

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 May 2020

Presidents Report

Well brothers and sisters, another month has gone by and we are still in the midst of this COVID-19 epidemic, but I am pleased to announce that it appears the situation has started to improve in our area. The governor has started to ease his stay at home mandates and has started to open things up in a gradual manner. At this writing I am not sure we will be able to hold any meetings this month, but I ask everyone to check with your stewards and our website on the most updated information on our meeting status as we move ahead. We have been having ZOOM meetings for our officers and stewards that Vice-President Mike Powell has set up, which has actually worked out quite well for us to have meetings to discuss the many issues we are dealing with. If we aren't able to have our usual meetings this month, we will be doing this again as well.

These have been the busiest times I can ever remember in dealing with issues that affect our members, but thankfully, we have been able to get a lot of your concerns taken care of in a timely manner, thanks to the excellent cooperation we have gotten from Labor relations. Last month I spoke of just a couple of offices who were not cooperating with our members, and I can say that I believe all of the issues that were pending have been resolved, other than a few pay issues for a few carriers who were out, and the managers didn't process their times properly. I have been in constant contact with Labor to resolve these issues, so hopefully, they have all been corrected. If you run into a situation where you are not being paid correctly, please have your steward contact me to expedite the process. There is one other item I would like to mention when it comes to getting problems resolved. There have been a few carriers who have contacted our National Leaders in Washington to report an issue. I have no problem when a member wishes to speak to our national leaders, but I can tell you they will ultimately refer it back to me for an answer. Please contact your steward first and then have him contact me for any concerns, since this will make it easier for me to get your problem resolved and answer your concerns in a timelier manner.

As I stated last month, I am on a daily telcon with the district leaders and branch presidents from the south jersey district who update us on the latest information, and it appears we have finally gotten enough supplies to take care of the issues we were having in getting them in the past, which was a major concern last month. The newest issue we are dealing with is whether masks are mandatory to be worn. The latest position of the district, as of this writing, which I am writing on May 3, 2020 is masks must be worn at all times, by all employees while in their buildings and for carriers while doing park and loop deliveries on the street. Masks do not have to be worn while driving in your truck by yourself or when doing curbside deliveries. Masks should be available at all times you are in your truck in case you run into a situation where you cannot practice social distancing. I say this now, but by the time you get the newsletter this policy may have been amended. I will keep your stewards updated if anything changes. I will not speak on any more of these COVID-19 issues here, but I ask you check out the NALC app or website for all the COVID information that is currently out there.

Next, we are waiting patiently for a decision on the consolidated casing issue. I have been told that a decision has been made on this issue, but the details have yet to be made official! As soon as I hear something, I will let everyone in Marlton know. Hopefully, it is almost over!

One last and most important item is the funding for the postal service in the next stimulus bill. For those of you who have installed the NALC app, you will notice you are constantly getting pushpin notifications to take action on this measure. It is vitally important we continue to have communications with our leaders in DC, since the President has continually been fighting the funding for the postal service. Please take this action seriously, since the postal service is in for the fight of its life due to this pandemic and must be included in the next bill.

Lastly, it is with deepest sympathy, I announce the passing of **Marie Revak**, the wife of former President, and the founding father of Branch 908, **Bill Revak**, who passed away on April 30, 2020. Everyone who has been around this branch for a long time remembers the presence that Marie had while she served as the first lady under Bill and all of her work she did for our branch until very recently. One thing I remember about Marie was her honesty and integrity. She never sugar coated how she really felt. If she had a problem with you or what you were doing, she wouldn't hesitate to let you know. One thing, but there were many, I will always remember about Marie personally, was how she was always so supportive of me and my family, especially when my boys were young and how she took care of them every year at our children's Christmas party. We will miss you Marie.

- Gary DiGiacomo – President
856-906-2838

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will (*possibly*) be held on **Wednesday, May 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 (*possibly*) be on **Wednesday, May 13th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively. **Please check the Branch website nalcbranch908.com to confirm if the meeting is on before traveling to the hall.**

Comments From the VP

As I write this article, we are in unprecedented times and a fight of our lifetime with the COVID-19 virus and the effects on life as we know it. Information is a key in this fight. A particularly good source for information is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website. Their website is www.cdc.gov and it is easy to use. You can find many topics on the CDC website concerning COVID-19. The NALC website at www.nalc.org provides daily information on COVID-19 as it applies to our jobs. Please use these websites to gain the knowledge to keep yourself and your loved ones safe and healthy. I want to thank all of you out on the front line for your service. You all are **HEROES**. Thank you and please be safe. 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** We are in this together. **Be Safe and God Bless**

Proud to Be Union
Mike Powell – Vice - President

Attendance Prize Stands at \$75

Since the **April 15th** regular monthly meeting of the Branch had to be cancelled, the prize still stands at **\$75** and will increase **\$25** per meeting, up to a maximum of **\$250**, until a member in attendance has their name drawn.

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello brothers, and sisters. Hope you are all well during these trying times...The NALC HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN is here to support our members in getting the care they need. As a result of the rapidly evolving COVID-19 pandemic, the Plan has made it a priority to remove any barriers that would prevent our members from getting the necessary testing.

Diagnostic Testing for COVID-19 We will now cover physician ordered diagnostic testing at 100% for patients that meet the CDC guidelines for COVID-19. We will also cover the associated office visit at 100%. **Office Visits for COVID-19:** High Option members: If you use a PPO provider, your office visit copayment will be waived. If you use a non-PPO provider, we will pay 100% of the Plan's allowance for the office visit. **CDHP/VO Members:** If you use a PPO provider, your office visit coinsurance of 20% will be waived. If you use a non-PPO provider, we will pay 100% of the Plan's allowance for the office visit.

