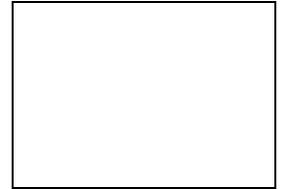


908 News

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



DELIVERING FOR AMERICA

Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com February 2021

Presidents Report

Well brothers and sisters, by now you all should have received your ratification ballot in the mail for the new national agreement. Due to some issues with members in certain areas of the country not getting their ballots in a timely manner, the deadline to send in your ballot has been extended to **March 1**. Please exercise your right by voting on this important issue.

Next, the consolidated casing disaster in our Marlton office has finally ended. It took a while, but as of February 1st all routes have been returned to their original route structure and all carriers had the option of returning to their route or bid on those that became available due to retirements. It appears the remedy for this pain and suffering for the last year amounts to **\$750.00** for each regular carrier and **\$200.00** for the CCA's. It probably cost the postal service in Marlton around **\$25,000.00**, not including all the additional overtime this office incurred the last year. I would love to see those numbers in print, but you can bet that won't happen. I am not sure if this settlement is the same for the other 62 offices involved in this initiative, but I am sure we are on the low end of this settlement, since many offices lost routes. I know many will say this settlement isn't worth the pain and suffering for the last year our brothers and sisters went through, and I totally agree with that sentiment, however, when trying to keep our jobs viable by making the postal service pay for their stupidity, asking for anything more could hurt our jobs in the long term. I have always said that it's not the dollar amount that I am concerned with, but more of the learning that a settlement like this does for any future violations. Hopefully, after spending millions of dollars in grievance settlements, the postal service will stop trying to change our jobs without first talking to us to find a better way to deliver the mail. Once again, for all those non-union members who say they don't need the union, I hope this settlement explains to you the importance of being in the union. Do you think if you worked at Amazon or Walmart, this could have been possible? I urge all those carriers, and we don't have many in our branch, who are non-members, will reconsider your position of not being a member and join with the 98% of your fellow co-workers and sign up.

As for the latest on the COVID-19 issues, it appears the numbers are starting to go down in our district, which is a good sign that maybe the vaccines and such are starting to work. Hopefully, these numbers continue their downward spiral and we can get back to doing the things we all miss doing. One issue we are still hoping will change are those regular carriers who are testing positive and are quarantining and are being forced to use their own leave to cover their absence. It appears the only way you can be paid administrative leave is when the OHNA nurse tells you not to report or to quarantine. I am hoping this position will change, but as of now it hasn't. If I hear of any updated information on this, I will get it out to all of you ASAP.

One other concern I want to update you on is many of our new CCA's who signed up to join the union but haven't seen their dues being taken out of their pay! For the record, this is no fault of your own. It appears our National has fell behind in processing all 1187's which caused us not to receive your completed form. I was assured this issue is being addressed and we will start to see the new members shortly. As soon as we get updated information, I will let everyone know when to expect to see your dues being processed. You will not owe any back dues, so please don't think you will be getting any kind of bill. This was a delay by our National and you are not liable for it. Thank

you all for joining and we will officially welcome you into our branch as soon as we get those 1187's.

As we have had our last few meetings at the Pine Grove Fire Hall on Jersey Ave in Gloucester, we will continue to use this large venue until such time as we can return to our hall in Woodbury. Please try and come out to this month, as it is well equipped to handle our meeting. Stay strong and safe!

Gary DiGiacomo – President

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, February 17th @ 8 p.m., at the Pine Grove Fire Hall, 827 Jersey Ave., Gloucester City, NJ 08030**. 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, February 10th @ 7:30 and 8:00 pm** respectively **at the Branch union hall**.

Attendance Prize Now at \$150

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, January 20th, Andrew Cermak**, a carrier out of the Sewell 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

Am I the only one angry that it seems like we letter carriers have been put on the back burner like a red headed stepchild by our elected officials? It seems like only yesterday that congress was having hearings on all the shady policies the new Postmaster General was implementing to destroy the Postal Service. It seems like yesterday that letter carriers throughout this great country of ours delivered 300 million ballots by mail during a raging pandemic. It seems like yesterday that there was talk that we letter carriers possibly might get some sort of hazard pay. Well now it is today, and all I am hearing is crickets from our elected officials. Where do letter carriers stand in the pecking order to get vaccinated? No one seems to have an answer. I personally registered about a month ago and I still have not received an appointment date. What is the leadership of our National Union doing about some of the issues above? Yes, they have extended some of the previous Covid-19 memos, but one of the most important issues concerns how will an individual be paid if they are stricken or have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19. We need answers from our National Union, and it does not seem to me they have them now. We need action from our elected officials about a slew of issues concerning letter carriers and we need them now!! In other matters over here at the Camden, **A.K.A. Shit Hole**, the minions continually try to force carriers, that are not on the overtime list, to work their non-schedule days and Sundays. This is after forcing these same non-odl carriers to work overtime during their regular scheduled workdays. We are human beings not machines working in a **raging pandemic** and our bodies and minds need the rest afforded us on our scheduled days off. The minions are now disciplining carriers for attendance issues for not working on

their non - scheduled days. We are filing the necessary grievances, but that is not enough carriers are at the breaking point here at the **Shit Hole** and our National and local leaders need to get involved in this issue immediately and stop this injustice **NOW!**

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!!!** 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.

We are in this together, Be Safe and God Bless

Mike Powell – Vice – President

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello brothers, and sisters. Hope all is well with you. With the ongoing pandemic crisis here are a couple links to help you register for vaccinations. <https://covidvaccine.nj.gov/> also available for Veterans is <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/>...The NJ state hotline to answer questions about the vaccine and help people with appointments launched Monday Jan. 25th. Callers can talk to a person for help when they call. The number is 855-568-0545.

