

908 News

NALC Branch 908
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Bill Revak Branch 908 South Jersey Letter Carriers

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Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com January 2022

Presidents Report

Happy New Year everyone. Hopefully, everyone made it safely through the Christmas season and had a great holiday. On to 2022, which seems crazy, but this is where we are. First, I just want everyone to be aware that all those COVID-19 memos we have been going by for the last 2 years, are still in effect until at least February 11, 2022. I am sure, based upon the situation we are in now, these memos may be with us for the near future. I will keep everyone updated as I get more information. At this month's meeting we will have the installation of the officers by our National Business Agent, **Brian Thompson**. Since we are starting to see an uptick on positive COVID cases, I am asking that all those who are coming to please wear your mask and if you are not feeling well, please don't attend. We are just trying to keep everyone safe and keep the branch business moving forward. I do not want to see us go back to where we were last year when we had to move our meetings to a different location. I am still hopeful this is just the winter colds and flu we are really dealing with and not another outbreak. Next, I want to update everyone on the latest COLA numbers. With 2 months remaining, the latest raise now stands at **\$811.00, which equates to .39 and hour**. Retirees next raise now stands at **1.7%**. I will have the latest numbers at our regular meeting. Since we are seeing a lot more positive COVID cases, the offices where there are confirmed positives should be giving a mandatory stand-up talk concerning this. I have been informed that some offices are not getting these talks, and I have notified the Business Agent on these offices. If your office falls into this situation, and you do not get the service talk, please let your steward or me know so we can get this corrected. I am not sure why certain offices say they are giving these talks, but in reality, aren't. This shows a true lack of concern for their employees. On to other important things. I would like to give another well-deserved and huge shout out to our **LCPF officer, Ozzie Lecky**, for his continued hard work in signing up carriers to join the Letter Carrier Political Fund. For the first time we have easily surpassed the 200 mark in contributors. Ozzie is never satisfied with reaching new milestones, so 300 is not impossible. I am sure by the time I report next year at this time we will be nearing that total as well. I urge all members to please consider contributing to this most important and vital fund as we will be trying to get those politicians put in office that support our jobs and the postal service to keep it thriving. One last piece of advice I would like to share with the members. During this COVID era, if you are not feeling well, please take a few days off from work and think of your fellow co-workers who may be at risk if you try and come into work. We have memos that protect us from discipline if you take off for COVID symptoms. I have also spoken to many postmasters who would rather have you take a couple of days off rather than lose you for 14 or more days due to a possible test result because you may be asymptomatic. It is all about using common sense when deciding if you should come to work or not. One last item I would like to address is those **9 non-union members** we posted in last month's newsletter. We do this to keep all of our 750 plus members apprised on those who feel they don't need to be part of our brother/sisterhood. We ask everyone to join so we can be united and stand up for everyone without worrying about repercussions. We are not trying to put you down, but are trying to get you to understand the importance of being UNION. I have found most people say they can't afford the dues they must pay,

but that is a total cop out in my opinion. Like everything else in today's world, you must pay for something in order to get something. With all the raises and protections the union has secured for you, you should want to be part of this union. I urge all members in the offices these non-members work to once again ask them to join the greatest union in this USA. Stay safe and hope to see you at this month's meeting.

Gary DiGiacomo – President
856-906-2838

Next Meeting

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

Attendance Prize Winner!

At the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on Wednesday **December 15th, Eric Dare**, a member out of our Blackwood Office won the **\$100** attendance prize. The prize now stands at \$25 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

