

908 News

NALC Branch 908
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Newsletter Com: Powell, Mendel, Lipski Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com April 2011

Presidents Report

Last month I mentioned we had a new District manager, and lo and behold he is history and we have a new man in place. As I find out more about him I will keep everyone updated. The big news everyone was waiting for on March 25 turned out to be nothing more than an early out and restructuring for managers in headquarters! All those ridiculous rumors that we were all hearing were nothing more than that! I kind of figured nothing was coming from this announcement, because every time they do this kind of hype it turns out to be a big dud! On to what is happening. It appears we are back into the next round of JARAP, as our National President signed off on another agreement to continue with this joint venture in evaluating routes. It is very important everyone knows what to expect this round so it is time for everyone to start paying attention to their routes and the time you are taking to do them. The evaluation dates will be either March/April or April/May. Once again, they have chosen the light time of year to look at our routes, so it is extremely important for everyone to watch management in your office and make sure you are getting proper credit for the work you do. It is extremely important to make sure your clock rings are correct because you are being evaluated on your actual time you use in the office and on the street. I haven't gotten any additional information on the players involved, but I am sure we will see the same tired face as always. All we can do is make sure we do our jobs professionally everyday and make sure you take your breaks and comfort stops you normally take on a daily basis. Remember, comfort stops become part of your route as do your breaks. If you don't take a comfort stop when you are walked with, then your route will not reflect this time and you are telling management you never need to go to a restroom!

One last item I want to let everyone know about that hasn't been discussed yet is this memorandum our national president signed on March 18, 2011. It is called the **Joint Alternative Route Structure Test**. The purpose of this test is to explore various combinations of office and street functions, and other alternatives for structuring city carrier routes in delivery units selected jointly by the USPS and the NALC. I will go into further detail at our regular meeting as to what I believe this memo really means to us as we go forward. Hope to see everyone at the meeting.

Gary DiGiacomo, President

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, April 20, 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 at 8 p.m.**, The Branch Board of Officers and Executive Board meetings are held on the **2nd Wednesday of the month. The Board of Officers at 7:30 p.m.**, and the Executive Board at 8 p.m. The next meeting of the Board of Officers and Executive Board will be on **Wednesday, April 13, 7:30 and 8 p.m.** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now Stands At \$100.00

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, March 16**, Joe Dionne, a member out of the **Maple Shade Office**, would have been the recipient of the **\$75.00** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$100.00** and will increase **\$25** per meeting, up to a maximum of **\$250**, until a member in attendance has their name drawn.

Trustee Report

Just a reminder about the Branch Scholarship, the drawing is in June. Anyone who has a qualified family member, please contact Trustee Shawn McBride at 856-649-9317 for an application or you can go to the Branch website and print out the application. Applications can be dropped off at any regular meeting, up to our June meeting or mailed to Trustee McBride at 1204 Huntingdor Mews, Clementon, NJ, 08021.

On to a new subject, everyone will have to write a check or money order when giving the Branch money for things that the Branch sponsors or runs. For example, Retiree Banquet tickets and any overpayments to a steward or officer, exceptions would be Colpe raffle or a ticket for charity.

Now to all letter carriers who drive a postal vehicle for a living. Shortly after 9-11 the State of New Jersey stopped sending out notices for driver's licenses renewal, which means all of you need to take a look at your licenses and check when it expires. The State will allow you to renew the licenses six months early and still give you credit for the time left on your current licenses. So take a look at it today.

The house behind the hall has been sold or rented to a handicapped person. **Please Do Not Park** in front of their house. We also have clean, new and used uniforms at the hall for free. Please contact me if you are interested. Any steward that needs access to the office at our hall to make copies or use the Branch computer please let Mike Powell or me know and we will be glad to open the door for you.

On a final note, **please continue to keep Fred and Jeannie Mendel in your prayers.**

Jim Comuso, Sr., Trustee Chairman

NALC Health Benefits

Anyone having an Optical Glass bill please send it with your name and address and phone number to **Health Benefits Officer Fred Mendel at 5 Payne Ave Runnemede, NJ, 08078**
HBR Fred Mendel

Branch Scholarship

Applications are being accepted for the "Drew Walters Branch 908 Scholarship" drawing. The drawing will be held on Wednesday, June 16 at the regular Branch meeting. The scholarship is open to all children, grandchildren, step-children (living with Member) and adopted children of all active or retired branch members. The entry form is available on our Branch website, nalcbranch908.com/scholarship.pdf, at our meetings or by contacting our scholarship coordinator: **Shawn McBride, 1204 Huntingdon Mews, Clementon, NJ 08021**

Phone Numbers to Remember

President- Gary DiGiacomo - 856-906-2838
Vice- President- Steve Rutkowski- 856-906-2026

Dates to Remember 2011

June 26-June 28 - NJ State Convention
June 1st-June 3rd - NJ State Congressional Breakfast

PROUD TO BE UNION!

