

908 News

NALC Branch 908

AFL-CIO

PO Box 1223

Blackwood, NJ

08012

Bill Revak Branch 908 South Jersey Letter Carriers

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February 2025

Presidents Report

The membership has spoken, and very emphatically! The Tentative Agreement has been overwhelmingly rejected by a vote of 63,680 versus 26,304. I guess I am not surprised by the outcome, but am very disappointed in the number of members who actually voted on this T.A. Over 90,000 members did not participate in this process, which is very disturbing to me. It looks like the next step will be arbitration, which is what everyone believed we should have done way back when. The only problem I see now is we have been without an agreement for going on 2 years, and the membership is missing out on any kind of raises for the work they are doing. Hopefully, the arbitrator gives us back pay and retroactive money, but it now becomes very shaky in my opinion. As I have said all along, this T.A. was not a great contract, but for the time being and the time that has elapsed was adequate enough to hold us over until 2026. I hope it works out for the membership because if it doesn't there will be even more division than there is now.

The next item I would like to address deals with the passing of the Social Security Fairness Act. Considering the amount of affected people (3 million) this bill affects, it may take up to a year for SSA to adjust benefits and pay all retroactive benefits to all those people. As I get more information, I will keep everyone updated.

Next, we are now in a new era of politics, with a new President, and with that there will be many fights we will be addressing going forward. Our first piece of legislation we are pursuing is HR 70, the anti-privatization bill. Please go onto the NALC website to see what you need to do to get our representatives to sign on to this bill.

Next, with the new Republican control of both the House and Senate, I want to let everyone know what may be happening to us going forward, and what to be looking for when we are asked to take action. There is a 50-page document compiled by GOP members of the House Budget Committee that could be a part of the budget, and I will outline what could be on our plate to deal with.

First, there is a proposal to standardize the amount FERS enrollees pay toward their defined-benefit annuity at 4.4%. To explain this more clearly, currently FERS participants pay 0.8% of their base pay to their retirement if they were hired in 2012 or prior, 3.1% if they were hired in 2013, and 4.4% if they were hired in 2014 or later.

The document also suggests eliminating the FERS supplement for employees who retire before reaching Social Security eligibility at age 62, a provision that would disproportionately impact federal law enforcement officers, who mostly are required to retire when they turn 57, and also force our members to work until 62. It also revives a proposal from Trump's first term to base federal retiree's annuity payments on the high 5 years as to compared with our high 3 we currently are under.

Another policy they are floating deals with charging unions for using agency property, including office space, computers, etc.

They also want to charge unions for official time granted to union officials. If this isn't an anti-union stance, I don't know what is! There are many other things being talked about that I will detail more at this month's meeting. You won't believe what they want to do to the union.

Next, as you may have heard, the postal service has offered a voluntary early retirement (VER) buyout of \$15,000.00 to the APWU and the Mail Handlers. Those interested have until March 7th to take the buyout. Sorry, the NALC wasn't a part of this VER. We will never get a buyout, as they need more carriers, not less.

Lastly, for those who get injured on the job and need to file a CA-1 on E-Comp, please be aware you will need to check the Retail and Delivery New Jersey, 21 Kilmer Rd Edison, NJ 08899 in the Select Duty Station part of the form. We had an issue where carriers couldn't access the CA-1 on E-Comp. Any issues please feel free to contact me for help.

Hope to see everyone at this month's meeting.

Gary DiGiacomo – President

We Are Grateful!