Happy New Year to all our active and retired members and their families! I would like to thank the members of Branch 908 for having the confidence in me to serve another term as your Vice – President. I would also like to thank all our active carriers and CCAs for a job well done throughout the year and especially during the hectic holiday season. As in past years, I recommend that everyone start the New Year off by checking their Personnel file for mistakes and for discipline that should have been removed. Just go to lite blue and click on eOPF you will be directed to sign in using Employee Identification Number (EIN) and your password. It has been a very tough year to say the least. For example, morale here at the Camden, “Shit Hole,” Annex is at an all-time low. Carriers are being forced to work overtime every day and some are being forced to work on their n/s day. The reason this is happening is because of staffing issues. Management here at the “Shit Hole” cannot figure out how to treat new hires, hence cca's with dignity and respect, which in turn creates a staffing issue because the new hires are quitting and moving on to greener pastures. In my opinion, our National Officers have got to strike a deal that would make all cca's career employees from day one, by doing this, in my opinion, it would give the cca's some initiative to stick around. The forcing of overtime is becoming commonplace and again I call on our highly paid and educated National Leaders to produce a viable solution to stop this practice. I for one would like to see the non-odl carriers BE COMPENSATED WITH ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE when there is a violation of Article 8.5. Management could care less if the non-odl is compensated an extra 50% of pay and the fact of the matter is the non- odl carriers want to be compensated with the time they lost, and it is time for our National Officers to do something

about it. We have a Region 12 seminar coming up and believe me this issue will be brought to the floor. On to another tidbit of information. The Gloucester City Post Office is being overrun with mice. I was dropping off box mail there the other day and two mice ran right over my foot. I did not think too much of it, till the very next day it happened again and there were mice droppings all over the table where I put the box mail. It boggles my mind how this could happen, but then again, it is the Post Office. 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**

Mike Powell – Vice – President

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Brothers and Sisters Happy New Year! I hope for all of you it will be a very happy, healthy, safe New Year. I must say thank you to all the members who showed faith in me as your HBR for the next couple of years. It's very humbling, an absolute honor, and I'm proud to represent, and serve you all.

For all of you who have maintained or made the switch to the NALC Health Benefit Plan you should have received your new ID cards in the mail by now. If you have not simply call the plan at 1-703-729-4677, and ask for your ID numbers. This way you will be able to receive treatment for anything without the unknowing if you are covered.

Don't forget also the NALC MBA (Mutual Benefit Assoc.) is now offering to you excellent disability insurance at reasonable prices. For more information either see me, call me, or go to the website at <https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/mutual-benefit-association>.

For optical reimbursements either give me a paper copy of your expenses at the meeting, or mail me a paper copy at **George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021**. Any questions always feel free to give me a call at 856-304-8665. Again, Happy New Year everyone. Hope to see you at our next meeting.

- George Greenwood, HBR

Ozzie's Corner

As we start a brand-new year together in 2022, I want to take this opportunity and time to thank the members of this great branch for electing me to lead our Legislative and Political Department as LCPF Chairman for this term. Your continued vote of confidence and trust in me I value at its highest. Representing the members in this branch as an officer is an honor and a privilege (one I take very seriously). Therefore, I am truly humbled by this selection, and I thank all of you.

As Amazon employees continue to attempt unionization across our country, let me share a true and funny story I shared at November 2021's general meeting during my in person report. In July and August 2021, we had a CCA (City Carrier Assistant) work in our Branch 908 offices in the Camden Annex. Also, let us call this CCA Judy (this wasn't the woman's real name by the way). Before Judy was hired through the Postal Service, she worked as an Amazon Delivery Courier for 3 months. During Judy's 60 day run as a CCA, she showed up to work every day (perfect attendance), carried her assigned route professionally (took her lunch and breaks) and didn't get into 1 accident (vehicle or otherwise). As time passed on, I got to know Judy more as a person. Through one of our conversations, she explained to me that her ending her employment at Amazon was a result of resignation, not termination. Basically, Judy wasn't getting enough hours (on her package/parcel route) and in turn wasn't making enough money. During the late Spring of 2021, Judy saw the hiring ad for a CCA position. The job description, pay and hours were more than enough to persuade her to give her Postal career a shot. However, toward the end of Judy's tenure frustration sat in. Judy was tired of being sent all over the place in the Annex (1 day the City of Camden, next day Bellmawr). Judy was tired of working until 6 or 6:30 pm most nights. Lastly, Judy always wanted to use and drive a Promaster Vehicle (not an FFV or LLV). Sadly, Judy had enough of the job and resigned after her 62nd or 63rd day working in the Annex.