The NALC Health benefit plan has announced its incentive rewards program for 2021. All members of the plan, and their dependents are eligible to participate, and receive rewards which range from \$5 to \$50. To find out more visit <https://www.nalchbp.org/news/2021-incentives>.

Did you know that city carrier assistants (CCAs) have retirement saving options with the Mutual Benefit Association (MBA)? The MBA offers retirement saving plans for all city letter carriers who are members of the NALC, along with their families. For more information about the Family Retirement Saving Plan, see the September 2020 Postal Record article. The MBA CCA Retirement Savings Plan (RSP) provides an opportunity for CCAs to begin saving for retirement prior to a career appointment with the Postal Service. The CCA RSP is a retirement plan designed to protect against the risk of outliving one's resources by providing a lifetime of supplemental retirement income. The CCA RSP is offered either as a traditional or a Roth IRA. For more information on this, and all MBA policies and savings click on MBA Brochures, Applications, and Forms at <https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/mutual-benefit-association>

The NALC Br. 908 optical fund is off and running again in 2021. The once a year, \$20 reimbursement for optical expenses is afforded to any member in good stand or qualified dependent. Only one per member, or family. Send me a paper copy of expenses with your name, address, and office/retired to George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021. Hope to see you at the next meeting. Be safe.

George Greenwood, HBR

Ozzie's Corner

Part 2 from January's Article: On July 6th, Con. Norcross's office sent me e-mails and updates every step of the way through my request, including their office sending a statement to the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. On July 29th, I received an e-mailed letter through The United States Postal Service in Con. Norcross's attached e-mail. The letter was from Washington, DC in the Government Relations Department. The Letter was highlighted with the Government Relations Rep (who blacked out his/her full name at the bottom of the letter) stating that The Postal Service and I quote: "strives to create a work environment that fosters mutual respect and understanding, while ensuring a safe workplace free of discrimination and harassment". Oh Really? Brothers and Sisters let me ask you these questions...Did the Manager in question show respect to me marking me AWOL on June 5th when I had a legitimate emergency that day with my family? Did the Manager in question fully understand that I was approved off already on June 23rd (by just checking the schedule the day before with our zone supervisor)? Did the Manager in question practice/show harassment to me on June 22nd by calling me? Obviously, the white collared folks down at L'Enfant Plaza (Government Relation's Office) thought so and the detailed complaint coming from a South Jersey Congressman's office was indeed the cherry on top of the cake. Finally, on July 23rd and August 10th I signed two payroll adjustments to get back my 16 hours management violated. The bottom line is this...we as Letter Carriers have rights. Management every day is holding us accountable from everything A to Z. Well, Brothers and Sisters in cases like this,

it is time to hold these men and women accountable. What management doesn't understand is that the tricks they try to pull get old. The bullying, hostile and vindictive behavior will always lose in the end. In addition, it was refreshing to know by filling out a Request for Assistance form with your local legislator (Con. Norcross in this instance), we won the case without filing a grievance. Therefore, we have not only our Shop Stewards as 1 option against management, but our District Reps as the other (The Wildcard). That is how Justice is Served in The Hell Hole Aka, Camden Annex.

In other news, I want to say a big thank you and good luck to Digna Townsend (Con. Norcross- District Representative) for her loyal assistance with our union in any matters we needed in the Cherry Hill Office. Among her many duties, Digna issued our branch retiree certificates every year at our retirement banquet. Recently, Digna accepted a County Representative position and will be working with Camden County Freeholder, Louis Cappelli. Once Again, thanks Digna and 908 will truly miss you.

Finally, I want to thank this month's LCPF Contributors: **Al DiSipio** (Stratford), **Robert Gaff** (Gloucester City), **Mario Illiano** (Bellmawr), **Keith Mitchell** (Bellmawr), **Tom Spearman** (Haddon Heights), Retiree: **Loretta Morris** (Gibbstown) and Life Member: **Leo Mealey Jr.** (Westville). Also, a big thanks to **George Greenwood** (Branch HBR) for his LCPF assistance. Remember, my phone number is (856) 220-8658 to reach me in our branch. Please be safe and stay healthy to you and your loved ones.

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.)*

2021 Branch Budget Approved

Those in attendance and eligible to vote at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch held on January 20th unanimously approved the Branch 2021 Budget. The budget estimates the receipt and expenditures of the Branch at \$237,000.00 for 2021.

Branch Attorney

Since 2008 the Branch has retained the law firm of **Uliase & Uliase** as our Branch OWCP attorneys for the membership to utilize if they choose. With the recent retirement of Carolyn Uliase, Thomas has been joined in the firm by their son Russell. In addition to OWCP law, Thomas specializes in civil law as well and we are pleased to announce that **Uliase & Uliase** is now available to our members for more than just OWCP cases. If they cannot help with your particular case, they will be able to refer you to a local attorney that can. **Uliase & Uliase's** offices are located at 106 White Horse Pike, Haddon Heights, NJ 08035 and can be reached at **856-310-9002**.

NALC Lapel Pin Earned

Branch retiree out of the Woodbury office and former Branch Officer **Tom "Newt" Walsh** has earned his 45-year NALC lapel pin. Congratulations and thank you to Tom for his service.

The NALC Constitution provides for the awarding of suitable lapel pins for every five years of NALC membership commencing with the 25th year. For example: 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and so forth. If you feel that because of your years of NALC membership, you are eligible for the award of a suitable lapel pin, see Branch Recording Secretary Norm Spence or send a letter to the Branch (PO Box 150, Pennsville, NJ 08070). Include your Name, Office, approximate date you became a member of the NALC and what pin you believe you have earned.

