

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

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Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com January 2023

Presidents Report

Happy New Year everyone. As we head into 2023, we will have many new challenges to face. First and foremost, we have new leadership at our national headquarters in D.C. Next, we will be starting negotiations for a new contract. Our current agreement expires this May. Hopefully, we can get another good contract without the use of arbitration. It appears the PMG is all about saving money and moving the company forward, so I would hope he would be a smart businessman and negotiate in good faith to get us a fair and just agreement. Time will tell if he means what he says when it comes to being a true partner with our craft. Speaking of our contract, the last of our raises will be official after the release of the C.P.I. in February. The latest numbers, with 2 months remaining, stands at a meager **\$41.00**. The retirees raise stands at **.2%**. We can't complain, since we have just amassed the largest raises in the history of the postal service.

Moving on to the next piece of news deals with COVID-19 claims. If you weren't made aware, **effective January 27, 2023**, all COVID-19 claims will no longer be considered CA-1 claims. All claims will now be filed on form CA-2. For those of you not familiar with this form, all I can say is it will be difficult to get these claims paid for, since there is a lot of documentation needed to get this type of claim approved. The reason being in most cases there is no clear, identifiable incident or incidents over a single day or work shift to which the injured worker can specifically attribute the event alleged to have caused the diagnosed COVID-19. The reason we now have to file a CA-2 is the uncertainty of COVID-19 has now passed. COVID-19 is being treated similarly to other airborne infectious diseases where the origins are unclear. Next, we are starting to see more offices being selected for the new route evaluation process. Our Marlton office is being looked at next, and the reason being is they were part of the consolidated casing disaster, and all those offices were automatically included in the next round. I just want to remind all carriers to continue doing your route in a professional manner and observe all safety rules and regulations, and take those breaks and comfort stops you need on a daily basis. Just remember, comfort stops are allowed and cannot be denied if they are reasonable. Comfort stops become part of your route time. If you don't take them, you won't get credit when your route is evaluated. I suggest everyone make sure you take comfort stops as you need them each day so when your route time is evaluated, we won't have any issues verifying them. This new process can track all your movements, so when they come and look at your route your time out there will be what you are doing out there. Please be smart and don't put yourself in a position where we can't defend your times on the street. Next, if you have been following the PMG's statements on our future, you see he is getting very aggressive on his 10-year plan. He is starting to look to consolidate offices into one large building. I haven't heard any official news for our area, but the rumors are flying. Next, he has also stated the postal service will be purchasing 66,000 electric delivery vehicles starting immediately until 2028. He also stated they will acquire 106,000 delivery vehicles replacing nearly half of the 220,000-vehicle fleet. One last item, that only involves our Marlton office, is the end of the Flat Sequencing System (FSS.) The postal service has finally determined this system is no longer cost efficient with the steady decline in Flat Mail. I have to say the PMG has really got involved in the waste in the postal service in his short tenure and is quickly addressing the waste. Hope to see everyone at this month's meeting where I will have

all the latest information affecting you. Stay safe.

Gary DiGiacomo – President

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, January 18th @ 8 pm**, 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 pm**, and the Shop Stewards **@ 8 pm**. The next meeting of the Executive Board and Shop Stewards will be on **Wednesday, January 11th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Winner!

At the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on Wednesday **December 21st, Serena Hughes**, a member out of our **Atco** Office won the **\$250** 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. 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. Make plans now to attend our annual Branch Banquet. Save the date, Saturday, April 15, 2023, 7 – 11pm. Tickets are \$20 for members and guests, \$10 for Branch retirees. Contact VP Mike Powell at (856) 906-2026 or 908vp@comcast.net or your shop steward for tickets. I want to encourage all our active members, retired members and CCAs to try to attend our monthly meetings. 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.

Mike Powell – Vice – President

Happy New Year!

Annual Branch Banquet – April 15, 2023

Start planning to attend now. The **16th Annual Branch 908 Banquet** will be held on **Saturday, April 15, 2023, 7 – 11pm** 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 2022 (there is still 1 pay period to go, so, we may have a few more to add if you retired at the end of the year):

Gay Lynn Brandt – Atco
Daniel Benevento III – Sewell
Wayne Sheltman – Riverton
John Martin – Woodbury
Thomas McCabe – Woodbury
Mike Porter – Voorhees
Lori Simmerman – Bridgeton
Felix Bocchicchio – Mt Ephraim
Anthony Cristella – Blackwood
Norm Spence - Pennsville

If you retired during 2022 and your name is not listed above, contact Vice President Mike Powell at **(856) 906-2026** or **908vp@comcast.net**.

2023 Branch Budget Approved

Those in attendance and eligible to vote at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch held on **December 21st** unanimously approved the Branch 2023 Budget. The budget estimates the receipt and expenditures of the Branch at **\$272,856.00** for 2023.

