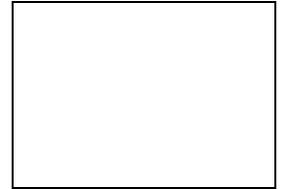


908 News

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 October 2017

Presidents Report

As we head into the fall season, look for managers to begin the squeeze on you in regards to your route times. As many of you are aware, they are already trying to implement their “**capture undertime Saturday nonsense!**” They are calling their postmasters on the carpet if their offices don’t capture undertime on Saturday, never mind if the volumes suggest they can’t accomplish this! They do not believe these offices have any volume, even though I am told some managers are now taking pictures to show there is mail in their offices. What this type of managing creates is what we are now seeing running rampant in the district, managers manipulating clock rings. I spoke about this last month when we uncovered a manager deleting rings, and was also changing codes in order to get the district their numbers. It appears the district knows this practice is going on, but really doesn’t want to address it because the infamous doctor has them all running scared.

I attended, along with Vice-president Mike Powell, a meeting with the district manager, the POOMS, labor relations and human resources, to address our concerns, and they have gone on record to say they will not tolerate this type of behavior and if they find our allegations are true, which they are, these managers will be dealt with! I am going to hold them to their word, and will let everyone know if they are going to treat their people as they would treat ours, which is severe discipline. After speaking with numerous managers off the record, they tell me everyone is engaging in some type of manipulations, and it’s the old elephant in the room mentality. What a shame this company can’t operate on honesty. Let the numbers tell the true story, not what the higher ups want.

Another item the DM spoke on was the attendance issue in our district. He stated South Jersey has the worst attendance record in the nation! He said he doesn’t understand why people aren’t coming to work! Really? The continued harassment and treatment the employees are getting on a daily basis is just one of many reasons folks are staying home. Understaffing of clerks, which causes delays in us getting the mail creates a domino effect in being able to get out on time, which stresses out everyone, and is another reason people call out. They don’t want to have to come in and argue with their supervisor about their daily assignment. I could go on, but we all know the reasons.

Lastly, he stated he is really hot on safety, which I do agree with him. Our accident rate is extremely concerning, and he is asking for our help. It is not just the new employees, but a number of our seasoned vets that are falling prey to accidents. It appears we are all getting a little sloppy in our work methods, which is causing us to put ourselves at risk for getting in an accident. My only advice is for everyone to start doing your routes like you are being followed every day. I know no one wants to hear this, but trust me when I tell you, if you do your job the proper way each day you will avoid those at fault type accidents. Remember, I don’t ever remember a carrier getting in an at fault accident while being inspected. There is a reason why that is! Take your time and be safe, and you will have along and accident free career.

Next, we will begin local negotiations this month, and your stewards will be asking for volunteers and ideas for items you may want to add or change in your office. I understand some managers may want to try and change some leave policies, but with the influx of all the CCA’s they are hiring, I think that argument is invalid. In fact, in order for management to change an existing policy, they have to show an undue burden on the

service. There is no way, in this district, with all of the CCA’s on board, they could ever make that argument stand. Be prepared for this nonsensical argument. Hope to see you at the next meeting.

- Gary DiGiacomo – President

Next Meeting

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

Attendance Prize Now at \$200

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, September 20th, Patrick Duran**, a retired member out of the Blackwood 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

I am going to start this month’s article off on a positive note. Last year we participated in an Angel Tree for under privileged children and it was a great success. The way the Angel Tree works is, tags are placed on the tree representing these children’s wishes. Donors pick a tag from the tree and then shop for the gift for the child selected. Please see your shop steward if you are interested in being a donor. If any member has any questions, contact Vice President Mike Powell @ 856-906-2026 or 908vp@comcast.net. If you believe every child deserves a Merry Christmas, then please help! Can you believe I have a few positive things to report about the “**Hell Hole**” aka **Camden Annex**. The first is that the Mail Handlers Union has won well over **\$7000** and counting for managers and supervisors continuing to perform craft work. Daylight Savings time ends on November 5 and we all know that some of us will be working in the dark. I want to remind everyone that if management instructs you to finish your assignment in the dark then make an attempt to follow that instruction until you feel that an unsafe condition exists. You, the carrier, are the one that makes that determination. If you determine the conditions are unsafe then inform your supervisor that you will be returning to the office. If you receive any discipline for your actions, contact your steward and we will grieve the situation. We deserve and have the right to a safe working environment as provided under Article 14 of our National Agreement. Speaking of Safety, I was recently informed by **The Hell Hole Management** that I could no longer be on the Safety Committee, which is a violation of Article 14 and OSHA laws. According to them they are acting on the orders from the minions from the SJ District. Upon being informed of this injustice Branch 540 President, Chuck Goushian, requested that all members of Branch 540 that serve on the Safety Committee withdrawal from the Committee until further notice. Thank you, Branch 540 for your show of

Solidarity (second positive). In addition, Branch 908 will also withdrawal from the committee.