Hands down the most thankless job is one of the Shop Steward. The job of a Shop Steward is an essential part of the NALC. Shop Stewards are important for the well-being of the letter carrier craft. They play the role of an intermediary between the employees and management to ensure the best working conditions and that all parties adhere to the collective agreement. This commitment is not easy and requires a ton of resilience especially when facing so much adversity. You will constantly be fighting against management trying to divide your office and turn carriers against the Union. You must be strong-minded and maintain the integrity of the National Agreement. You will be challenged, have no doubt about that. In this branch we are so fortunate to have some of the best Stewards. I want to mention each and every Steward in the Branch, these guys are warriors! **Atco Office Jason Dempster, Blackwood Harry Bell, Bridgeton Mike Graff, Camden (A.K.A. The Hell Hole) Mike Powell, Clementon Joe Walder & David Jonczak, Gibbstown Walt Grossmick, Hammonton Frank Ingemi, Maple Shade Allen (TMZ) Muff, Marlton Jim Boyle, Pennsville Mike Graff, Riverton Allen (TMZ) Muff, Sewell Allen (TMZ) Muff, Stratford Jim Boyle, Swedesboro Paul Delvalle, Voorhees James Powers, Williamstown Jeff Ferry, Woodbury Mike Graff, & Jim (The Doctor) Comuso, Woodstown Frank Ingemi.** We also have two Formal A Stewards **Mike Graff, & Allen Muff**, these two guys have a difficult position to have to oversee offices when stewards are in need of extra help. I feel very fortunate to work closely with all these guys and know the tireless work they all do. In our newly improved newsletter, we will be posting more every month to keep you all updated on what

your stewards are doing in your office. You, the employee may not know what a steward really does for all of you. One thing for sure is that these guys are very involved and detailed oriented to protect each and every one of us. One final note I would like to congratulate some people on their recent appointments to the branch, I am sure they will excel in their roles. In no particular order, **Financial Secretary Mike Graff, Assistant Recording Secretary Allen Muff, Trustee David Jonczak**, Shop Stewards in Clementon now that the merger is complete and official **Joe Walder, and David Jonczak**, welcome aboard! Always remember their bad day is not yours, they also have a responsibility to follow the rules. **Stay Strong, Strength in Numbers. Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions.** Executive Vice President **Shawn McBride (856)649-9317**

Comments from the VP

What does Dignity and Respect mean? It means we as employees expect to be able to come to work and have an environment free of **Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment**. We as carriers expect to have an atmosphere of **Mutual Respect**. We all give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, however most of the time that is not enough for most managers. Over here at the Camden, (a.k.a. shit hole) Annex, most of us find the work environment hostile and toxic. Management somehow thinks the best way to get the most out of us carriers is to attack and mistreat us. This, in my opinion, leads carriers to dread coming to work, which results in the attendance issues we have in this deplorable institution!! There are contractual provisions and memos of understanding that protect carriers from **Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment**. I suggest all carriers become familiar with the following provisions M-01242 Joint Statement on Violence in the workplace, M-39 Sec 115.4 Mutual Respect Atmosphere, ELM 665.24 Violent or Threatening Behavior and 14.1 Sec1 Responsibilities. These provisions are available on the NALC website. We are in an intervention here at the Camden, (a.k.a. shithole) for some of the above reasons and it needs to Stop! I want to encourage all our active members, retired members and CCAs to try to attend our monthly meetings. It is not only your chance to get valuable information on things happening in the Branch but more importantly to ask questions or voice your concerns to your elected officers. You can also grab a bite to eat, have a beverage of your choice and meet and mingle with new and old friends. 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 Union Mike Powell – Vice – President**

U.S.P.S. Oversight Hearing

As we continue to ride the wave from our historic legislative win, signing The Social Security Fairness Act into law on January 5th. On December 10th there was an important hearing on Capitol Hill. The House Oversight and Accountability Committee (HOAC) held a hearing with Postmaster General Louis DeJoy and The Postal Service Inspector General Tammy Hull. The hearing was 3.5 hours long. "The Delivery For America Plan (DFA)" and other topics including crime, heat illness and service standards were discussed. The hearing was under the direction of HOAC Chairman **James Cromer**(R-KY). Opening statements were made by Rep. Cromer, The PMG and OIG. The hearing proceeded into a Q & A segment. 90% of the questions were toward the PMG. Interestingly, the "once publicly confident and cocky PMG" looked vastly different in this interview. The PMG looked nervous (like a scared 10 year old). Mr. DeJoy's answers to most questions were shaky at best through a cracked voice that stuttered. Also, his eyes were blinking multiple times with a look of fear on his face. The first speaker was **Jamie Raskin** (Ranking member of the Committee, D-MD). Mr. Raskin in his statement said, "During Covid-19, The Postal Service has been one of the most essential institutions. We rely on them for delivery of bank statements, legal notices, and notification of data breaches". However, Mr. Raskin pointed to the decline in "On Time Delivery" or Service Standards. What was once an impeccable principle at 95%, has become a problematic issue for our customers in many regions of America (89% or less). The 2 to 3 days (the old way) to receive a piece of mail has now gone up to 3 to 5 days. According to Mr. Raskin, PMG DeJoy has failed under his leadership to provide the best service for the American