Telehealth/Virtual Visits: In addition to the virtual doctor visits available through NALCHBP Telehealth, the Plan will now cover medically necessary online Telehealth Office Visits. This will be effective March 1, 2020 until further notice. For the cost visit nalchbp.org. To locate a provider in the telehealth network, contact the following: NALCHBP Telehealth (medical) High Option Members visit nalchbptelehealth.org or call 888-541-7706. Telehealth (medical) CDHP/Value Option Members visit MDLIVE for Cigna.com or call 888-726-3171.

TeleMental/Virtual Visits: To ensure that our health plan members affected by COVID-19 have the mental health support and resources they need, you can access TeleMental or Virtual visits rendered by providers such as psychiatrists, psychologists or clinical social workers. Go to nalchbp.org for pricing, and how to access.

Prescription Benefits: CVS Pharmacy is now offering the option of home delivery, where available, of all prescription medications at no charge. We are also waiving early refill limits on 30-day prescriptions for maintenance medication prescriptions ahead of their normal fill schedule. Please take advantage of our 90-day prescription benefit for maintenance medications and be sure to refill any eligible 90-day maintenance medications to be sure that you stay adherent during this pandemic.

Optical reimbursements for any member in good standing are still in effect. The reimbursement is one \$20 payment per member, or family dependent per year. Send a paper copy of your optical expense to me with your name, and office/retired at: George Greenwood 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021. Any questions feel free to call me anytime at 856-304-8665. Be safe all.

- George Greenwood, HBR

Ozzie's Corner

Its official! The 2020 National Presidential Election is now set for November with Joe Biden (D) versus Donald Trump (R). One thing you must keep in mind when you look at both of these candidates, our current man in charge: Donald Trump is not a fan of the Postal Service and especially City Letter Carriers. The 2021 budget proposal calls for cuts, eliminations and slashes across every board to City Letter Carriers. If you don't believe me, go to NALC.ORG. Next, click on the search bar at the top and type in: 2021 budget proposal, the ideology will make you shake your head! In addition, the budget proposal was typed up in March 2020's Postal Record (pages 5 & 6). On the other hand, Joe Biden supports all unions across the board and he strongly believes in adapting a path to a better postal reform. With that being said, we must first go out and do our civic duty in November and cast our vote and second and the most important thing is to choose the right Pro Letter Carrier Candidate. We need to start putting our personal political beliefs to the side and on the back burner and come together as a union and fight like hell for our job, benefits and pension. Remember brothers and sisters, everything we've worked so hard for all these years can go with one stroke of the pen.

In other news, I want to take this time to thank each and every active Branch 908 member who has been on the frontlines during this horrific COVID-19 pandemic. I thank you each and every day for the immeasurable sacrifices you are doing being

essential workers. Speaking of front-line workers, pay close attention to HR (House Resolution Bill) 6559 - The COVID-19 Every Worker Protection Act Of 2020. Every day, thousands upon thousands of essential workers in occupations like: Healthcare, Transit, Construction and yes, Letter Carriers, have become infected and died of this disease. HR 6559 ensures that these front-line workers have important resources such as safe equipment, training and protocols. OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) requires by law that every person needs to be safe and healthy in their workplace. Therefore, every worker needs to be protected against infectious diseases such as COVID-19. The Bill was introduced by Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA) on April 21st and currently has 50 Cosponsors.

Finally, I want to thank this month's LCPF Contributors: **Rodel "Leo" Pagaduan** (Stratford), **John Prelas** (Woodbury), **James Suggs** (Bridgeton), **Greg Solly** (Haddon Heights), **Joe Townsend** (Gloucester City) and **Jim Boyle** (Stratford Shop Steward and Branch Trustee) for his special assistance. One dollar per pay is all it takes to stand up, fight and protect your job. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 for any matters in our branch. I look forward to speaking with you all soon and as always stay safe. **OZZIE'S CORNER CORRECTION IN APRIL'S NEWSLETTER:** H.M. Foxwell Jr's office is Penns Grove.

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.)*

Branch Scholarship Drawing

We will be drawing the winner of this year's Branch Scholarship at the regular monthly meeting on **May 15th**. 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

Grievance Log Step B Decisions

Hammonton - Management violated Article 41 Section 1.A.2 of the National Agreement when they failed to post City Route (CR) 18 after the incumbent carrier was in a higher-level supervisory position in excess of 120 days. As a remedy, CR 18 will be posted in the next available bidding cycle, additionally, due to the delay in posting, the successful bidder shall receive a **one-time lump sum payment of \$50.00**.

Hammonton - Management violated Article 8.8 of the National Agreement by failing to provide 8 hours work or pay in lieu of to a Full Time Regular Carrier who worked his non-scheduled day on December 12, 2019. As a remedy, the **carrier shall be paid 1.93 hours at the overtime rate** for the lost work hours.

Hammonton - Management violated Article 8.8 of the National Agreement by failing to provide 8 hours work or pay in lieu of to a Full Time Regular Carrier who worked his non-scheduled day on November 4, 2019. As a remedy, the **carrier shall be paid 2.51 hours at the overtime rate** for the lost work hours

Hammonton - Management violated Article 19 of the National Agreement when they failed to respond to the grievant's request under ELM Section 939.12. As a remedy, the grievant shall be granted the footwear exception as prescribed by his physician.

Westville - Management violated Article 10.5 of the National Agreement when they refused to approve the sick leave request submitted by grievant. As a remedy, local management is directed to process the necessary pay adjustments to honor the grievant's request for sick leave for the period from 11/23/2019 through 1/31/2020 within 14 days of this decision.

Stay Safe, We Will Get Through This