

908 News

NALC Branch 908
AFL-CIO
PO Box 150
Pennsville, NJ
08070

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



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Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com January 2020

Presidents Report

Happy New Year everyone. As we head into the new year, we will be facing many hurdles in the months ahead. The first issue, and the most important one deals with our waiting on a new contract. Hopefully, we won't have to wait too long for the arbitration decision, since there won't be the usual delays of trying to get the postal service to agree on a new agreement with stall tactics they like to use, since we are heading directly to a hearing. Hopefully, the decision will be resolved by the spring or early summer. The next issue we are patiently waiting on is the arbitration decision on the consolidated casing initiative. We have witnessed the utter failure of this process in our Marlton installation, and we should be hearing of this decision shortly. Another issue we will be waiting on as our contract becomes finalized is the national dispute on the Safety Captain/Safety Ambassador Program. When this program was started unilaterally by management, the union decided to cease working jointly with management, since the program gave us no say on who would be chosen as a Safety Captain and had many problems which could divide the work-force. Understanding the importance of safety, especially in our district, which ranks near the bottom nationally, our Business Agent, David Napadano and the District Manager, James Drummer, have agreed with continuing the principles and expanding the participation of the current Safety Captain program. There will changes to the program that we originally had wanted for this program. The Union will have the right to choose its representatives in the program and the observations made by these captains cannot be used in any way for discipline. We have always stated that safety is the most important part in our daily work life, but management never wanted to do it in a fair and joint way. Hopefully, with a new contract we can get back to working together with management for the betterment of our members, and this local agreement is a good start. I will keep everyone updated as I get more information on this program. The next issue that I became aware of during the heavy holiday season was how management was soliciting carriers to work less than their 8-hour guaranteed time when working a non-scheduled day. Let me quote from our contract, The Step 4 settlement H4N-2D-C 40885, November 14, 1988 (M-00879) provides that "Management may not solicit employees to work less than their call-in guarantee, nor may employees be scheduled to work if they are not available to work the entire guarantee." Please don't be fooled or agree to work less than you are guaranteed to receive, even if that's all you really want to work. Those provisions were put in the contract to protect you from managers trying to save a buck at our expense. If you can't commit to 8 hours, don't accept this improper offer. I have instructed all stewards to file grievance on behalf of those carriers who have "waived" their guarantee. The only way to waive a guarantee is if you became sick or had a personal emergency occur while you were working. One other item I would like to mention that concerns our Gold Card members. When you reach your 50 years in membership, your dues are waived, and you no longer have to pay to stay a member. You deserve that for the milestone you have reached. Lastly, we will be having the installation of all officers at the January meeting. Our National Business Agent, David Napadano, will be there to install the officers for their next 2-year term. Hope to see everyone at the meeting. In unionism!

- Gary DiGiacomo – President
856-906-2838

Next Meeting

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

Attendance Prize Winner!

At the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on Wednesday **December 18th, Andrew McGraw Jr.**, a member out of our Woodbury Office won the **\$225** attendance prize. The prize now stands at \$25 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

Happy New Year to all our active and retired members and their families! I would like to thank the members of Branch 908 for all your support and having the confidence in me to serve as your Vice-President. I would also like to thank all our active carriers and CCAs for a job well done throughout the year and especially during the hectic holiday season. As in past years, I recommend that everyone start the New Year off by checking their Personnel file for mistakes and for discipline that should have been removed. The Postal Service, in compliance with OPM, has gotten rid of the paper versions of the OPF (Official Personnel File), the files are all digital now and you can view your file from your home computer. Go to the eOPF website at <https://eopf.usps.gov/eOPF/jsp/essLogin.jsp>. Once there, you will need your EIN (Employee Identification Number), this is the number on your pay stub, and your USPS PIN number (the same one you use for Postal EASE). If you forget your PIN, call 1-877-477-3273 and follow the prompts to have a new PIN mailed to you. Once you log in you can view and print anything in your file. If you find something that should not be there, contact your Shop Steward. I know this sounds like a broken record, but I would like to remind all our active members to serve their routes in a safe and professional manner. Do not be bullied by management and their projections to run thru your route. Take your lunch and breaks and take the time that is necessary to complete your route safely. I want to encourage all our members and especially our CCAs to try to attend our monthly meetings. It's your chance to get some important information on things happening in the branch and most importantly to ask questions or voice your concerns to your elected officers. If any active, CCA or retired member needs my help on any issue please contact me anytime at **(856)-906-2026 or 908vp@comcast.net**.

