

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



Return Service
Requested



BUY AMERICAN - BUY UNION



Newsletter Com: Spence, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com November 2019

Presidents Report

I recently returned from the Committee of Presidents meeting last month and got a lot of updated information from President Rolando and Executive Vice President Brian Renfroe, that I will share with everyone at this month's meeting. I will try and highlight some of the important items in my report, for those who won't be able to attend the meeting. First, and foremost, is our next contract, which appears headed to arbitration, which I will go into detail on what our national is proposing and all the items they are trying to get included at this month's meeting. Some interesting things they are looking to include are adding another step to both pay charts, which I never understood why this was never addressed previously, since length of service should always include some sort of additional wages. You shouldn't be frozen once you hit the top level, there should be a reward for those who stick it out and stay for the duration. Hopefully, this will get incorporated into the next agreement. Next, as you are aware, PMG Megan Brennan has announced she is retiring at the end of January. I believe this was not her personal decision, although they will never admit it. She has a different vision than what they are looking for, as can be attested by the latest fiasco of the consolidated casing initiative, which I believe she wasn't on board with. It should be interesting to see what puppet they drop into this position. It wouldn't surprise me if the infamous "Dr." is the one they pick, since he is the brain-child behind many of these failing initiatives we have been dealing with the last couple of years. The next item he mentioned dealt with phasing out the non-career workforce. It is obvious to everyone involved the CCA position isn't working the way the USPS envisioned it. The turnover rate is over 55 percent, which isn't good, and needs to be fixed. They are still talking on CCA conversions even though we want to establish a total career workforce and eliminate the CCA title. Another thing President Rolando stated was we have no intention of extending this round of negotiations since the Postal service has no desire to want to try and come to an agreement that is good for both sides. Another item he brought up dealt with a couple of arbitration hearings that are scheduled to be heard shortly. The CCA cap grievance is scheduled to be heard in December and the Consolidated casing Initiative Grievance is scheduled for November 22nd. There are a lot of other things he touched on that I will go into detail at our regular meeting. Locally, we have been notified that our Blackwood office is scheduled to be inspected at the end of January and the Sewell office will be re-inspected again in May. They are now doing pre-walks in Blackwood as I write this month's article. I know there are a lot of newer carriers in this office, so we will have inspection training after the first of the year to get everyone up to speed on how to do a proper route inspection, so don't sweat it now. I just want everyone to remember to do your job safely and professionally and you will never have to worry. Another situation we are still dealing with is the consolidated casing initiative in our Marlton office. Nothing has changed on how it is going here, as the steward reports it is still not working and is doomed for failure, as we head into the holiday season. Hopefully, this gets resolved before then! One last thing I would like to mention is the election of all branch positions at last month's meeting. I would like to thank the membership for their support on electing everyone to their respected positions, and I am once again honored to be serving as your president for the next two years, even though there are those in the area who were hoping I would go away. Sorry, the membership has spoken,

and I am happy to continue the fight for everyone. This is the first time in branch history where we had no contested elections for any positions in our branch! Not only was this a first, but it will also save our branch thousands of dollars in what it cost to conduct an election. Thanks again. One last item that I will discuss at our meeting, is our progress on taking over the building or whether we should be pursuing a different approach on this building. We had an inspection performed on the building and as we all figured, it needs a lot of work. We have had a couple people come out and give us their opinions and we can talk about how we would like to proceed going forward. Hope to see everyone at the meeting.

- Gary DiGiacomo – President

Next Meeting

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

Attendance Prize Now at \$200

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, October 16th, Patrick McCarthy**, a retired member out of the Salem Office would have been the recipient of the **\$175** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$200** 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 wish all our Regular, Retired and CCA members and their families a Happy Thanksgiving. Any member who wants to take part in the Angel Tree for under privileged children, please contact Vice-President Mike Powell. If you believe every child deserves a Merry Christmas, then please help! I want to remind all our carriers, especially our CCAs that headlamps are not part of our uniform, and you are not required to wear them. Please let your steward know if management tries to issue you a headlamp so the proper grievances and Osha violations can be filed. Over here at the Camden, aka Hell Hole, Annex management continues to harass, use fake numbers and use discipline to intimidate. Safety violations are going on everyday here at the Hell Hole. Management has bullied the clerks into pushing and pulling two hampers at a time, the doors in this dump are left unsecured and wide open for any terrorist to walk in, and the only thing the incompetent managers here at the Hell Hole are worried about is if someone has a green tag on their sneakers. I kid you not. One of my reliable sources has told me that the District will be monitoring the performance of all carriers. They will be tracking the so called 3 vital carriers. What a joke!! How about monitoring the incompetent minions in charge of some of the offices in this district, specifically the Sewell Office comes to mind. In our Marlton office we have the unsuccessful Consolidating Casing Test going on. What a nightmare. What our brothers and sisters are going through over there is criminal. If any active member, 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

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Don't panic. I too received a letter about certain medicines no longer covered by the NALC hbp. It happens every year with all insurance companies. The biggest 2 concerns by most people so far are diabetes medications, and Epi Pens. Due to the greedy CEO's of the producing companies NALCHBP, and Cigna simply told them to keep it, and managed to get us lower cost medications for the afflictions. A simple phone call to your doctor, and pharmacy, and all will be fine.

As a matter of fact, this year NALC, and Cigna joined in with Livongo to offer diabetic patients a great new program...A Diabetes care management program – Transform Diabetes Care...This program helps deliver better overall care and lower costs for members with diabetes. Your enrollment in this program includes a connected glucometer, unlimited test strips and lancets, medication therapy counseling from a pharmacist, two annual diabetes screenings at a CVS MinuteClinic® and a suite of digital resources through the CVS mobile App, all at no cost. Please call CVS Caremark® at 800-933-NALC (6252) for more information.

