

908 News

NALC Branch 908

AFL-CIO

PO Box 150

Pennsville, NJ

08070

Bill Revak Branch 908

South Jersey Letter Carriers

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April 2022

Presidents Report

In keeping with my monthly report on the COLA and how crazy these numbers continue to rise, our latest numbers for our 6th of 7 raises now stands at **\$395.00** for the first month, which equates to **\$.19** an hour. The retirees raise stands at **3.9%**. I will have the latest numbers to report at our meeting in April. Next, the postal service has updated their face covering policy effective March 29, 2022. **Effective immediately**, the Postal service will **no longer** require any postal employee to wear a face covering while at work, which will make many of our members happy. Employees may continue to voluntarily wear a mask or face covering if they wish. Next, all those Memo's we have been under for the last 2 years have once again been extended until **May 6, 2022**. Also, the maximum annual leave carryover amount of **520 hours has been extended into the 2023** leave year, as many members have been inquiring about. Also, the **2022 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive** is fast approaching after a 2-year hiatus. It will be held on **Saturday, May 14th**. Hopefully, it will once again fill up our food banks who are in desperate need of supplies. On to another important concern that has been addressed by our National Union, and it concerns the annoying DPS problems that many of you had to deal with and continue to face each day. You can read all about it in this month's Postal Record in our vice-president Lew Drass's article. I will summarize it here for everyone. It basically involves business routes and apartment routes and those DPS errors that arrive in the front of your trays that you have to manually sort on the street. Back in the beginning of DPS this mail would be brought to your case to sort. Not anymore, management doesn't want carriers in the office, so they make everyone do it on the street. Lo and behold, our national has finally decided to pursue this issue, and through 4 arbitration hearings, where we prevailed on all of them, we are now ready to start hammering management in the grievance procedure if they refuse to fix this problem. Our national has made it easy for us to file grievances on this matter, since it is a contract violation. We will be instructing our stewards on what needs to be done to address this violation. If you have this DPS problem, please let your steward know so we can get a grievance started. As you all are aware, your managers are trying to cut your office time with their new math, so let's start getting some of our time back by stopping this blatant annoyance and violation. Last, but not least, we held our annual Retirees Banquet on Saturday April 2nd, and was a great time for all who attended. It was nice to see so many people come out and enjoy the evening. I would like to thank our National Officers, **Chris Jackson**, Director of City Delivery, and our National Business Agent from Region 12, **Brian Thompson** and his RAA's **Leo Zachwieja** and **Steve Wiley** for coming to help honor our recent retirees. I would also like to thank VP **Mike Powell** and his committee, **Phil Haas** and **Ozzie Lecky**, for all their hard work in making this year's banquet a huge success. Hope to see everyone at this month's meeting.

Gary DiGiacomo – President



Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, April 20th @ 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, April 13th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now at \$100

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, March 16th**, **Joseph Thomas** a member out of the Williamstown 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

I would like to take this time to congratulate all the retirees who were honored at the Retiree Banquet on April 2, 2022. It was a really nice time had by all who attended. We had a 50/50 for **MDA** that raised **\$304**. I want to thank **Ozzie Lecky, Phil Haas, Pete DeSimone, April Litty** and **Trudy Spence** for all their help during the banquet. Next year's banquet will be held on **Saturday April 15**.

I have a few things I feel I need to write about. The first is about all of us as union brother and sisters sticking together. I get the fact that everyone is not going to get along all the time, which is expected we all have issues outside of work that may affect our moods. We need to have each other's back. Remember, management is not your friend, so please don't be coaxed into writing statements or sharing information about other carriers with management that could lead to them being disciplined. At the rap session recently held in March, I brought up the DUO issue and if our national leaders have ever considered trying to negotiate to put offices that were moved back to their original stations. The answer was NO and although in some circumstances in other parts of the country some offices were moved back to their stations it is unlikely that will happen here. The last thing is staffing. I believe that all new hires should be hired as career employees' right from the start. This in my opinion is the best way to give new hires the incentive to stay. 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 be Union.

We are in this together.

Mike Powell – Vice – President

Easter Ham Drawing Winner

At the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, March 16th**, President **Gary DiGiacomo** was the winner of the drawing for an Easter Ham, donated by branch retiree **Joe Foreman**, in honor of former Branch COLCPE Chairman **Norm Task**.

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello sisters and brothers. Hope all are well. At the March meeting I informed everyone I would be sharing much information in the next few months at the meetings, and in the newsletter that I learned in training. Here is some of that Info: How's your health? Have any on the job injuries, or illness?

Well did you know in 2020, OWCP began assigning cases to claims examiners (CE) nationally. In 2020, USPS allowed OWCP to process CA-1s, CA-2s, and CA-7s online electronically. In 2022, OWCP no longer accepts paper claim forms. That means no more management interference whether knowingly or unknowingly. Carriers do not need permission to file a claim. It is the carrier's choice which form to file. Management is not your friend when you are injured. Should an injury or illness that is job related occur this is where you start the claim process:

OWCP Website – <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/owcp/FECA>.

For contractual information Article 19 JCAM covers Handbooks and Manuals. OWCP related Handbooks and Manuals include but are not limited to: EL-505 Injury Compensation Employee Labor Relations Manual (ELM 540), CA-810 Injury Compensation for Federal Employees, CA-550 FECA Questions and Answers. Article 21.4 specifically requires the Postal Service to comply with applicable regulations of OWCP. The National Agreement clearly requires the Postal Service to comply with OWCP law and regulations.

