

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 November 2020

Presidents Report

Last month we were finally able to have a regular membership meeting, even though it was held at a different location than our normal meetings in Woodbury. We had our meeting at the Pine Grove Fire Hall on Jersey Ave in Gloucester, and I would like to thank all those who attended our first meeting since February and invite everyone to attend this month's meeting at the same place. I can guarantee you will have plenty of room to social distance, since this hall is extremely spacious, and can accommodate as many people safely as we could possibly imagine. We will continue to hold our meetings there until such time as the Governor eases his indoor restrictions.

At last month's meeting I was happy to finally award the Branch Hero of the Year award, which we normally do at our retirement dinner, to carrier **Lonna Lenher**, a carrier out of our Blackwood office, whose heroic deeds helped save the life of one of her customers. Congratulations again Lonna, we are very proud of you.

Also, at the meeting I was proud to present our Steward of the Year award to Steward **Jim Boyle**, out of the Stratford/Somerdale/Magnolia office for his dedication in representing the carriers in his office.

On to some other important news, we are still in the midst of our "Virtual Arbitration" for a new contract. This is a first for everyone involved, so there is still hope the postal service will come to a tentative agreement with us before the virtual hearings conclude. If not, we will be once again at the mercy of an Arbitrators decision. If this occurs, we probably won't get a decision until after the first of the year. For up to the date info please refer to the NALC app for all the latest news on this most important issue.

For those who weren't aware, our National Business Agent, **David Napadano**, has stepped down as Business Agent for Region 12 effective October 30th. I would like to take this time to thank Dave for all his hard work for letter carriers in our region as well as our branch. One thing I can say about Dave is he told it like it was whether you liked it or not. His knowledge and expertise will be sorely missed. As you all know we have always had some issues with the Region 12 office prior to Dave taking over the reigns as BA. I can honestly say that he definitely tried to right a lot of the wrongs our branch was dealt over the years, and I thank him for that. I wish him a long and healthy retirement.

Another item we will be dealing with as the holiday season approaches will be making sure everyone continues to work in a safe manner. With darkness becoming an issue with the later start times, I am hoping the district will try and find a way to bring carriers in earlier in order to avoid having them being out there in the dark longer than they have to. I haven't heard any rumblings about changing start times, but I am hoping they think really hard about doing it since they say they are concerned about the health and wellbeing of their employees. They continue to say we are the worst district when it comes to accidents, so a good way to avoid the darkness accidents would be to start earlier so we can get carriers off the street in a timely manner. We shall see if they are really concerned or just talking trash.

I am also happy to report the COVID-19 infections are still very few among the south jersey district employees. It appears some offices are saying they are not happy with the cleaning being done when a positive infection is detected. If you feel your office isn't being cleaned properly, please let me know ASAP,

so I can inform the district. They tell us the offices should be cleaned as soon as a positive has been discovered.

Lastly, I was hoping to report on the results of the Presidential election, but it appears we may have to wait awhile for the result since it is that close. Hopefully, by the time you get the newsletter we will know who our next President is. As always, elections have consequences, and hopefully, this election has positive ones!

I would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and hope to see you at this month's meeting.

Gary DiGiacomo – President

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, November 18th @ 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, November 11th @ 7:30 and 8:00 pm** respectively **at the Branch union hall**.

Attendance Prize Now at \$100

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, October 21st, Lawrence Adair**, a carrier out of the Woodbury Office would have been the recipient of the \$75 attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$100** 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

Hopefully, by the time you read this article the election will finally be over. This election process has been exhausting to say the least. COVID-19 appears to be spiking again and I urge everyone to wear a mask when appropriate and social distance. As I have said in my previous articles and I will continue to say **You all are Heroes**. I want to thank all our brothers and sisters of this great branch for all your hard work and risking your health during this pandemic. Veterans Day is November 11 and I want to thank all the Veterans of our branch for their service. Also, please remember to thank your steward. Our stewards are second to none and work countless hours fighting to defend your rights. Finally, I want to wish all our members and their families a Happy Thanksgiving. 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**.

We are in this together, Be Safe and God Bless

Proud to be Union.

Mike Powell – Vice – President

Remember Our Veterans



Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello brothers, and sisters. It's on! Open season for FEHB (health insurance), and FEDVIP (vision and dental) has begun. It will run from **Monday November 9 through Monday December 14**. Active members use PostalEASE, and retirees use OPM to make any changes in your plans. Our own plan the NALC HBP you will find is the only 5-star plan in the country. It offers low premiums, great coverage, low out of pocket expense, a tremendous provider network, and we own it. Check out the prices, and coverage at nalchbp.org... when making the change to our plan do not bother with self plus one coverage as OPM has made it more expensive than family coverage. If you have a dependent just join the family plan. Any problems, or questions regarding open season please give me a call anytime. The year is quickly winding down so don't forget to send me your paper receipt for a \$20 dollar reimbursement for optical expenses. This is available to all members in good standing for one annual reimbursement for member/or qualified dependent. Just mail your receipt to me with your name, address, and office/retired at George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021.