“The labor movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress. Out of its bold struggles, economic and social reform gave birth to unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, government relief for the destitute and, above all, new wage levels that meant not mere survival but a tolerable life. The captains of industry did not lead this transformation; they resisted it until they were overcome. When in the thirties the wave of union organization crested over the nation, it carried to secure shores not only itself but the whole society.”

- *Martin Luther King Jr.*



Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello brothers and sisters. Happy New Year. Although unusual, this year all your health, dental, and vision plan benefits begin January 1, 2023. If you have not received ID cards for any of your plans and need to utilize the benefits simply call your plan and ask for ID numbers until you receive your cards.

For NALC plans call NALC Health Benefit Plan 1-703-729-4677 Monday thru Friday 8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

One of NALC HBP features to look into this year is Hinge Health. Why? Good news! As a member of the National Association of Letter Carrier (NALC) Health Benefit Plan, you and your eligible family members (18 and older) have access to digital physical therapy programs from Hinge Health. Reduce your back, knee, hip, shoulder, or neck pain as much as 70%. Our Musculoskeletal Program through Hinge Health offers a convenient way to help you overcome back and joint pain, avoid surgeries, and reduce medication usage - all from the comfort of your home. This program is offered at no cost to you and your dependents. Depending on the treatment needed, this program offers access to physicians, physical therapists and health coaches, and motion sensor technology to guide you to the right care at the right time.

For more information or to enroll call 855-902-2777 or visit hingehealth.com/nalc. This is a fantastic program that is free to you, they send you any needed equipment, and it works. I'll be speaking on this at the membership meeting in January 2023, and also will bring what I received to show everyone.

Quick reminder: MBA offers all members great programs for life insurance, disability insurance, and various savings programs. For more information go to

<https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/mutual-benefit-association>

The new year for optical reimbursements has begun. Reimbursements are one \$20 per year for yourself/dependent. For any member in good standing send me a paper copy of your optical expense with your name, office/retired to George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021...any questions give me a call 856-304-8665. Have a safe, happy, healthy new year folks.

George Greenwood, HBR

Ozzie's Corner

As we ring in the new year and say goodbye to one of the most productive years in NALC history (the signing of The Postal Service Reform Act Of 2022 into law), the year 2023 brings on new goals and priorities our union wants to achieve. First, the NALC wants to push back to the forefront HR 842 (The PRO Act: The Protecting the Right To Organize). 2022 saw individuals in the labor movement coming together and standing up to billion-dollar employers successfully organizing unions (example: Starbucks). Therefore, the hardworking men and women who clock in on a daily basis to start their occupations deserve a much-needed contractual voice at the bargaining table. Next on the agenda, The NALC wants to work with The Postal Service in renominating Board of Governor member Donald "Lee" Moak. Moak's background covers primarily the aviation industry with extensive stints as a pilot, pilot leader and association leader (former President and Chief Operating Officer of The Air Line Pilots Association). Because he was a staunch advocate for aviation safety, Moak helped ensure aviation jobs for many years to come in the airlines field. In August 2022, Moak was a special guest speaker in Chicago at our national convention and vowed to work with the NALC, and with the other fellow Board of Governors to come up with ideas and ways to hire new City Letter Carriers and fix the staffing problems. This would be a huge feather in our cap union wise because Moak already brings job creativity experience working in a previous life as a union delegate. Another important item The NALC wants to negotiate with Congress is Hazard Pay. Nearly 2.5 years later since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, City Letter Carriers continue to be on the front lines providing essential service to our American customers. However, our City Letter Carrier who works in today's world has a greater and higher risk to health and safety issues. The added financial compensation would be a true token of appreciation to our members in a time when we as City Letter Carriers are relied upon the most right now (example: delivering a 2nd round of free Covid Test Kits).

In other Branch 908 news, I will be putting together our first branch CCA/PTF nights coming up in the next couple of months. I have narrowed it down to a Tuesday and it will be definitely before the start of our yearly Prime Time schedule (May 2023). I want to thank fellow Executive Board Officers **Mike Powell** (Vice President), **Shawn McBride** (Asst. Recording Secretary) and **George Greenwood** (Health Benefits Officer) for their participation in the event. Because 908 has over 30 offices in our branch, we will be having multiple meetings on different nights. I ask that all CCAs and PTFs continue to read the monthly Newsletter and attend the general meetings to get the latest info on dates and times.

Finally, I want to thank this month's LCPF contributors: **Ashley Andrews, Jason Axilbund, Mike Breyer, William Dougherty Jr., Tyler Harvey, Chuck Huff III, Mario Illiano, Mike Lombardi, Matthew Maher, Jack McCormick, Keith Mitchell, Herbert Nuss Jr., Joe Powell Jr. and Seth Sexton**. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 to reach me for any matters in our branch.

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.)*

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