

908 News

NALC Branch 908
AFL-CIO
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Bill Revak Branch 908 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
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Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com December 2021

Presidents Report

I would like to take this time to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy and healthy New Year. As you continue to deliver the enormous number of packages this year, which I am told is exceeding all expectations, I want to update everyone on the current issues we are facing and will continue to face in the new year. First and foremost, our latest contractual COLA is standing at **\$582.00**, with 3 months remaining. I will have the latest numbers at our meeting in December. The retiree raises stands at **1.2%**, which has 11 more months to go for their numbers to be completed! This is on top of the last contractual raise of **1.3%**, for our members, which they just received in November. I know the high cost of living isn't really a good thing, but can you just imagine if we didn't have those protections factored in? The next item we are still waiting on is the COVID-19 vaccination and testing mandate the Biden administration has tried to implement. It appears the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit in Cincinnati, has been designated to resolve all pending legal challenges to this emergency rule. In a related development, the NLRB General Counsel's office has issued a memorandum affirming that unionized employers will be obliged to bargain in good faith with their unions over the workplace effects of the OSHA rule. I will let everyone know when I hear how this all turns out. Next, for those employees who have amassed annual leave in excess of the normal 440 hours this year, may again carryover up to 520 hours for leave year 2022. This also means if you retire, you may get terminal leave of up to the 520 hours. This memo expires at the end of 2022, so be careful not to get caught in a use or lose situation next year. There is no guarantee this memo will be extended in the following year. Another issue we have seen surface this November is the POOM in our district mandating carriers' swipe to 737 while delivering parcels. We contend this a violation of our contract, in that all mail delivered on a route be given credit for the time and number of parcels it delivers. It appears the POOM has her own idea on how this works, and has instructed all managers to enforce this policy, even though they all know it is improper. For the life of me I can't understand why management would not want to give our routes the proper numbers they show! All this will do is create tons of grievances and bad data integrity issues when they want to conduct route inspections. Hopefully, someone will step in to stop this nonsensical approach to manipulating the data. Will they never learn? Last, but not least, I want to once again remind everyone on the issue of working in the dark, especially our newer CCA's. Darkness, in and of itself is not a safety issue. What could be an issue is if you can't make a delivery because of the darkness at a residence or other receptacle. You must make a determination on whether it is a safety issue to make a delivery. If you believe it is, then please bring back that delivery and let your manager know you couldn't make that delivery because it created a possible safety issue. It is best to err on the side of safety, then to try and make an attempt and get injured. Unless you are told by your manager to bring back mail, please do not take it upon yourself to bring back any mail. It will definitely take you longer in the dark, but we get paid by the hour, and if it means

staying out until all mail is delivered safely, then that's what it takes. Please remember to be extra cautious during this crazy time as people are all in a hurry and one moment of distraction or trying to go faster than you have to could be disastrous. Please come out to our Christmas meeting and enjoy our shrimp and wing fest and enjoy a relaxing evening with your brothers and sisters. Stay safe.

Gary DiGiacomo – President
856-906-2838

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, December 15th @ 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, December 8th @ 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, November 17th**, **Brian Lefebvre**, a member out of the Atco Office would have been the recipient of the \$75 attendance prize. **The prize now increases to \$100 and will be won by a member in attendance at the December 15th meeting!**

Comments From the VP

I want to wish all our Branch 908 members (regular, retired, CCAs) and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Prosperous and Safe New Year. I want to thank the following carriers and their families for sponsoring a child from the Angel Tree for under privileged children. From our Bellmawr Office, **Bob Olszewski, AJ Rybicki**. Haddon Heights, **Bill Kyser, Rico Jackson**. Mt. Ephraim, **Mike Hoopes, Joe Powell** (retired). Westville, **Nick Acevedo, Steve Elias, and Ozzie Lecky**. Gloucester, **Bob Gaff**, VP - **Mike Powell, Joe Sloan** (retired), and John Andrioli (Supervisor). One retiree requested to be anonymous. Again, a big thank you to all of you!!! I have a few items to address, the first is when supervisors ask us carriers to do more work in an unrealistic time frame. So, what happens in this scenario is a lot of carriers go faster and cut corners to make it work out. Some skip breaks and lunches. Some delay mail. There are umpteen other ways some carriers cut corners to make the so-called numbers work. The upshot of it is, when supervisors dump their false numbers on us carriers, many carriers end up rewarding this misbehavior by giving supervisors the so-called improved productivity numbers they wanted. Please do not fall into this trap. Work professionally and take your lunch and breaks. This leads me to my next item, the 3996. 1. Verbally inform your supervisor when you believe you cannot complete your route in 8 hrs. **Sections 131.41 and 131.42 of M-41**. 2. Request and fill out form 3996. **Section 122.33 of M-39**. 3. Keep your cool and do not argue. Tell your supervisor that you will do your best and ask for a copy of the 3996. **The M-39 section 122.33 requires supervisors to provide you with a copy if you request it.** All you have to do

is your best: work professionally. 4. Do not make decisions. Carriers get paid to deliver mail. Supervisors get paid to make decisions. If you feel you cannot make your approved time, call your supervisor, and ask what he would like you to do. **Ex. Bring mail back or finish the route.** The next issue is serious. Several of our offices are without a Union Steward, most if not all for quite some time. The Branch is asking that any carrier, T-6, or CCA who works in an office without a Steward consider taking the job. The Branch will train you and help you with any issues that arise in your office. These are paid positions in the Branch. Please call President **Gary DiGiacomo** if you are interested or come out to the next Union meeting. It is Christmas time and that means plenty of parcels and forced overtime. I am sure that many are working more than the 12- and 60-hour limits. Most carriers are worn out by the time Christmas Day gets here, and management does not make it any easier with their false numbers and harassment. I would like to take this time to thank all our members, especially here at the Camden, Shit Hole, Annex, for all your demanding work each day of the year. I want to encourage all our active members, retired members and CCAs to try to attend our December meeting. 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 be Union. **We are in this together, Be Safe and God Bless**