On September 27, 2021 (my day off) I was sitting on my front step of my house in the early afternoon. I was talking on the phone and noticed racing down the street going over the speed limit was a navy-blue Amazon Promaster Vehicle. The vehicle abruptly and recklessly stopped in front of my house, then proceeded to knock over one of my garbage cans. After the Courier shut off the vehicle, I yelled to the driver: "You just knocked down my trash can!" As the side door of the vehicle

opened, I recognized who the driver was...it was yes indeed you guessed it, Judy. By this point, Judy had a look of total sorrow and embarrassment expressed all over her face, but I decided to take a different approach. Instead of me continuing to verbally blast her on hitting my trash can, I explained some key points to her. Point 1: always drive within the speed limit on a back street (don't speed) Point 2: regardless of the employer, report the accident immediately. Point 3 (the most important): The Union Difference. In a common case like this, the Shop Steward or Union Rep would have fought tooth and nail to save Judy's job. The union would stress to management a corrective measure (a discussion, additional driver training, etc.) compared to management using a punitive measure (letter in file or termination). If Judy would have hit Mr. Smith's trash cans, the outcome in this story I guaranteed would have played out much differently. I assured Judy that I wouldn't call and report the accident (and I never did). 3 things I came away from this "small world" story are: A. Sometimes the grass is not always greener on the other side. B. Employee protection is one of the important leaves of our union and contributing to LCPF is the branch that helps hold all of these leaves in place (pay, job security, benefits). C. I was glad to talk to Judy and share with her my union knowledge (planting the seed of unionism by showing Judy the difference between union and non-union).

In other news, I want to thank January's LCPF contributors: **Ashley Andrews** (Maple Shade), **Jason Axilbund** (Westville), **Robert Gaff** (Gloucester City), **Herbert Nuss Jr** (Atco), Retirees: **Mike Breyer** (Sewell), **David Entwistle** (Riverton), **Mike Fitzgerald** (Woodbury), **Charles Huff III** (Mount Ephraim) and **Timothy King** (Westville). Also, **Jason Dempster** (Atco Shop Steward) for his LCPF assistance. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 to reach me for any matters in our branch.

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.)*

2022 Branch Budget Approved

Those in attendance and eligible to vote at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch held on **December 15th** unanimously approved the Branch 2022 Budget. The budget estimates the receipt and expenditures of the Branch at \$255,096.00 for 2022.

COVID-19 Related MOUs Extended Until February 2022

By joint agreement ([M-01969](#)), several COVID-19 related memorandums of understanding have been further extended through Feb. 11, 2022. These memoranda include: temporary expanded sick leave for dependent care ([M-01910](#)); temporary use of the 7:01 rule ([M-01913](#)); temporary workplace changes to promote social distancing ([M-01915](#)); temporary use of TCAs ([M-01916](#)); and reinstatement of temporary additional paid leave for CCAs ([M-01965](#)).

NALC and the Postal Service also agreed to another temporary time limit extension on Step B and arbitration appeals ([M-01970](#)), and an agreement giving local parties the ability to mutually develop a sign-up process for full-time employees who previously did not, or could not, place their names on either the overtime desired list or work assignment list ([M-01971](#)). Both of these agreements will expire on Feb. 11, 2022.

Also extended through Feb. 11, 2022, is a USPS memorandum ([M-01914](#)) which instructs managers and supervisors to allow liberal changes of schedule to accommodate employees who are dealing with childcare issues related to the pandemic. The memorandum also provides for liberal sick leave usage for employees who are sick and liberal annual and leave without pay (LWOP) to the extent operationally feasible, treats COVID-19 related leave as scheduled (as opposed to unscheduled) leave, and directs that leave taken for COVID-19 related reasons during this time may not be cited in discipline for failing to maintain an assigned schedule.

Branch Attorneys

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