

908 News

NALC Branch 908

AFL-CIO

PO Box 150

Pennsville, NJ

08070

Bill Revak Branch 908 South Jersey Letter Carriers

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

Presidents Report

I want to take this moment to thank everyone for their hard work and going the extra mile last month, on food drive day. We were put in a very bad situation when our cards never showed up from the national, who dropped the ball on getting us our cards. I don't want to blame anyone for this mishap, but we were registered, as we have been for the last 25 years, but they stated we weren't! Thanks to our Business agent, Brian Thompson, he was able to get us cards from other branches, which showed up on Wednesday and Thursday of the week of the food drive. We were able to get the cards to our offices and some offices also got bags, which definitely helped getting our numbers respectable. I have been told the south jersey food bank got their best turnout of all time, which makes me feel a little better, since I thought our branch would be a total disaster in doing our usual great showing. Once again, thank you to all who did their part to help feed those in need. Next, as I stated last month, our contract has expired as of May 20th, and as of this writing, they are still negotiating those items that can't be agreed to. Just so you know, nothing has changed, and everything stays the same until such a time as a new agreement is reached. Don't let anyone tell you the contract is no longer valid, as some have already tried saying! Keep checking the NALC website for all the latest updates, since this will be our last newsletter until September. Next, we have been talking about management placing carriers on the "Deems Desired" list for attendance. We now have **5 Step B decisions** out of our Marlton office that states management must follow the provisions of the ELM 513.361 when requiring medical documentation in the future and must not be arbitrary, capricious or **unreasonable**. It appears management there thinks they can place anyone at any time on the Deems Desired list. **These DRT decisions say they can't**. If anyone runs into this same situation, please let your steward know so we can file the appropriate grievances. Another item that has been extended to our craft is the 520 annual leave carryover, which is now extended through the 2024 leave year. This is good news for those considering retiring in the next 2 years. Another concern our national is looking at concerns the overstaffing of some of our offices. I have asked your stewards to let me know if your office is overstaffed with CCA's and are not getting hours or are being consistently loaned out to other offices. Hopefully, this situation will be resolved with the next contract. Another thing I would like everyone to be aware of concerns **Rural Carriers** doing our craft work. I have been alerted this may be happening again in some offices. For the record, **Rural carriers cannot work in our craft PERIOD!** For the life of me, I can't understand why some of our carriers would allow this to occur right under their nose. Please stop this if you see it. If you don't want to get involved, please let me know the particulars and I will address it for you. I know some carriers say as long as they don't have to carry it, they don't care who does! Bad position to take. They didn't want to be part of our craft years ago when we asked them to consider it, so please don't let them do our work now. Just so you know, any work they do in our craft will get you paid **cash money** for all the hours they work. Think about that the

next time you see them out there. Another item I want to remind everyone about is the heat that will soon be approaching. Please make sure you take all the proper safety precautions when dealing with the heat and stay hydrated. Also, please download the **OSHA/NIOSH heat safety App** from your play store. This should be with you at all times to help you navigate the heat this summer. Lastly, it was nice again to see the many new faces at last month's meeting and I hope this trend continues. Remember, this month is our **shrimp and wing feast** to start our summer break from meetings. Hope to see you there. Stay safe.

Gary DiGiacomo – President

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, June 21st @ 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, June 14th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now at \$150

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, May 17th, Aaron Glidden**, a member out of the Pennsville Office would have been the recipient of the **\$125** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$150** and will increase **\$25** per meeting, up to a maximum of **\$250**, until a member in attendance has their name drawn.