4th Annual Branch Banquet

On April 9, 2011, The Branch held our 4th Annual Banquet at Nicolosi's Banquet Hall in Woodbury. It was a great night for all who attended! Branch President, **Gary DiGiacomo** acted as the Emcee for the night with some help from Recording Secretary, **Michael Powell**. They kept the business part of the evening short, while still getting everything accomplished. Invited guest included; Director, Health Insurance, **Brian E Hellman**, who brought greetings from National President, **Fredric Rolando**, National Business Agent **Bill Lucini**, Regional Administrative Assistants, **Dave Napadano** and **Ray McDonald** and last but not least, long time Branch Member and Retiree, **Alan Grey**, who did our invocation. In addition to the above, the Honored Retired guests in attendance were, **James Barlow**, **Earl Breslin**, **Ron Hamlin**, **Georgia Marko** and their families. A special thanks goes out to **Jake "the Snake" Evison**, a Branch member out of our Woodbury Office. Jake is a great DJ and did a fantastic job keeping the party alive! I recommend Jake to any member who is looking for a DJ. **Jake** can be reached via phone at **856-853-0419**, or through his website at www.TheHotSounds.com. Special thanks go to Branch Trustee **Donna Villec**, for acting as our greeter/ticket taker and photographer for the night. Thanks also goes out to my better half, **Theresa DeAntoneo** for all of her help with organizing this event and to everyone who came out for this special night. I have had many phone calls from Members who attended letting me know that they had a great time. **Mark next year calendars now for our 5th Annual Branch Banquet which will be held on April 14, 2012.**

Shop Steward of The Year

At the Branch Banquet on April 9, The Branch awarded the Fourth Annual Shop Steward of the Year Award. The winner chosen from nominations made by the membership was **Paulsboro Shop Steward, Loretta Morris**. Branch President **Gary DiGiacomo** presented Loretta with a plaque. **Congratulations Loretta and keep up all your hard work!**

Grievance Log

Step B Decisions

Blackwood- Management violated Article 7 of JCAM, specifically the TE memorandum when TE's were borrowed on more than an occasional basis. As a remedy 15 ODL carrier's will each receive **\$40.04 (\$600.60 total)** for this violation.

Blackwood- Management violated Article 7 of JCAM, specifically the TE memorandum when TE's were borrowed on more than an occasional basis. As a remedy 12 ODL carrier's will each receive **\$40.04 (\$480.48 total)** for this violation.

Somerdale- Management violated the National Step 4 Settlement and Article 8 when PTF carriers were voluntarily loaned to the Somerdale Post office for the "sole" reason to avoid paying overtime. As a remedy the payment of **\$320.32** will be paid to an ODL carrier.

Step A Decisions

Somerdale- Management violated Article 8 of the JCAM. As a remedy ODL carriers to receive a total of **\$440.44**.

Somerdale- Management violated Article 8 of the JCAM. As a remedy ODL carriers to receive a total of **\$400.44**.

Marlton-Management violated Article 7 and the TE memorandum on the borrowing of TE's on more than an occasional basis. As a remedy ODL carriers will be paid **26 hours at the Overtime rate**.

Marlton- Management violated Article 8 of the J-CAM. As a remedy ODL carriers will be paid **16 hours at the overtime rate**.

MDA Walk and Phillies Tickets

On February 20, 2011 there was a Muscle Walk for MDA in MaysLanding at the Hamilton Mall. George and Annette Greenwood, Linda Hartman and myself all walked. We raised **\$300.00** and the total for the day was **\$16,000.00**. We had a great time and I hope to see more people next year. We are still accepting donations. To make a donation, call me at (856) 287-6215.

I want to thank everyone for buying and/or selling the Phillies raffle tickets. The drawing was March 30, 2011. We raised **\$1000** for MDA.

Donna Villec, Trustee

Phillies Raffle Ticket Winner!

The winner of the Phillies 14 Sunday game package was our very own **Donna Villec**. **CONGRATULATIONS DONNA ! YOU DESERVED IT FOR ALL OF YOUR HARD WORK!**

Republicans Introduce Bill To Eliminate FERS Retirement For New Hires

Republican Senators Richard Burr, (R-NC) and Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma), on Thursday introduced a bill (S. 644) that would eliminate the pension portion of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) for all new federal employees hired after 2012.

The legislation would not affect Thrift Savings Plan benefits and agency-matching contributions. It also will not affect FERS pensions for current federal employees and retirees. It would, however, apply to members of Congress. Today, U.S. Senator Richard Burr (R-North Carolina), along with Senator Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma), introduced the *Public-Private Employee Retirement Act of 2011* to address long-term liabilities facing the federal government. The legislation would end the defined benefit pension portion of the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) for new federal government hires starting in 2013, leaving fully in place the Thrift Savings Plan with the current match (up to 5%) for both current and future federal workers. The bill would also apply to Members of Congress. "Right now, federal government workers receive far more generous retirement benefits than private sector employees. The cost to taxpayers of these benefits is unsustainable and we simply cannot afford it," said Burr. "We cannot ask taxpayers to continue to foot the bill for public employee benefits that are far more generous than their own." "The congressional pension plan currently in place only serves to foster political careerism and should have been frozen years ago. In addition to enjoying a better benefits package, federal workers generally earn up to 20 percent more than their private sector counterparts. When American families across the country are being asked to sacrifice in order to meet their basic needs, federal employees and members of Congress should not be the exception. Defined benefit pension plans are going belly-up across the nation because politicians and employers continue to make promises they cannot keep. Existing federal employees will be unaffected, and all federal employees would continue to enjoy a 401(k)-style pension plan with a very generous federal match. But the only responsible thing to do is stop making irresponsible commitments and forcing future generations to pick up the tab," said Dr. Coburn. Currently, federal workers enjoy both a defined benefit pension and a Thrift Savings Plan (equivalent to a 401(k)) with up to a 5% match, paid for by the taxpayers. The average private sector employee gets a 401(k) with a 3% employer match and no pension. Federal workers also continue to enjoy federal health care benefits (FEHBP) after they retire, a benefit that is becoming increasingly rare in the private sector. Current federal government employees and retirees would not be impacted by the changes in the Burr-Coburn bill.

Source Postal News.com

HAPPY EASTER!

