. Please continue to read the Newsletter and/or attend our monthly meetings (based on state guidelines) to get any updates on this information.

Speaking of The PRO Act (Protecting the Right To Organize), good news came on March 9th! With a vote in The House of Representatives of 225 to 206, The PRO Act passed and is now on the senate floor. Remember, the PRO Act contains 3 important highlights: A. Empowers workers to organize and bargain B. Holds corporations accountable for union-busting C. Repeal "right to work" laws, which were created during the Jim Crow era to keep White and Black workers from unionizing together. Now more than ever, the hard-working men and women tied to every union across our great country needs the PRO Act to pass and they need it to pass ASAP! To contact your Senator, call The AFL-CIO Senator Action Line at (844) 551-6921.

Finally, correct action was practiced in our March monthly union publication (The Postal Record). If you read March's newsletter, the 11 Branch 908 members that were credited with LCPF Contributions under NALC Branch 540 (Camden Mgd.) for the year 2020, were corrected and credited under Branch 908. The day I discovered this contribution error (explained all in detail in March's newsletter), I unraveled another mind-

boggling mistake the very next day (surprise, surprise). 2 members that contributed in December 2020, didn't show up at all in February's Postal Record (LCPF Contribution Issue). Once again, I contacted Tracey Jones (NALC Finance Department) and told him of this slip in the cracks. A week later, I checked on the NALC's website and on page 19 (March's Postal Record) has the 2 members and 11 credited members listed. So, the final 2020 numbers are 199 contributors for 27%.

In closing, I want to thank April's LCPF contributors: **Gregory Dunlap** (Stratford), **LeRoy Huster Jr.** (Woodbury), Retiree: **Richard Bacon** (Bridgeton) and Life Members: **Alfonso "Bud" Davis Jr.** (Riverton) and **Howard Foxwell Jr.** (Penns Grove). In addition, a special thank you to **Pete DeSimone** (Marlton/Voorhees Shop Steward) for his LCPF assistance and **Joe Foreman Jr.** (Marlton-Retiree) for the Easter Ham (a drawing we do every year in memory of COLCPE Chairman: **Norm Task**). My phone number is (856) 220-8658. I hope to see you all at April 21st'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.)*

New Housing Chairman

Due to the recent passing of Housing Chairman **Joe Walder**, President **DiGiacomo**, with the advice and consent of the Executive Board, has appointed **Steve Elias** to fill out the remainder of this term of office. **Welcome aboard Steve!**

Branch Scholarship Drawing

We will be drawing the winner of this year's Branch Scholarship at the regular monthly meeting on **May 19th**. 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.

Grievance Results

Pre-Arbitration Settlement

Stratford- Management will conduct the special route inspection on CR 8403 within 28 days from the signing of this agreement, which is March 26, 2021. Also, management agrees to compensate the affected carrier **\$200.00** dollars for their violation.

Step B Decisions

Camden Annex- Management **did not** have just cause to issue the grievant a Notice of Removal dated February 24, 2021 for violation of the Last Chance Agreement. As a remedy, the NOR shall be rescinded and expunged from the grievant's file and the grievant shall be made whole for any lost wages or benefits.

Proposed By-Law Amendment

The following proposed amendment to the Branch By-Laws was read at the regular meeting of the Branch on **March 17th**. It will be opened for discussion and voted upon at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **April 21st**:

Article 1: Section 1:

Currently Reads:

This Branch shall be known as, The South Jersey Letter Carriers, Branch 908, National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO, Woodbury, New Jersey.

Proposed Change:

To amend Art. 1 Section 1: Delete and Replace
Whereas: The founding father of Branch 908, Bill Revak,
passed away Feb 6, 2021

And

Whereas: Bill was Branch President for over 30 years:

Let it be resolved that Article 1: Section 1: shall read:

This Branch shall be known as Bill Revak Branch 908 South Jersey Letter Carriers.