people. Another topic brought up was DeJoy's financial projection of The Postal Service's finances. When DeJoy arrived in 2020, he came from a "corporate flipping" background and had a somewhat decent idea on how to manage companies. However, DeJoy predicted The Postal Service would reach the "breakeven point" in 2023 or 2024. To everyone's surprise that didn't happen. In Fiscal Year 2022, The Post Office had a net loss of \$950 million to an increased net loss of 9.5 billion in Fiscal Year 2024(a 900% increase in a 2-year span). Republican Gary Palmer (AL) told a story about one particular postal building in his district. The constituent had attempted to reach out many times to The Postal Inspector because of the property conditions. The constituent complained of poorly handled waste and trash in the parking area. Mr. DeJoy's response was, "I have over 31,000 facilities in horrible condition, however I have \$20 billion put in deferred maintenance of these buildings". There was one problem in this situation, the constituent still hasn't gotten a response in 3.5 years from The OIG's Office!!! I KID YOU NOT! The topic of heat stress/heat illness was brought up by Greg Casar(D-TX). In a proposed OSHA rule, workers who are in 90 degree or more weather will be required to take a 15-minute break every couple of hours with water readily available to them. Mr. Casar emphasized in his report to Mr. DeJoy that this "Hits home" to him because of the last on the job Letter Carrier fatality that occurred in his state last year (**Eugene Gates**). Mr. Casar talks more about heat safety by stating on record additional information. Mr. Casar presented statements from Texas Letter Carriers who were reprimanded for going off their routes to get a drink of water and for getting in trouble for taking a break. In addition, Mr. Casar brings up the falsification of heat training to The PMG. DeJoy's response was, and I quote, "The records were batched loaded Instead of individually put in". ARE YOU KIDDING ME? Immediately, the temperature got turned up during the interview, not through the heat illness prevention talk, but by Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi(D-IL). The presentation starts out with the Congressman bashing The PMG on the "6" price hikes on stamps in 4 years. Next, The PMG gets verbally dismantled when the Congressman talks about his salary. "Service Standards have gone down. Affordability has gone down. Your compensation has gone way, way, way up and that's deeply deeply troubling", the Rep says. Here is another fact, The PMG's salary went from \$481,000 in 2021 to \$561,000 in 2024. A 17% increase. When the Rep asked this, The PMG responded, "I have no idea". IS THIS CANDID CAMERA?!?! The final blow during this segment came when the Rep had written "U.S. Postal Service Undeliverable Reports" or what we as Letter Carriers know as the PS Form 1571s. One of the Form 1571s said, "Instructed to leave mail behind". When the Rep showed this during the testimony, The PMG's response was, "I can't see that far". During the hearing, DeJoy is asked by multiple people on the committee, "What grade would you give yourself for the job you are doing"? The modest PMG says, "an A". The most unforgettable presentation came from Rep. Rich McCormick(R-GA). During one of his stories, Mr. McCormick talks about how he was expecting a certified letter for tax returns to arrive at his house. The mail was sent 2 miles away. Yes, it did arrive, ONLY 4 months later and only through a congressional inquiry filed by Mr. McCormick. 4 MONTHS LATER!! When Mr. McCormick went to his Post Office to talk to The Postmaster, he/she wasn't available. Therefore, Mr. McCormick left his contact info. The Post Office never called him back. The Congressman says to the PMG, "That's the environment you are fostering". To further support his case, Mr. McCormick said," When I was a kid, I looked at The Post Office as a trusted government agency, your 4 years in tenure has destroyed that". The Congressman and PMG exchange verbal punches and then the unthinkable happens. Like that 10-year-old, The PMG covers his ears. That took the cake for me. What I got from the hearing is this...you have people on both sides of the aisle that are questioning his business practices as the lead head of The Postal Service. The DFA Plan now has only 6 years left with a new administration in the 119th Congressional term. To be continued!!

