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| 908 NewsNALC Branch 908AFL-CIO**PO Box 1223**Blackwood, NJ 08012 | Bill Revak Branch 908South Jersey Letter Carriers

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| **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: Litty, Lipski, Powell Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com April 2024** |

**Presidents Report**

In case you haven’t heard, we have finally selected a neutral arbitrator to hear our case, which hopefully will get scheduled ASAP, and not drag on into the summer months. His name is Dennis Nolan, and he is the same arbitrator who was scheduled to hear our last contract before it was settled. I am getting some noise that I am being a little too hard on my position on the delay in getting an agreement, but I truly believe something isn’t right this round. More and more information is starting to surface on the real reason there was a delay in the negotiation process. Stay tuned for all the latest news as I will constantly keep you updated on all the latest information I get. I am still hopeful this contract will be settled before a hearing, because if not, we won’t get an agreement before the summer. The national has not yet published when the hearings will be held, which again makes me believe something is up! I will go into more detail at the meeting. Next, by the time you get this month’s newsletter, everyone should have received the HIPP training for this year. As long as you were given this training by April 1, 2024, in front of the TV screen or computer, then that qualifies for the training. If you believe you haven’t been given this most important training, please let your steward know, so we can get the appropriate grievances filed and your managers held accountable. This training is not optional, but mandatory, since heat awareness, especially in our area, is very important to identify to help avoid any serious health effects. For those who didn’t attend last month’s meeting, I will give you a brief synopsis of what our National President, Brian Renfroe discussed at the Region 12 training seminar many of the officers and stewards attended last month in Atlantic City. Obviously the most important topic was our next agreement. He mentioned a few items that he believes will be included in the next contract. First, he said it looks like there will be changes to Article 8, which may include more lists, such as a work assignment carrier who can also work their drop day on their own route, which as of now is not allowed. Not sure how this is going to work out, since many of our issues deal with equitability, and this may create some more problems. We shall see if this comes to fruition. It appears the maximum AL carryover of 520 hours may become permanent. Next, the maximum hours worked on a daily and weekly basis may change. The 12-hour maximum and 60-hour weekly maximum may be lifted to allow volunteers only, to work past these numbers. He said it appears there will be a permanent route evaluation and adjustment process similar to the TIAREAP process we currently have in place. I know many aren’t in favor of this, but as long we have input in a process, I believe it is in the best interest for our members. They are discussing a single rate pay table, which definitely needs to happen. The two tables we have now just aren’t fair for the craft. The big issue in these two tables deals with the C.O.L.A. Table 1 gives everyone a full raise and table 2 gives a prorated COLA raise, which definitely isn’t fair. Next, he mentioned a need to address the uniform problem. The prices have gotten so out of reach for everyone, they are trying to find a solution to rectify these ridiculous prices. Lastly, the coming of the S&DC’s, especially the one in Vineland, which I mentioned last month, was discussed in detail. EVP, Shawn McBride, attended the meeting and gave a detailed report at last month’s meeting. In short, as of now there are no carriers going into this office, but that doesn’t mean they

won’t be later on. If any of our carriers are moved, we will let you know what that would mean as there are different scenarios when this occurs. The Bellmawr S&DC is still being discussed, but I haven’t been given anything official. The earliest something like that may happen wouldn’t be until next year. Last, but not least, next month, May 11th, is the Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. This year there shouldn’t be any issues with the cards and bags as we have been told our offices are on the list to get the materials in a timely manner. Our numbers were down last year, and I am hoping everyone this year does their part to make it a very successful drive. I am always disturbed when I hear of carriers not delivering cards and bags because they don’t want to pick up the food! This is a one-day event that does so much good for the food banks, who really need our help. If anyone knows of any manager or carrier who refuses to participate by not delivering cards and bags, please let me know ASAP. The food drive is our baby that we started a long time ago and have gotten the postal service to join in as a full partner. Over the years I have gotten many members who have said they don’t want to be bothered by this food drive, which for the life of me I can’t compute. No one will ever be disciplined for the extra time it may take on this day, so please don’t be intimidated. I hope everyone will try and do their part to make our numbers get back to where they were in prior years. Hope to see everyone at this month’s meeting. **Gary DiGiacomo – President**