EVP's FYI

I would like to thank all the members of the greatest Branch in the NALC, Branch 908 for the opportunity to become your Executive Vice President. The topics I will be discussing with you all will be mostly about our rights and responsibilities as Letter Carriers, things we deal with daily. This month I will touch on how we handle the morning process on the workroom floor. This is probably one of the most discussed topics when I speak to Carriers regardless of years of service. This article will cover some basic advice on how to handle situations that carriers deal with. For more detailed advice please refer to the current NALC Letter Carrier Resource Guide found on NALC.org or on their APP. First you are required to orally inform your manager in accordance with sections 131.41, & 131.42 of Handbook M-41 if you believe can't carry the route in eight hours or within your normal schedule time. Request PS Form 3996 to fill out in accordance with Section 122.33 of Handbook M-39 which requires your manager to provide once you request it. If asked why the request, simply explain why calmly. If denied, immediately request to speak to your shop steward. Fill the form out, write in the request box why you can't complete your assignment in 8 hours. Please be specific and not general, your shop steward has and can provide you with a list of acceptable reasons to write down as a guide. Please don't be talked into not doing this procedure because they say the route shows a certain

time, by doing this you are allowing their tools to determine our times and our pace. This violates multiple national settlements examples such as M-01664, & M-01769 dealing with projections and our pace. Please remember nothing replaces the opinion of a professional letter carrier. Just simply provide your best estimate and reasons why. Please remember don't lose your temper, they want you to become frustrated. This will do nothing to help you, it will only hurt you. There is no reason to argue with them, simply just ask for your copy of the PS Form 3996 before you leave for the street in compliance with section 122.22 of Handbook M-39. Remember never compromise your safety or skip breaks and lunches to get back on time. We get paid to deliver mail; managers get paid to make decisions scary as that sounds. The carrier should proceed to contact the office in the afternoon per local instructions and inform them again that you can't make it back in their estimated times. Again, don't argue just simply ask should you continue, are they sending help, should I return with the mail I have left by a certain time, nothing more. Remember their bad day is not yours, don't take on undo stress. **Stay Strong, Strength in Numbers.** **Executive Vice President Shawn McBride (856)649-9317**

Comments From the VP

I want to wish all our regular and retired carriers and their families, a happy, fun filled, and safe summer. I also want to give all our shop stewards a big **Thank You!!** for doing a great job representing our members. I would also like to ask all our members, active and retired, and especially our CCAs to please take the time to get involved with the union. Remember, brothers and sisters, you are the union. Come out to a meeting, grab a bite to eat and have a beverage of your choice, meet carriers from other offices and see how your elected officers are managing your dues money. Next, I would like to congratulate our newly appointed officers **Shawn McBride**, Executive VP, **April Litty**, Recording Secretary, **Jim Comuso**, Assistant Treasurer **Jim Boyle**, Trustee Chairman and **Jason Dempster**, Trustee. I am confident they will serve the membership well. I want to extend a shout out to our members for the great job you all did for this year's food drive and to **Mike Graff** for the excellent job he did as our food drive coordinator. I want to remind everyone that the summer months are fast approaching which means we all need to be hydrated. Also, remember to put on some sunscreen, wear sunglasses and a hat to protect your skin from the sun's ultraviolet rays. I hope to see everyone at this month's meeting for our usual shrimp and wings fest. 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. Mike Powell – Vice – President**

Health Benefits, MBA, FMLA, Optical

Hello brothers and sisters. Hope you're all well. So summer is upon us. Time to be ready to protect yourself from all heat related illness/injuries. Anything from heat rash to heat stroke. You need shade, water, cool air, whatever take care of it. Your life is more important than any piece of mail ever. Know the signs and symptoms. Take whatever actions are necessary for you. Keep this link in your phone and be prepared.

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/warning.html>

Don't forget MBA over the summer. All retirement savings for CCA, regular, and families, disability insurance, etc. are all just a few clicks away. <https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/mutual-benefit-association>. Any CCA's converting to career over the summer don't forget the best health benefit plan in the business. Same for anyone retiring. You own it...The NALC Health Benefit program. Great premiums, low out of pocket expense, massive physicians and facilities network. Now available for retirees is the new NALC Aetna Advantage plan that not only offers great coverage, but also earns you a \$75 reduction in your monthly Medicare part B premium. Find it all at <https://www.nalchbp.org/>

Lastly optical reimbursements continue throughout the summer. Just send me a paper copy of your receipt with your name, address, and office/retired on it to me at George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021. Feel free to give me a call any time with your questions, or concerns. Have a great summer. Be safe sisters and brothers. George Greenwood HBR.