Finally, I want to thank this month's LCPF contributors: **Tyler Esposito**(Stratford), **Keisha George** (Gloucester City), Retirees: **Chuck Huff 3rd**(Mt. Ephraim), **Matthew Maher**(Marlton), **Jack McCormick**(Blackwood), **Joe Powell Jr.**(Mt. Ephraim) and CCA: **Danielle Walden**(Voorhees). Also, I want to say a special thank you to my stepdaughter **Hailey Baron** for creating this year's CCA/PTF Night flyer. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 to reach me for any branch matter.

In Solidarity, Ozzie Lecky

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, February 19th @ 8 pm**, at the American Legion Hall, 502 Colonial Ave., 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 pm**, and the Shop Stewards @ **8 pm**. The next meeting of the Executive Board and Shop Stewards will be on **Wednesday, February 12th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now at \$50

On **Wednesday January 17th** at the regular monthly meeting, **Richard Hurst**, a retiree out of the **Paulsboro** office, would have been the recipient of the **\$25** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$50** and will increase **\$25** per meeting, to a maximum of **\$250**, until a member in attendance has their name drawn.

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Save the Date!!!

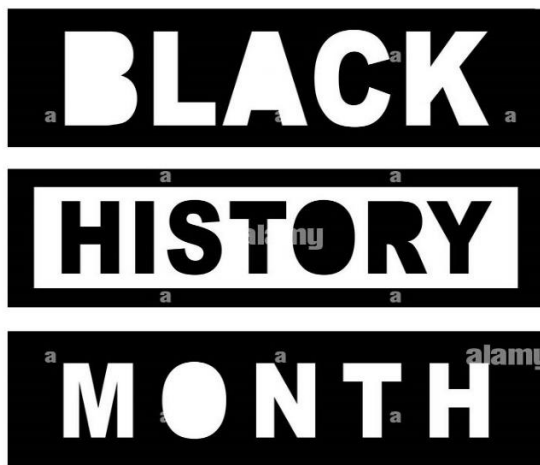
Our annual branch banquet will be held on Saturday, April 12, from 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM at the Elizabeth Ballroom in Gloucester City, NJ 08030. **Tickets are \$20 for active members and guests, \$10 for branch retirees** and will be on sale starting on February 1. Contact VP Mike Powell at (856)-906-2026 or 908vp@comcast.net or your shop steward for info or tickets. The following retirees will be honored **Anne Adair**(Atco), **Eugene Curry**(Riverton), **John Harley**(Williamstown), **David King**(Hammonton), **William King**(Blackwood), **Tina Lofton**(Voorhees), **John McLeer**(Gloucester), **Rodel Pagaduan**(Stratford), **Dawn Pezzano**(Sewell), **Teresa Peters**(Glendora), **Charles Greene**, **Gary Harter**, **Robert Holler**, **Leroy Huster**, **John Kuruc** and **Jeanette Vollmer** all from our Woodbury Office, **Val Apartin**, **MaryEllen McGuire** and **Glenn Strunk** from our Marlton Office **Bill Hillman**, **Fran McGuriman**, **Lucy Rapisarda** and **Regina Hines** from our Clementon Office. We will also be honoring **Anthony Scardino** local hero, out of the Somerdale office.