 **EVP’S FYI** Happy April and welcome to spring. This article is dedicated to all the carriers that came out to the branches Shop Steward training last month. This was a big success the turnout was fantastic. I would also like to thank all the officers and current Stewards that participated and helped. We put together a nice skit of a mock PDI, the acting was fantastic and realistic. We then provided a discipline case to prepare for an Informal A meeting. The responses were great everyone took the time to provide in writing some arguments utilizing Article 16 Just Cause Principles. We then had a second training session to teach how to conduct an Informal A meeting, once again the attendance was fantastic. Special thanks to Ozzy Lecky played the manager, April Litty who was the employee being interviewed, Allen Muff as a Steward, Mike Graff as the Steward in the PDI, Branch President Gary DiGiacomo, and Vice President Mike Powell with each giving advice and passing on their knowledge to everyone who came out. Their knowledge and experience helped so much. The more we can train as a branch the more unified we become. The next generation of leaders are vital to our success. It is a thankless job being a representative to carriers, make no mistake it is the most important job in the Union. As we all know management can be very punitive and at times very unruly to say the least. It takes courage to stand up for our rights. I just want to thank all that currently serve as shop stewards, and all that are willing to step up to learn. You are real leaders and have my respect. If there is anyone who didn’t attend and are still interested in learning to become a Shop Steward don’t hesitate to call me or text me, we are always encouraging people to step up and will provide the training to help. Always remember their bad day is not yours, they also have a responsibility to follow the rules. Stay Strong, Strength in Numbers. Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions. **Executive Vice President Shawn McBride (856)649-9317**

**Comments From the VP**

Make plans now to attend our Annual Retiree and Awards Banquet, Saturday, April 13, 2024, 7– 11pm. The banquet will be held at Elizabeths Ballroom in Gloucester City. The following members will be honored this year. **Richard F Bergbauer, (Hammonton), John R Bobo, (Marlton), LeeAnn Boschetto,( Pennsville), Nadine Casella, (Swedesboro), Anne Freshcoln, (Sewell), Edward M Herda, (Stratford), Joy E Melita, (Williamstown), Valerie Murphy, (Williamstown), John J Prelas, (Deptford), Jack J Scott Jr, (Hammonton), John J Sharkey, (Sewell), Andrew J Steen, (Deptford), and Thomas E Zaremba, (Deptford).** Come out and enjoy good company, food, drink, and music!!! 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. A colleague over here at the Annex suggested that I listen to a podcast called From A to Arbitration. He suggested that I listen to episodes 144,145 and 146. So, I listened to them, and they were powerful. If you are a dues paying member of this union and have the time, listen to these episodes on this podcast. 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**

**Next Meeting**

The next regular monthly meeting ofthe Branch will be held on **Wednesday, April 17th @ 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, April 10th** @ **7:30** and **8pm** respectively.

**Attendance Prize Now at $100**

Had she been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, March 20th,** **Cathleen “Cat” Cleary** a member out of the **Woodbury** Office would have been the recipient of the **$50** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **$75** and will increase **$25** per meeting, up to a maximum of **$250**, until a member in attendance has their name drawn.

**Easter Ham Drawing Winner**

At the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday March 20th**, **James O’Brien**, a carrier out of the Pennsville office, won the Easter Ham, donated by branch retiree **Joe Foreman**, in honor of former Branch COLCPE Chairman **Norm Task**.

**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 $2,000.00 ($500 a year for four years). Applications are available at every monthly meeting, on the Branch website, or you can contact Trustee Chairman Jim Boyle. All previous winners that receive scholarship payments must submit any updated information to Jim by the May meeting. This would include where the students will be attending in the fall semester. Remember all winners must be full-time student. If you have any questions, contact **Jim Boyle at 856-952-6107**

**MDA Raffle**

Tickets are on sale for the MDA raffle. First prize is a 55’ 4k UHD Roku TV, Second place $200 gift card, third place $100 gift card. The Drawing will be held at the June 19th regular monthly meeting. Tickets are $5 and are available through your shop steward or you can call/text **April Litty** @ **856-885-1451**