Now for open season (Mon 11/11/19 – Mon 12/09/19) I encourage everyone to do their homework to see what insurance plan works best for them, but I will say that NALC Health Plan is in my opinion the best coverage, cost, and out of pocket expense offered through FEHBP. Many changes, and improvements on an already great plan for 2020 to include many free programs, incentives, and discounts for many of your personal needs. I'll be discussing many of these at the November meeting, and check it out at NALCHBP.org.

Optical Reimbursements: All members in good standing of Branch 908 are entitled to one per member/or dependent family member \$20 reimbursement for optical expenses. Simply send me a paper copy of your receipt with your name, address, and office/retired to me at: George Greenwood 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021.

Please feel free to give me a call anytime with questions concerning NALC Health benefits, Mutual Benefits, Optical reimbursements, or FMLA at 856-304-8665. Hope to see you at the next meeting.

- **George Greenwood, HBR, 856-304-8665**

Ozzie's Corner

April of 2020 will mark the 40th anniversary of the great wildcat strike. The sacrifices of those brave men and women wearing the postal blue shall never be forgotten. Before 1970, Congress had to authorize the Postal Service to pay raises to their employees. Unfortunately, wages back then were not suitable for Letter Carriers. In fact, many Letter Carriers who worked 40-hour work weeks with the pay they received were eligible for public government assistance (welfare, food stamps, etc.). As a result, many brothers and sisters across the country became frustrated and dissatisfied. The hard work protesting and fighting paid off in a big way and shortly afterwards came the first piece of important Letter Carrier Legislation Congress passed, The Postal Reorganization Act. The PRA gave us full collective-bargaining rights for the first time ever to negotiate our working conditions, hours and wages. The NALC (National Association of Letter Carriers) was established through this victory. However, let us not forget, if we didn't join hand and hand organized, standing up to our beliefs in those tough times we would be collectively-begging for what we wanted instead of collectively-bargaining. Remember, the current administration's top priority under the Postal Service Budget Proposal is to eliminate unions (collective-bargaining). I cannot stress to us how detrimental it would be if that was to happen because there would be no more checks and balances, just one party ruling everything, and our voice doesn't count. In addition, the Domino Effect would take place, losing 6 day delivery, door to door, starting privatization, etc. The Letter Carrier Political Fund since 1975 has given us as union members the assurance of not losing a thing. The 1, 5 or 10 dollars you give per pay now, can protect you as an active and retired member. I want to thank this month's contributors: **Greg Brown** (Haddon Heights), **Bob Gaff** (Gloucester City), **Chuck Huff III** (Mt. Ephraim), **Howard Nash** (Elmer), **Mike Olson** (Sewell), **Ryan Schmidt** (Pennsville) and **Tom Spearman** (Haddon Heights). My phone number to reach me for any union matters in our branch is (856) 220-8658. Finally, I want to send a special thank you and great

job to **Jim Comuso** (Trustee Chairman) for his hard work and valuable dedication to our branch. I hope to see you all at November 20th's meeting. 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.)*

Trustees Report

This month at our regular meeting we will once again be honoring former Trustee Chairman, **Jack Bittner**, with our annual Turkey give away for one lucky member in attendance. For those who didn't know Jack, he was the branch's longest serving trustee chairman, who passed away in 2007. Each year since his passing the branch honors him with a turkey, donated by our current trustee chairman, **Jim Comuso**. In other news, the Trustees will be doing one of its semi-annual audits of the books on November 11th at 7pm at the union hall, if anyone is interested in observing this process. Also, Trustee **April Litty**, who runs our children's Christmas party, wants to let everyone know it is scheduled for **December 8th from 1-3pm** for all union members and their families. If anyone is interested in helping set up the hall with April, please let her know. And, as a final save the date, our annual branch retirement and social banquet is scheduled for **March 28, 2020 from 7-11pm**. The trustees and I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving and hope to see you at this month's meeting. For any info on the branch's finances contact me @ 609-932-9913

James Comuso Sr. - Trustee Chairman

Nominated Without Opposition & Declared Elected

The following Branch Officers and Shop Stewards were nominated without opposition and declared Elected to their respective positions for the 2020 – 2021-year term of Office:

Branch Officers

President	Gary DiGiacomo
Vice President	Mike Powell
Recording Secretary	Norm Spence
Treasurer	Tom Barnett
Financial Secretary	Steve Lipski
Asst. Recording Sec.	Shawn McBride
Trustee Chairman	Jim Comuso
Trustee	Jim Boyle
Trustee	Pete DeSimone
Trustee	April Litty
Trustee	Mike Graff
Health Benefits Officer	George Greenwood
Housing Chairman	Joe Walder
Sgt At Arms	Phil Haas

Shop Stewards

Atco	Jason Dempster
Blackwood	Mark Davis
Bridgeton	Andrew Marcoionni
Camden Annex	Mike Powell
Hammonton	Frank Ingemi
Marlton	Pete DeSimone
Pennsville	Norm Spence
Riverton	Jim Livingston
Sewell	Allen Muff
Somerdale	Jim Boyle
Williamstown	Jeff Ferry
Woodbury (3)	Shawn McBride
	Jim Comuso
	Mike Graff

Convention Delegates

Tom Barnett	Jim Boyle
Jim Comuso	Jason Dempster
Mike Graff	George Greenwood
Phil Haas	Ozzy Lecky
April Litty	Jim Livingston
Shawn McBride	Allen Muff
Mike Powell	Ryan Schmidt
Norm Spence	Tom Walsh

The Branch Officers and Stewards wish all the Members and their Families a HAPPY THANKSGIVING!