Any questions, concerns, difficulties with open season, or any of the above give me a call at 856-304-8665. Hope to see you at the next monthly meeting. Be safe.

George Greenwood, HBR

OPM Announces 2021 FEHBP Rates

OPM has announced the 2021 FEHBP rates. The NALC Health Benefit Plan has a modest increase for all options. The complete rates for 2021 can be found on OPM's website at <https://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/plan-information/premiums/>

Below are the rates for active Letter Carriers for 2021:

NALC HBP Option	Enrollment Code	2021 Empl. Pays	2021 Change in empl. payment
High Self	321	91.47	3.91
High Self & Family	322	190.88	9.73
High Self Plus One	323	219.45	8.14
CDHP Self	324	52.45	0
CDHP Self & Family	325	121.84	1.21
CDHP Self Plus One	326	115.72	0
Value Self	KM1	43.05	0
Value Self & Family	KM2	100.04	.99
Value Self Plus One	KM3	94.97	0

Ozzie's Corner

On November 3, 2020 our most important and crucial presidential election will take place. Joe Biden (D) and Donald Trump (R) will duke it out to see who in the end will reign as the head of the United States for the next 4 years. Here are the facts, The NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers) has officially endorsed the Biden/Harris (Kamala Harris: Vice Presidential Candidate) Team for the election. Besides being a pro-labor and pro-union presidential candidate, Joe Biden wants to look into ways in saving and fixing The Postal Service's financial issues. Therefore, Biden wants to start a better path to postal reform. On the other hand, we have our current man in charge: Donald Trump. Remember these facts, over the last 3 years of his administration he has drafted a budget proposal about the Postal Service and City Letter Carriers that would absolutely make you sick to your stomach. The language in the proposal calls for eliminations, slashes and cuts that would take a direct hit to our pension, health benefits and jobs. If you don't believe me, go to NALC.ORG. Next, click on the search bar at the top of the page and type in 2021 postal budget proposal, the ideology will make you shake your head! In addition, his most recent Postal Service hire (Postmaster General, Louis DeJoy) wanted to eliminate the use of postal equipment and delayed mail delivery in areas across the country during this past summer. Finally, during one of most the recent presidential debates he flat out accused Virginia Letter Carriers in discarding and dumping election ballots in creeks... really? Whether you like President Trump personally or not, here is the bottom line: President Trump is not a fan of the Postal Service. With that being said, it is an absolute must that we do our civic duty and cast our ballot in this election. Brothers and sisters, we need to put our personal political beliefs to the side and on the back burner. We need to continue to come together as a union. Vote to save your job, pay and benefits.

Before I jump into my next bit of info, I want to take this opportunity to thank every active City Letter Carrier that has been on the front lines during day 1 of the COVID-19 pandemic, but especially over these last few weeks collecting all of the election ballots. I am proud to say I am one of you and you are without a doubt the backbone of The Postal Service. Remember, your mail in ballot has to be postmarked by November 10th so it can be counted. Also, please make sure you sign your name on the envelope before sending it. Additional voting info can be found at Vote.NJ.Gov.

On October 11th and the 25th, I worked as a volunteer in a phone bank exercise that the NALC was having for the presidential race. For 2 hours each night, you are contacting fellow brothers and sisters in other union paying jobs and asking them questions and their opinion about the upcoming election. Arizona, Iowa and Virginia were the places I was assigned to call (key battleground states). The NALC is always looking for volunteers and help, especially during election time. NALC.ORG is the official website to check out events and dates where our national union always needs members for assistance.

Finally, I want to thank this month's LCPF contributors: **Zane Bassett** (Stratford), **Roseann Francis** (Marlton), **Tim King** (Westville), **Alyssa McConnell** (Blackwood), **Diego Melendez** (Bellmawr) and **Dwayne Shropshire** (Gloucester City). Remember, for as little as \$1 per pay you can sign up and join the fight. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 to reach me in our branch. I hope to see you all soon, take care and be safe.

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.)*

**Congratulations and Best Wishes to
National Business Agent Dave Napadano!
Enjoy Your Retirement!**

Trustee Report

Brothers and Sisters, it has been and continues to be very difficult year for all of us, hopefully you and your families are well. Just to keep you informed that all Branch functions including administrations work are being done monthly and the branch continues to be in excellent financial condition. Your branch officers are always available to the members! It's November, so it's time for the 14th annual **Jack Bittner** free turkey give away at the November regular meeting. Jack was the branch longest serving Trustee Chairman and his memory is honored yearly. The only requirement is that you be present at meeting. As the sitting Trustee Chairman, it is my honor to purchase said turkey and donate it at meeting. Be safe to all, and Happy Thanksgiving!

James Comuso Sr - Trustee Chairman

Penalty Overtime Exclusion

As referenced in Article 8, Sections 4 and 5 of the National Agreement between the NALC and the USPS, the December period during which penalty overtime regulations are not applicable consists of four consecutive service weeks. This year, the December period begins Pay Period 25-20 -Week 2 (Nov. 28, 2020) and ends Pay Period 01-21-Week 1 (Dec. 25, 2020).

*The Branch Officers and Stewards
wish all of our Members and their
Families a*