- **George Greenwood, HBR**

Ozzie's Corner

The White House released the 2024 Budget Proposal and there was great news to report. The report didn't call for cuts in programs under federal employees (including postal employees). The programs mentioned not to be affected were health benefits and retirement. The Budget Proposal calls for 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave. The Proposal also calls for Congress to include in the package at least 7 days of Sick Leave with the 12 weeks of leave. A childcare tax credit would be implemented, just like the measures that were under The American Rescue Plan Act in 2021, but with different dollar amounts. The 2024 childcare tax credit for a child under 6 years of age would be \$3,600 per child. A child 6 years of age and older would be \$3,000 per child. In 2021 under ARP (American Rescue Plan), the childcare tax credit was \$2,000 across the board for any age group.

In other news, I want to thank **Dalin Hackley** (Community Outreach Coordinator, Con. Norcross's Office, Camden, NJ) for guest speaking at our branch retirement dinner and for producing our annual honoree certificates. Also, I want to say a big thank you to **Alyson Kerr** (South Jersey Director, Con. Jeff Van Drew, Northfield, NJ) for their retiree certificates.

Finally, I want to thank this month's LCPF contributors: **Greg Brown** (Haddon Heights), **Cathleen Cleary** (Woodbury), **Kyle Duboise** (Woodbury), **Amberlyn Gonzalez** (Pennsville), **Derrion Moore** (Woodbury), **Loretta Morris** (Gibbstown: Retiree), **Kevin O'shaughnessy** (Marlton), **Jason Weaver** (Woodbury) and **Denise Zanes** (Pennsville). I want to say a special thank you to **Jim Comuso** (Asst. Treasurer) for his assistance at our CCA/PTF night. My phone number is (856) 220-8658 and email is opleckyjr@gmail.com if you need me for any matters in our branch. I want to wish you and your family a safe and happy summer.

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.)*

Branch Scholarship Winner

The winner of this year's Branch Scholarship is **Joshua Garcia**, son of Blackwood carrier **Perla Garcia** out of the Atco office. The alternate is **Chloe Danaher**, daughter of **Tom Danaher** retired carrier out of Gloucester. The winner of the Scholarship will receive a fund of \$2000.00 (\$500.00 a year for four years). If you have any questions, Trustee **Jim Boyle** can be contacted by phone at 856-952-6107.

No Meetings for the Summer

Just a reminder that there will be no regular monthly Branch meetings or Shop Steward meetings in July or August. There will also not be a newsletter published during this period. We will return to our normal schedule in September.

Branch Picnic

The Annual Branch picnic at Clementon Park and Splash World will be held on **Sunday, September 10th**. Park hours are from 11am to 6 pm. Food will be served between 2 pm and 4 pm. The buffet includes hamburgers, hot dogs, wings, hoagie tray, baked beans, potato salad, potato chips, pickles, frozen dessert, soda and beer. Tickets are \$25 per person (children 36" and under are free), tickets include admission to both parks and free parking. All tickets must be bought in advance; there will be **No Tickets Sold at the Gate**. Clementon Park requires a headcount so that they can properly staff the park. Therefore, **all tickets must be purchased by August 12, 2023 – no exception!** Tickets can be purchased by **check or money order only, no cash**, at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch or from a Branch Officer or your Shop Steward. You can also mail a self-addressed stamped envelope with a check or money order made out to "Branch 908" to Phil Haas, 112 Park Ave., Gloucester, NJ 08030. Contact Phil Haas with any questions or for more info: 609-868-3285.

Branch Attorneys

Uliase & Uliase

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