

908 News

NALC Branch 908
AFL-CIO
PO Box 375
Gloucester City,
NJ 08030

South Jersey Letter Carriers

Atco, Barrington, Bellmawr, Berlin, Blackwood, Bridgeton, Clayton,
Deptford, Gibbsboro, Gibbstown, Glassboro, Gloucester, Haddon Hts.,
Hammonton, Lawnside, Magnolia, Mantua, Maple Shade, Marlton,
Mt. Ephraim, National Park, Palmyra, Paulsboro, Penns Grove, Pennsville,
Pitman, Riverton, Salem, Sewell, Somerdale, Stratford, Swedesboro, Voorhees,
Wenonah, Westville, Williamstown, Woodbury, Woodstown

Prsrt First Class
Postage Paid
Permit # 967
Bellmawr, NJ
08031

Return Service
Requested



BUY AMERICAN - BUY UNION



Newsletter Com: Powell, Comuso, Lipski Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com April 2013

Presidents Report

I would like to thank all those brothers and sisters, family and friends who participated in the National Day of Action on March 24th in Philadelphia to tell our leaders that 6 Day Delivery is necessary and should not be tinkered with. We filled our bus and joined hundreds of others at 3rd and Market Sts. in Philadelphia to show our support for this national endeavor. By all accounts, it was a tremendous success nationwide, as seen on all newscasts throughout the country, and I thank those of you who understood the importance of this event. I guess I will never understand why more carriers weren't there, since it affects them as well, but hopefully those of you who didn't attend this rally will see the importance of these events in the future and make it a priority the next time the national calls upon us! Speaking of the national, if you did not attend last month's meeting, you missed the announcement that our national President, Fred Rolando, will attend our annual retiree's banquet on April 13th. This is a great opportunity to meet your national president in a casual atmosphere where we have great food, drink, and entertainment for a ridiculous low price of \$20 per person. If you have not already purchased your tickets, you had better hurry before we are all sold out and you miss your opportunity to meet the national president. If you have never attended our retirement banquet, you are missing a great time at a reasonable price with all your brother and sisters in a casual surrounding. I hope to see you there. Another issue, which is about to surface, is the new CCA's starting on April 15th, when their new pay salary goes into effect. The district is trying to hire approximately 650 CCA's, where we have about 160 on the rolls right now. They have asked us to try to recruit people to apply for these positions, but it seems there is not much of a selling point since their salary has been seriously reduced and they have no real benefits other than a possible path to getting a career appointment. I hope that this will work out for everyone who has already been hired and the postal service does their best to get these carriers hired into the career workforce. Another area that is being discussed is what is going to happen to our PTF's who are still waiting to become regular. As of this writing the national is working on a memo to get PTF's promoted to regular, but haven't come up with a solution as of yet, but hopefully by our regular meeting we will have an answer, or at our banquet, president Rolando can give us the most recent update on this situation. Here is just another reason to come out this year to the banquet, get the latest from the President! One last item I must mention was my meeting with the new District Manager. Well, if you call a meeting where the DM leaves after 1 hour, and never returns, a meeting, then I guess we had a meeting. How someone can ask all local union presidents, our national business agent, and his assistants to a meeting, then leave before anyone can question his policies leaves a lot to be desired. My opinion is this was a slap in the face of all union members and just plain ignorant. That is all I will say about this first impression of another District manager! Oh, and thanks for the later starting times, that was a brilliant strategy to get people motivated!

Gary DiGiacomo- President

Phone Numbers to Remember

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

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, April 17 @ 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 Branch Board of Officers and Executive Board meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. The Board of Officers meet @ **7:30 p.m.**, and the Executive Board @ **8 p.m.** The next meeting of the Board of Officers and Executive Board will be on **Thursday, April 11 @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now Stands at \$100

Had he attended the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, March 20, A.J. Whitton**, a retired member from our Westville Office, would have been the recipient of the \$50 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.

Trustee Report

Dear Brothers and Sisters, The trustees will be making recommendations to change the wording of some branch by-laws that will help the Branch maintain budget integrity. All proposed by-law changes will be printed in the newsletter before they are voted on. Finally, please take advantage of the services our Branch has to offer. Examples, Optical Fund, Sick and Welfare Fund, and activities such as the Retiree and Award Banquet, Branch Picnic and of course the Kids Xmas Party just to name a few. Remember, it is all about you our members.

James Comuso, Chairman Board of Trustees

Health Benefits

Have you appointed a personal Representative? Under the Health Insurance Portability, and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule the HBP can only release your protected health information for purposes of treatment, payment, or healthcare operations. Completing a Personal Representative Authorization form allows the NALC HBP to release protected information to those family members, or friends who may contact the Plan on your behalf if/when you are unable to do so.. Keep this information current by completing a new form every two years. You can download a copy of the Personal Representative Authorization form at www.nalc.org/depart/hbp.

For all optical claims mail a copy of your bill to me at:

George Greenwood, HBR

1083 Chews Landing Rd.

Laurel Springs, NJ 08021.

Keep yourself up on all that's happening with your career, and come out to a meeting.

George W. Greenwood HBO

Dates To Remember 2013

Congressional Breakfast- 4/9-4/11

Retiree and Awards Banquet - 4/13

NJ State Convention - 5/19-5/21

Branch Picnic- 9/8

Save The Date

On March 24th the Branch provided a bus to the Rally to save 6 day deliver. We as a Branch had approximately 40 + members, family and friends attend this important event. We had food and refreshments back at the Union Hall upon return from the rally. I want to thank all that attended.