Branch Scholarship Drawing

We will be drawing the winner of this year's Branch Scholarship at the regular monthly meeting on May 21st. The winner of the scholarship will receive a fund of \$2,000.00 (\$500 a year for four years). Applications are available at every monthly meeting, on the Branch website, or you can contact Trustee Allen Muff 856-723-7434. All previous winners that receive scholarship payments must submit any updated information to Allen by the May meeting. This would include where the students will be attending in the fall semester. Remember all winners must be full-time students.

MDA

Tickets will be on sale starting at the February meeting for the MDA raffle. First prize is a PS5 Digital edition with NBA 2K25 bundle. Second place is a \$200 gift card. Third a \$100 gift card. The drawing will be held at the June regular monthly meeting. Tickets are \$5 and are available through your shop steward, at the Regular monthly meetings, or you can call/text Jason Dempster 856-503-5007. All proceeds benefit the **Muscular Dystrophy Association**. Thank you to everyone who participated in the block pool for MDA at the time of this printing we do not have the winners, but we'll announce them on **Facebook @ NALC Branch 908** asap.



William Harvey Carney

After escaping from slavery William Harvey Carney joined the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry in 1863. Due to his heroic acts during battle, he earned the Medal of Honor. There was a song written about Carney called "Boys the Old Flag Never Touched the Ground". After being honorably discharged Carney went on to deliver mail from 1869 until 1901 in New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he was the first black mail carrier. He was the founding Vice President of NALC New Bedford Branch 18. Carney died in 1908 after an elevator accident but his legacy lives on. There is a school in New Bedford named after him. His home is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. There are statues of him on the African-American Medal of Honor Recipients Memorial in Wilmington, Delaware and at West Point Cemetery in Norfolk, Virginia. Thank you for your service, Mr. Carney.

Tentative Agreement

The membership voted NO to the tentative agreement. The NALC and USPS will now negotiate again for a period of not more than 15 days, starting 2/4. After which the Executive Council will decide to either send a new tentative agreement ballot to the membership or proceed to binding interest arbitration.

CCA/PTF Night

We will be hosting our second annual CCA/PTF night on Tuesday April 1st at 7pm. This meeting is specifically for you CCA's and PTF's. There will be presentations and opportunities for you to ask questions. There will also be food, drink, and a raffle. **Ozzie Lecky** will be hosting. If you do not hear from him by March 1st call/text him 856-220-8658.

PTF CORNER

Each month we would like to take a few minutes and go over some talking points for PTF's. It is so important to help you folks understand your rights; this is a great forum to do this in. We encourage you to please send us your input and any future questions we can list them and give answers to help you all. Below are a couple items from the Questions and Answers for PTF's that the national put together, mainly the difference between CCA's and PTF's. Each month we will try to touch on different points.

Question: Can a PTF opt (hold-down) on a carrier technician assignment? If so, do I receive carrier technician pay?

Answer: Temporarily vacant carrier technician positions are higher-level assignments and thus not subject to opting (holding down) under the provision of article 41, Section 2.B. Rather, temporarily vacant carrier technician positions must be filled in accordance with Article 25, and as a career letter carrier, you now are entitled to the provisions outlined in the article. Employees who are detailed to a carrier technician position in accordance with Article 25, Section 4, are entitled to higher-level pay as if promoted to the position. See Article 25, sections 1,2, & 4 of the National Agreement for the entire explanation.

Question: An unassigned regular (UAR), PTF and CCA all have requested to opt (hold-down) on the same vacant route for the same time period. Who gets the hold-down?

Answer: Full-time reserve, unassigned regulars, and PTFs have first preference, by use of their seniority, to be awarded a hold-down assignment prior to a CCA. This is all outlined in Article 41, Section 2.B of the National Agreement, refer to it for full explanation.

CCA Corner

Each month we would like to take a few minutes and go over some talking points for CCA's. It is so important to help you folks understand your rights; this is a great forum to do this in. We encourage you to please send us your input and any future questions we can list them and give answers to help you all. Below are a couple items from the Questions and Answers for CCA's that the National put together. Each month we will try to touch on different points.

Question: Do CCAs have a work hour guarantee?