**Proud to be union.
Mike Powell - Vice President**

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello all. It's already October. Open season for health, dental, vision, and flexible spending benefits is almost upon us. The dates for this year will be from Monday November 13 through Monday December 11. OPM is set to announce the new rates in early October. They can be found at OPM.gov when made public. Now is a good time to compare plans to see what suits your needs. The NALC Health Benefit Plan is as always leading the way in cost, and coverage. Check out the NALC plan at nalchbp.org.

As I stated last month I will again encourage all members with 10 or more years left in their career to give a serious look at additional life insurance coverage through the NALC Mutual Benefits Dept. Get additional coverage now while you are relatively young to avoid the shock of the cost to continue coverage in retirement through the USPS. To compare go to nalc.org, and click on member benefits, then click Mutual Benefits to see what is available. Plan today for tomorrow.

Optical reimbursements of \$20 per year per member are available to all members in good standing. Get yours in for 2017 before it ends for the year. Send a copy of your receipt with office working in/retired to me @ George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021.

Any questions always feel free to call me at 856-304-8665....Hope to see you at the meeting...Be safe.

George Greenwood, HBR

Ozzie's Corner

On September 25th and 26th I had the pleasure to attend our NJSALC State Biennial Convention in Atlantic City. On that Monday, our National President and keynote speaker, Fred Rolando addressed the state. In the legislative department, Bro. Rolando brought up many important and strong points on why we as brothers and sisters need to contribute to the LCPF. One, he stressed that for the first time in a long time we have a 1 party government (1 system controlling the house, senate, white house, etc.). In our national union, you have a wide range of Letter Carriers who believe in what they believe, from the far left to the far right. In addition, it's the same in Congress. We have support from all political parties, but different spectrums. However, there are 2 things all Congress Representatives want...money and votes. The LCPF solely supports the people who support us. Also, the LCPF does not use a dime of our union money and it's a security and important investment in your job. Next, Bro. Rolando talked about the upcoming 2018 possible budget proposal with the post office. Whether you are active or retired I suggest you pay close attention to the elephant in the room and realize what is possibly at stake. I will give a breakdown on the budget proposal at October 18th's meeting and in next month's newsletter. Finally, I want to thank Sis. Joanne Lamplugh for contributing to this month's LCPF. Remember, get informed and stay informed.

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.)*

Trustee Report

Brothers and Sisters, just a few things this month. First, the Trustees and I completed a financial audit of the treasurer's checking account and the sick and welfare account. All your monies are accounted for in both accounts; everything was and is in order. Next, please vote this year in the Branch election and the state governor race it is important. Before you know it, the holidays will be here, remember the Branch's kids xmas party is December 10th. Please, keep all our fellow letter carriers in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico in your prayers and donate what you can, this could be you.

Jim Comuso - Chairman of the Board Trustees

Phone Numbers to Remember

President - Gary DiGiacomo - 856-906-2838
Vice- President- Mike Powell - 856-906-2026

Non – Members

The following Letter Carriers are gladly accepting the COLAs, raises, step increases as well as the union protections provided by the NALC with our newly negotiated contract. However, they don't believe that they should have to pay their fair share. They are quite happy to let their fellow Letter Carriers pay their way, while still enjoying the benefits. If you work with one these individuals, please talk to them and help them see the error of their ways and ask them to see their shop steward or a Branch Officer so that they can join the NALC and help carry the load.

(as of 8/31/2017):

- Donna Fetzer – Blackwood
- Walter Lyons – Hammonton
- Bruce Stamper – Voorhees
- Bertalan Gonci (CCA) – Marlton
- Gabriel Biaggi – Riverton
- Dakota Marich (CCA) – Swedesboro
- Mark Robinson – Swedesboro
- Layla Hart - Swedesboro
- Christopher Martin (CCA) – Swedesboro
- David Exler – Williamstown
- Luis Luna – Woodbury
- Sandra Calsamilia - Woodbury

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 2018 thru 2019 shall take place at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, October 18, 2017**. 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 (18) 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).

OPM Announces 2018 FEHBP Rates

OPM has announced the 2018 FEHBP rates for 2018. The NALC Health Benefit Plan has a modest increase for most options. I believe you will find this increase to be lower than most of the other plans in the FEHBP. The complete rates for 2018 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 2018:

NALC HBP Option	Enrollment Code	2018 Empl. Pays	2018 Change in empl. payment
High Self	321	66.06	0.97
High Self & Family	322	143.53	4.18
High Self Plus One	323	159.78	10.02
CDHP Self	324	44.46	0.00
CDHP Self & Family	325	98.32	1.93
CDHP Self Plus One	326	96.17	0.00