Mike Powell – Vice – President

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello brothers and sisters. Open season for health, dental, and vision insurance is now closed. Changes after this point can only be made for a “Qualifying Life Event”. If you had/have any problems with changes, etc...feel free to give me a call at 856-304-8665. Although open season has ended the NALC MBA is open year-round to sign up for any of the Life Insurance, Retirement savings, or the new Individual Disability Income. To find out more go to: <https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/mutual-benefit-association>

At this point there are no foreseen changes coming up for 2022 in the FMLA laws. For any serious, reoccurring, or dependent care medical situations protect yourself with FMLA. Follow the link for qualifications, coverage, etc... <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/faq>

The year is almost coming to an end so if you plan on getting a reimbursement for optical expenses send it to me so that I receive it before 12/31/21. Any claims received after this date will have to be counted for the year 2022. To receive yours for 2021 send me a copy of your optical expense with your name, address, office/retired to:

George Greenwood 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021...Any questions always feel free to call...856-304-8665. Have a blessed holiday brothers and sisters, and be safe.

- **George Greenwood, HBR**

Ozzie's Corner

EVERY BLUE-COLLAR UNION JOB HAS 1! Part 2: The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) is the second major union I will touch on. The IBEW has 775,000 members (active and retired). The industries the IBEW covers are utilities, construction, telecommunications and manufacturing. In 2011, the IBEW created The Unity Fund. Just like LCPF: A. The Unity Fund is used to defend attacks on collective bargaining rights. B. The Unity Fund works to address labor issues that threaten good paying American jobs. In addition, The Unity Fund is used for financial aid for members who are on strike and assists IBEW people who have suffered loss from natural disasters (Not like LCPF). The 2 ways a member can contribute to The Unity Fund is by writing/sending in a check to the national headquarters in Washington, D.C. and the other is by credit card (Not like LCPF). Another form of activism the IBEW practices is E-Activist (remember this guys and gals!). The E-Activist portal has general info the IBEW asks about the member (name, address, organization, etc). After the member completes the E-Activist application, the member is on an automatic alert to receive important emails and notifications from the union.

The third major union we will look at is The United Steelworkers (USW). The USW is North America's largest industrial union that covers jobs in the pharmaceutical, metal

and education fields just to name a few. The name of the action program USW uses is called PAC (Political Action Committee). Just like LCPF: A. PAC is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from members of USW. B. Regardless of political affiliation, a portion of the finances from PAC is used to support political candidates who have the best interests in the USW. USW encourages their members to contribute through an automatic payroll deduction (just like Postalease) as the best option, however members can select a monthly withdrawal from their bank account too (Just like EFT: Electronic Fund Transfer). Interestingly, one-time contributions can only be accepted with a credit or debit card (Not like LCPF). So, whether you are a Locomotive Engineer for Amtrak, a Pharmacy Tech for Express Scripts, a Camera Operator for the local TV station or a City Letter Carrier for the United States Postal Service, there is only 1 common denominator. Contributing to the pacs of these good paying blue-collar jobs is the fuel that will keep our labor movement running for many years to come.

Finally, I want to thank December's LCPF contributors: **Angela Brothers** (Bellmawr), **Sonya Brown** (Voorhees), **Esther Gonzalez** (Voorhees) and **Jack Geisler Sr.** (Life Member: Woodbury). Also, I want to thank **Jim Livingston** (Riverton) for his LCPF assistance. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 to reach me for any matters in our branch. I want to wish you and your loved ones a Happy Holiday and Happy New Year.

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.)*

Turkey Drawing Winner

At the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, November 17th**, **Marc Davis**, a member out of our Blackwood Office was the winner of the Annual Jack Bittner Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway. Thanks to Branch Trustee Chairman **Jim Comuso** for donating this year's turkey.

Proposed 2022 Branch Budget

The proposed 2022 Branch Budget, which has been approved by the Executive Board, was presented for the review and consideration of the membership in attendance at the regular monthly meeting on November 17th. The proposed budget will be open for review, discussion, consideration, and vote at the regular monthly Branch meeting on December 15th. The budget estimates the receipt and expenditures of \$255,096.00 for 2022.

Career Non-Member Listing as of 12/1/2021

The following Career Letter Carriers are gladly accepting the COLAs, raises, step increases as well as the union protections provided by the NALC. 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.

Donna Fetzer – Blackwood
Jessica Dowd - Bridgeton
Walter Lyons – Hammonton
Tyrone Johnson - Riverton
Nicole West – Stratford
Mark Robinson – Swedesboro
Luis Luna – Williamstown
Dawayne Sanders – Williamstown
Paul Heil – Woodbury

The Officers and Shop Stewards of the Branch would like to take this opportunity to personally wish You and Yours a Happy Holiday Season and a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year!

Branch Attorneys

**Uliase & Uliase
106 White Horse Pike, Haddon Heights, NJ 08035
(856) 310-9002**