All proceeds benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

**Health Benefits,** **MBA, FMLA, Optical**

Hello brothers and sisters. MBA has a couple programs that could be a tremendous help to all carriers. Those would be Individual Disability Income, and Hospital Plus. Both great policies to help protect you financially when injured off the clock. To better understand the benefits of both programs, go to **nalc.org**, sign in to members only, then click on member documents, then MBA information and the specific titles. Both policies are great offerings from NALC to you because although you are covered while at work by OWCP, you are NOT covered by disability off the clock. Various options are available for these policies so don't put it off until it may be too late. I'm getting many calls regarding this SEP for Medicare Part B. In particular question number 7C. If you look down to the instructions it spells out how to answer this question stating “Enter dates of employment (or volunteer work) and health coverage: Only complete this item if you selected YES to item 7a or 7b. You only need to enter any work and health coverage you had since you turned 65.” We're into April now so it's time to start talking about heat related illness, and injury. OSHA has great information on identifying, treating, and prevention of heat related injuries **(www.osha.gov/heat-exposure**), as well as an app for both android, and apple phones at **www.osha.gov/heat/heat-app**. Always remember safety is the number one priority. Any CCA's converting to career don't forget NALC Health Benefit Plan. Best in the business, and very affordable since we own it. Details, and information can be found at [**www.nalchbp.org/**](http://www.nalchbp.org/)Any member in good standing is entitled to a one per year, per member optical expense reimbursement. To get yours simply mail me a paper copy of your expenses with your name, mailing address, and office/retired to me at: George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021. Also feel free to give me a call any time with any questions regarding any of the above at **856-304-8665. Please do not use a website listed in your usps retiree newsletter regarding the SEP for Medicare part B. As usual the usps has screwed up. Apparently, they did not proofread their own articles. Take note in the article towards the end it refers you to a 5-part educational video. The website it’s referring you to is a scam site. Please read the information I have been trying to help you all with, and DO NOT follow the link usps is giving you in the article. The correct link is: https://www.keepingposted.org/pshb-videos.htm** Take care everyone, and as always be safe. **George Greenwood, HBR**

**Ozzie’s Corner**

 Finally, we have a name!! the long-awaited name of the crime fighting bill called POLCA (H.R. 7629). POLCA stands for Protecting Our Letter Carriers Act. Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, there have been more than 2,000 crimes committed against City Letter Carriers. On 3/13/24 the bill was introduced by B. Fitzpatrick(R-PA) and G. Landsman(D-OH). The legislation is covered under different layers to protect The Postal Service and our members who work in the streets every day. $7 billion will be placed on the infrastructure to install high-security collection boxes. Electronic versions will soon replace the arrow key. On the court side, The Attorney General will appoint an assistant U.S. attorney in each judicial district for the purpose of investigating the crimes against our brothers and sisters and to prosecute those who committed the crimes. In addition, the sentencing guidelines for these crimes carry the same weight as an assault against a federal law enforcement officer. Our NALC family must come to work the same way they go home to their loved ones every night......Safe and unharmed. In other news, the Democrat Senate race just changed completely with a stunning announcement on March 3/24.24 T. Murphy (wife of NJ Gov. Phil Murphy) announced she is withdrawing her name from the Primary Election. The race gives Congressman Andy Kim a clear path as the frontrunner to win. Andy Kim addressed our delegates at the Region 12 Rap Session. Con. Kim wants all our issues to be addressed and successfully passed in The Senate. Also, he thanked The NJ State Association for their continued support. On the republican side, there are a few names considered for the top spot including Larry Hamm and Patricia Campos-Medina. NJ's senate seat became open after current Sen. R. Menendez (currently indicted) decided not to run for another term. Finally, I want to thank this month's LCPF contributors: **Jeff Breyer, Scott Cooper, Steve Elias, Phil Haas, Dave Jacobs Jr., Herb Nuss Jr, Scott Shannon, Tom Spearman, Kathy Williams, and Andrew Taylor.** My phone number is **(856) 220-8658** to reach me anytime. 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.)*

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