Michael Powell- Recording Secretary

Preparations for 2013 Food Drive Under Way

Hundreds of NALC branches throughout the country are preparing now for the 21st annual NALC Food Drive, which will take place on Saturday, May 11. "On the second Saturday in May, letter carriers once again will proudly lead the country's largest single-day drive to help fight hunger in America," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "What we see on our routes drives us to do what we can to help millions of Americans get the food their families so desperately need, and I once again call on every active and retired NALC member to get started now to prepare to make this coming drive another successful one."

Opinion Refutes USPS Claim on Cutting 6-day Mail

Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe's claim that the Postal Service has the right to cut its mail delivery schedule from six days to five days "rests upon a faulty USPS premise," the Government Accountability Office (GAO) said in a legal opinion released March 21, adding that there is no legislative authority from Congress allowing the change. The GAO agrees with an ever-growing chorus of voices that the postmaster general doesn't have the law on his side in this matter.

Senate, House Pass CR with 6-Day Language Intact

On March 20, the Senate approved its version of a continuing resolution (CR) to fund the government through the current fiscal year, ending Sept. 30. (The current CR expires March 27.) **The language mandating six-day-a-week mail delivery was retained.** The House passed the measure on March 21 unchanged, and President Obama signed it into law on March 26. Note that this will only preserve Saturday mail in the law **through Sept. 30**, and with Postmaster General Donahoe threatening to end Saturday delivery on his own in August, our battle to keep Saturday mail permanently continues.

Retiree Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)

The February 2013 Consumer Price Index (CPI) released March 15 showed a slight increase, so the accumulation toward the 2014 retiree cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) now stands at **0.8 percent**.

EAP Website for Postal Employees

Magellan Behavioral Health, the contractor providing the Postal Service with Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) services, has created a free, informative, new website for postal employees. Letter carriers may join the site by surfing to EAP4you.com, clicking "New User," entering 800-327-4968 and registering with an anonymous user name and password. The site contains a huge storehouse of up-to-date health and wellness information on everything from coping with workplace stress, to child and elder care, to time and money management, to learning the warning signs of substance abuse. It also offers an "ask the expert" section for customized advice, anonymous self-screening tools for such problems as depression and alcohol abuse, and a wealth of links to Internet resources on all things related to personal or family health.

Branch Attorney's

The Branch has on retainer attorney Hal Crass of **Pearson & Crass**. Hal is on retainer as the Branch attorney for all legal matters. **Hal's** office is located at 59 N. Broad St., Woodbury, NJ 08096 and he can be reached at **856-845-7900**. In addition, the firm of **Uliase & Uliase** is on retainer for the Branch to handle Federal Workers' Compensation Claims. These are the only issues that they handle. **Uliase & Uliase** are located at 106 White Horse Pike, Haddon Heights, NJ 08035 and can be reached at **856-310-9002**.

Boosted by Strong Market, TSP Funds Make Gains in March

After a modest showing so far this year, Thrift Savings Plan funds were buoyed by recent record highs on Wall Street and finished the month with solid gains. All five regular funds, in addition to the target-date Lifecycle Funds, finished March in the black for the first time since November, according to data provided by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. In March, the C Fund (designed to match the performance of the S&P 500) and the S Fund (stocks of U.S. companies not included in the S&P) posted the largest gains. The I Fund, which is tracked to international stocks and which fell by nearly 1 percent last month, dug itself out of negative territory and posted a slight gain of 0.88 percent. All of the L Funds, a mix of fund investments targeted to when participants will begin withdrawing funds from their accounts, bested last month's performance, although not quite reaching the highs of January's returns. The G Fund lived up to its sure-and-steady reputation, posting an ever-so-slight gain of 0.13 percent — as it has for the past three months. Over the past 12 months, the G Fund is up by 1.46 percent, the F Fund (representing the bond market) up by 3.98 percent. The C, S, and I Fund are all up by double digits year-to-date: 13.98 percent for the C Fund; 17.16 percent for the S Fund; and 11.59 percent for the I Fund. Overall, the stock market is experiencing one of the "strongest bull markets in a half century," according to

Phillies Tickets

Unfortunately, this year's winner of the Phillies Tickets was not a member of Branch 908. The winner was Bill Fox a resident of Gloucester City. The good news is the Branch raised \$380.00 for **MDA**. Donna Villec coordinated the sale of the raffle tickets. Great job Donna.

Postal Service Trying to Break Labor Unions

I am watching the face-off between the Postal Service and the federal government over Saturday delivery with grim amusement. When I carried mail, I came to know that the Postal Service administration considered itself also the FBI, CIA and Department of Homeland Security combined. It has a culture all its own and feels it answers to no one outside of the organization. Rep. Brian Higgins has recently found that out. The Postal Service is doing a lot of poor-mouthing about finances, but its administrators, at least in Buffalo, were happily voting themselves performance bonuses, among other things, at the time I left. The withdrawal of Saturday service is just an attempt to break the laborers' unions in favor of the administrators' unions. Yes, the postmasters and others have their own unions, and all of this is internecine warfare within the culture, with the customers, and public service, as the losers. In the administrators' world, like the big banks, they feel they're too big to fail, so when they're told no, they just wait a while and do as they please. They are arrogant fools and I hope the federal government cracks down on them and the politicians who are empowering their foolishness.

Attention

Please remember to give any changes of address to your **Steward** so that you can continue to receive the Branch Newsletter and other important information. Alternatively, send changes to Mike Powell, Recording Secretary at: P.O. Box 375, Gloucester City, NJ 08030 or 908Recordingsec@comcast.net.

Name: _____
Current Address: _____

New Address: _____

Phone Number: _____
E-mail: _____
Post Office: _____

PROUD TO BE UNION