Finally, never fear for filing a claim. Reporting a work-related injury or illness is a core employee right and retaliating against a worker for reporting an injury or illness is illegal discrimination under section 11(c).... If employees do not feel free to report injuries or illnesses, the employer's entire workforce is put at risk. Employers do not learn of and correct dangerous conditions that have resulted in injuries, and injured employees may not receive the proper medical attention, or the workers' compensation benefits to which they are entitled. Ensuring that employees can report injuries or illnesses without fear of retaliation is therefore crucial to protecting worker safety and health. [osha.gov/as/opa/whistleblowermemo.html](https://www.osha.gov/as/opa/whistleblowermemo.html)

Any dues paying member of Branch 908 wanting to claim their reimbursement for 2022 optical expenses please send me a paper copy of the expense to: George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021...any questions always feel free to give me a call at 856-304-8665. Be safe all.

- **George Greenwood, HBR**

Ozzie's Corner

Victory Is Ours!!! On March 8th, The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 passed in the Senate. The overwhelming final vote total was 79 to 19 (48 Democrats, 29 Republicans and 2 Independents). I want to take this opportunity to applaud each and every member in Branch 908 (Active, Retired and Life) for their hard work lobbying. The emails, phone calls and/or in person office visits you made to both of our Senators paid off in a huge way. One last and important note is this about HR 3076, once the bill is placed on President Biden's desk for a final signature, The President has 10 days from the time the bill is placed on his desk for the bill to be signed as an official law. However, if the bill is on his desk and passes the 10-day period for the piece of paper to be signed there is a huge key factor. The key factor is the legislation is automatically put into law within 30 days if there is no signature by The President. Either way, we claimed a monumental win! First, I want to personally thank Wyatt Sklar (Community Affairs Coordinator, Sen. Robert Menendez's Office, Barrington, NJ) for his in person meeting we had on February 16th. The meeting was very positive and informative with Mr. Sklar. Furthermore, Mr. Sklar assured me that he would pass on our important information to the person or party that was designated to handle our request in Sen. Menendez's office (co-sponsor HR 3076). Next, I want to equally say thank you to MacKenzie Belling (South Jersey Director, Sen. Cory Booker's Office, Camden, NJ) for our tele-meeting and email follow ups. During one of our emails, Mrs. Belling told me she would pass on the HR 3076 packet info (I originally emailed to her) to a team who handles USPS projects on Sen. Booker's staff. As expected in the Garden State, both Senator Menendez and Booker voted yes to the legislation. On behalf of all of the members of Bill Revak Branch 908, we want to say a "**Big Thank You**" to both of these federal legislators for standing up and fighting for strong Postal Reform.

In other news, I want to thank Dalin Hackley (Outreach Coordinator, Con. Donald Norcross's Office, Camden, NJ) for preparing our branch banquet retirement certificates for our April 2nd event. Speaking of Congressman Norcross, any active

city Letter Carrier who is a veteran in our branch who needs my assistance with Military Buy Back, DD214 or other classified info I got great news. I have a brand new updated "Request for Assistance Form" on file.

In closing, I want to thank this month's LCPF contributors: **Joe Carfagno** (Woodbury), **Paul Delvalle** (Williamstown), **Tyler Esposito** (Stratford) and **Mike Foley** (Retiree: Gloucester City). In addition, a special thank you to **Joe Foreman Jr.** (Retiree: Marlton) for the Easter Ham (a special drawing we do annually in memory of COLCPE Coordinator **Norm Task**). My Phone number is (856) 220-8658 to reach me anytime.

In Solidarity,

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.)*

Newest Gold Card Member

Per the NALC Constitution: when a member reaches 50 years of membership in the NALC, he/she shall be given a Life Membership Card of Gold which shall entitle him/her to all privileges of membership in the NALC without the payment of dues. It is our honor to recognize **Richard Bacon**, retiree from the Bridgeton office for his years of service.

Lapel Pins Awarded

Congratulations to the following members who were awarded NALC Lapel Pins this month:

Dave Jacobson – 25 years	Norm Spence – 30 years
Jake Evison – 35 years	Joe Foreman – 35 years
Gary DiGiacomo – 40 years	Bill Gore – 40 years
Frank Ingemi – 40 years	Joe Townsend – 40 years
Bill Baitinger – 55 years	Leo Mealey – 55 years
Joseph Santangelo – 55 years	James Wilson – 55 years
Wayne Kline – 60 years	Tom Barnett – 65 years
Richard Beers – 65 years	George Tyson – 65 years
Cecil Laverne – 65 years	

The NALC Constitution provides for the awarding of suitable lapel pins for every five years of NALC membership commencing with the 25th year. For example: 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and so forth. If you feel that because of your years of NALC membership, you are eligible for the award of a suitable lapel pin, see Branch Recording Secretary Norm Spence or send a letter to the Branch (PO Box 150, Pennsville, NJ 08070). Include your Name, Office, approximate date you became a member of the NALC and what pin you believe you have earned.

Branch Scholarship Drawing

We will be drawing the winner of this year's Branch Scholarship at the regular monthly meeting on **May 18th**. The winner of the Scholarship will receive a fund of \$2000.00 (\$500.00 a year for four years). Applications are available at every monthly meeting, on the Branch web site, or you can contact Trustee **Jim Boyle**. All previous winners that still receive Scholarship payments must submit any updated info to Jim by the May monthly meeting. This would include the student's current college and where he or she will be attending in the upcoming fall semester. Remember all students must be a full-time student. All payments for the upcoming fall semester will be sent to the colleges in June. If you have any questions, Trustee **Jim Boyle** can be contacted by phone at 856-952-6107.

In Memoriam

Charles Allocco, on April 3, 2022, age 52. Active carrier from the Pennsville Post Office.

Branch Attorneys

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