PROUD TO BE UNION
Mike Powell - Vice President

2020 Branch Budget Approved

Those in attendance and eligible to vote at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch held on December 18th unanimously approved the Branch 2020 Budget. The budget estimates the receipt and expenditures of the Branch at \$237,000.00 for 2020.

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello brothers, and sisters. Happy New Year. With the new year fill out a new health assessment too. Anyone with the NALC HBP High Option can fill these out annually and receive your choice of one of three gifts offered. While you're at it check out the many free programs, and discounts offered through the plan at nalchbp.org.

With the new year I'm also anxiously awaiting the announcement of when the MBA will be rolling out the new Disability policies. Hopefully the government red tape, and regulations is being maneuvered smoothly, and the policies can be offered very soon. I will get that information out immediately as I receive it.

One more item for the new year would be the optical reimbursements provided by NALC Br. 908. Any member in good standing is entitled to one \$20 reimbursement for the year for optical expenses incurred. To receive yours simply send me a paper copy of your optical receipt with your name, address, and office/retired to George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021.

Any questions on the above, or other matters please feel free to give me a call anytime at **856-304-8665**. Take care brothers, and sisters. Have a safe happy healthy New Year.

- **George Greenwood, HBR**

Ozzie's Corner

This month in January, marks a special anniversary for me as an officer. I will be celebrating my 5-year anniversary as the Legislative Director and LCPF Chairman for NALC Branch 908. Before 2015, the Legislative and Political pact the NALC promoted nationally was called COLCPE (Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education). In our local, there was 1 and only 1 man that headed this program for 50 plus years as the COLCPE Coordinator, **Norm Task**. For anybody that didn't know Norm, he was a little guy. Norm stood 5'5" and weighed maybe 140 pounds, but the words that came out of his mouth stood taller and had more weight than anybody I ever heard of talk about how politics ties in with our jobs as Letter Carriers. Norm's voice had fire and passion behind it. In addition, he captivated his audience because you never knew what he was going to say and after every general monthly meeting report, he would pump his fist in the air. As a young guy starting out in the union and going to the meetings, it was inspiring to see what he was doing for ALL OF US. Unfortunately, in mid to late 2014 serious health issues were catching up with him and he couldn't attend the meetings on a regular basis. Therefore in 2015, President **Gary DiGiacomo** appointed me the position as COLCPE Coordinator. The very next weekend, I contacted Norm and told him the news and he was excited. Norm realized he couldn't run the race no more, but he was damn proud that I showed interest in doing this difficult job for our branch. In my first 2.5 years, at least once a month, I would keep him updated on what was going on with our branch numbers and percentages. Needless to say, he was elated and overjoyed. However, the joy turned to sadness in May 2017 when he passed at the young age of 91. Norm fought his health issues for as long as he could and that is what a union is all about. We have to fight until we die. As Political Representative, that is my promise to you. I am going to continue to work as hard as I can to educate and inform my brothers and sisters in this local on the issues that matter the most to Letter Carriers in the Legislative Spectrum. I want to thank you Norm for passing the torch to me and may you continue to rest in eternal peace. Next, I want to thank **Gary DiGiacomo** (Current President) for selecting me and having the confidence in me to do the branch work. In addition, I want to thank **Mike Powell** (Current VP) for his big-brother wisdom. Finally, I want to thank all of the officers, shop stewards and members (past and present) who I have met, talked to or had a pleasure to work with in this branch.