Answer: Yes, CCAs employed in post offices and facilities with 200 or more work years of employment have a four-hour work guarantee and CCAs employed in all other post offices have a two-hour work guarantee.

Question: Are there rules covering work hour guarantees for CCA who has a gap between two periods of work?

Answer: If a CCA is notified prior to clocking out that he/she should return within two hours, it is considered a split shift, and no new work hour guarantee applies. However, if a CCA is notified prior to clocking out that he/she is to return after two hours, the CCA must be given another work hour guarantee pursuant to Article 8.8 (two or four hours depending on office size).

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR OFFICE A LOOK INTO ISSUES HAPPENING TO BRANCH 908 CARRIERS

We will start with our newest office, **Clementon**: PDI for bringing mail back, no discipline issued. OWCP leave being paid as sick leave, was resolved and corrected CA-7 filed. Carriers NS days wrong in the system causing OT and LWOP, resolved to correct the pay avoiding a future Letter of Demand. A previous grievance settlement won the steward back in May, was supposed to have a pay adjustment done by the Step B team. It never occurred and when local management tried to correct it and pay it through an adjustment, it was denied by the district. So, a non-compliance grievance has been filed to correct this and sent out to the Step B team. Great work there in Clementon Joe and Dave. In **Elmer**, the Shop Steward just won a good discipline grievance from the Step B. They rendered a decision to rescind the discipline. Management was forcing a PTF to work in another facility on Sundays for Amazon delivery. This was silly, it got to this point. The National Agreement under Article 12 clearly states they cannot make a career employee work in another facility without their permission or proper notice. I won't explain anymore we don't want to teach management how to do their job. Luckily, the Shop Steward knows his job and defeated management, great job Frank as usual.

Other ongoing issues with management in most offices: Management continues to believe they can manage from their computer screens with no visual evidence. This is problematic and is considered Covert and spy tactics. If you are questioned on the workroom floor or asked to go into the office with management, do not forget to ask for your union representative so we can put a stop to this harassment. All we know is that we are always working, maybe they feel guilty for all the time they don't work, so they feel the need to harass us the workers.

Unauthorized Overtime is another big issue happening. If you do not notify management in the morning via PS Form 3996 of the need for overtime, and if not approved you also need to contact management when on the street if you will not make their expectations or are working later than your estimate. These are your requirements and if you do these things no discipline will meet Just Cause. Please make this a common practice.

We have two separate offices, **Sewell** and **Gibbstown**, that CCAs were not properly converted to career. We filed grievances and won at Step B. As a result, the B team corrected the dates on the conversions but left the payroll adjustments to be made at the local offices within 30 days. To all of our surprise they were not

done (sarcasm meant there), we were not surprised and we have since filed non-compliance grievances to have the pays corrected, stay tuned for the results soon as we hear it we will put it in the newsletter, thanks goes to Walt in Gibbstown for the initial filing of the grievance as well as Allen in Sewell. An additional thanks to Formal A rep. Allen Muff who sent out both non-compliance grievances in both offices great work guys.

Hot off the press is a 7 day for conduct issued in **Williamstown**, stay tuned for that result. Jeff will be digging in a doing his due diligence on this case. Stay tuned for next month for what's happening in your office, our monthly update.

Non-Members

Gianna Giunta-Ruiz, Paul Heil, Lawrence Trimmer-Woodbury
Luis Luna, Dawayne Sanders-Williamstown
Walter Lyons-Hammonton Mark Robinson-Swedeseboro
Nicole West-Stratford Tyrone Johnson-Riverton

If you know someone who is not a member but would like to be, tell them to contact your steward or any branch officer and we'll take care of them.

To share any questions, comments, original artwork, or photographs send to aprillitty@gmail.com

Check us out online @ www.nalcbranch908.com
And on Facebook NALC Branch 908
www.nalc.org is the National website

"The harder the conflict, the greater the triumph."-George Washington

"If any man tells you he loves America, yet hates labor, he is a liar. If any man tells you he trusts America, yet fears labor, he is a fool."-Abraham Lincoln

Happy Presidents Day



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