In other news, I want to thank this month's LCPF contributors: (Active): **Ashley Andrews** (Maple Shade), **Jason Axilbund** (Westville), **Albert DiSipio** (Stratford), **Mario Illiano** (Bellmawr), **Keith Mitchell** (Bellmawr), **James Murphy Jr.** (Sewell). (Retirees): **Rose Burke** (Stratford), **Gregory Byrnes** (Hammonton), **William Dougherty Jr.** (Williamstown), **David Hogate** (Elmer), **Loretta Morris** (Gibbstown), **Joseph Powell Jr.** (Mt. Ephraim), **John Wilson Sr.** (Woodbury) and (Life Member) **William Debes** (Williamstown). Remember, for as little as a \$1 per pay contributing to this pact helps protect all factors of a Letter Carrier's job. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 if you need my assistance in any matters in our branch. I hope to see you all at January 15th's meeting.

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.)*

Annual Branch Banquet – March 28

Start planning to attend now. The 13th Annual Branch 908 Banquet will be held on **March 28, 2020** from 7:00 – 11:00pm at Elizabeth's Ballroom located at Highland Blvd. & Sylvan Ave., Gloucester City N.J. This is a great night to eat, drink, dance, and socialize with good friends and specially to honor those members who have retired in the past year as well as those who have been selected to receive Branch Awards.

The following Branch members have retired in the 2019 pay year.

Vince Castagna – Blackwood
Joanne Lamplugh – Riverton
Leroy Blount – Marlton
Edgar Cantiveros – Marlton
Janice Murray - Marlton
James Hiltwine – Marlton
Annette Rodriguez–Rivera – Pennsville
Gregory Byrnes – Hammonton
Vincent Lombardo – Sewell
Shari Owen – Riverton
Arlene Schwartz – Marlton
Dawn Cain – Marlton
William Bryson – Voorhees
April DiRocco – Marlton
Matthew Maher – Marlton
Michael Olson – Sewell

If you retired during the 2019 pay year and your name is not listed above, contact Vice President Mike Powell at **(856) 906-2026 or 908vp@comcast.net**.

Those members retiring beginning with pay period 1 – 2020 through pay period 26 – 2020, will be honored at the 2021 banquet.

Grievance Log

Step B Decision

Elmer - Management had just cause to issue corrective action for Improper Conduct/Failure to follow Instructions, however the team agrees the 14-Day Suspension was punitive in nature and reduces the suspension to a 7-Day suspension to be removed in 1 year from date of issue.

Sewell - Management violated Article 17 of the National Agreement when they failed to provide sufficient time to the steward for grievance handling. As a remedy, the steward will be compensated a lump sum payment of **\$1500.00** for the time spent processing grievances off-the-clock.

Stratford - Management violated article 8 of the National Agreement when non-overtime desired list carriers worked overtime before maximizing the ODL carriers. As a remedy, **1 carrier to receive .50 hours at the overtime rate.**

Stratford - Management violated article 8 of the National Agreement when non-overtime desired list carriers worked overtime before maximizing the ODL carriers. As a remedy, **4 carriers will receive 2.33 hours at the penalty overtime rate.**

Stratford - Management violated article 8 of the National Agreement when non-overtime desired list carriers worked overtime before maximizing the ODL carriers. As a remedy, **1 carrier to receive .22 hours at the overtime rate and 1.33 hours at the penalty overtime rate.**

Stratford - Management violated article 8 of the National Agreement when non-overtime desired list carriers worked overtime before maximizing the ODL carriers. As a remedy, **2 carriers to receive .45 hours at the penalty overtime rate.**

Stratford - Management violated article 8 of the National Agreement when non-overtime desired list carriers worked overtime before maximizing the ODL carriers. As a remedy, **1 carrier to receive 2.50 hours at the penalty overtime rate and 1 carrier to receive 1 hour at the overtime rate and 1.50 hours at the penalty overtime rate.**

Dates to Remember

March 1 – 4 – Region 12 Rap Session – Bally's AC

March 28 – Branch Banquet

August 17 – 21 – National Convention - Honolulu