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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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**Presidents Report**

 We still have no information on a date for our arbitration hearing on a new contract, so it is becoming very frustrating to all our members why there is such a delay in letting everyone know where we stand. Hopefully, by our next meeting, I will have something to report to everyone on what is going on, but I am not holding my breath!

 For the retirees, the latest C.O.L.A. numbers stand at **1.7%** for the next raise, which I believe will be constantly going up due to inflation hitting us hard again. Also, there was a hearing on the WEP and GPO, which affects those CSRS retirees. We have overwhelming by-partisan support and are hoping we can get this bill marked up and taken to the floor for a vote. Keep pushing, it is not dead yet! You can watch the hearing on YouTube.

 Next, I have included a few Step B grievance settlements in this month’s issue, which I believe is good news and information for everyone. The first decision came out of **Gibbstown**, where management issued a Letter of Warning to a carrier for Improper Conduct/Expansion of Street Time. This case was laughable and needs to be exposed here. The carrier filled out a 3996 for 15 minutes due to icy conditions, and believe it or not, management wouldn’t accept the carrier’s reason. They used everything improper to issue this discipline. They used DOIS and RIMS data to support their case! They did not prove the carrier engaged in any time-wasting practices and even acknowledged the carrier called in to report the extra time was needed! This case was one that wasted everyone’s time and was nothing more than a personal attack. The postmaster should be issued discipline for such a waste of the service’s money, not the carrier who was working.

 Next, we have told everyone if management is walking your route and doing a 3999, they must follow the TIAREAP Memo. None of our offices, I believe, are doing this properly, and the DRT has issued another win for us on this matter. If you have been walked, please file a grievance so we can get all this data thrown out. This is another lazy ploy by management to try and harass our carriers with their phony numbers and bypass the proper way to walk routes. Please don’t let them get away with not doing their job properly, since they want to come at us when we don’t do our job properly. Until this process is ended or changed, we must continue to hold them to what the MEMO states, pure and simple.

 Next, for those who haven’t watched the latest grilling of our PMG on YouTube, by the Senate, I strongly urge you to take a look at how he is trying to explain his handling of his Delivering For America plan, which is blowing up right before our eyes. It appears he is implementing a lot of these new S&DC’s before doing a study to see if it is doable and going to work! I kid you not. He was stuttering an awful lot throughout the hearing when trying to answer a lot of the Senators questions. If he continues this path, we are doomed as a company, in my opinion. Has anyone thought he may just want to destroy the postal service? Just wondering!

**Gary DiGiacomo – President**

**EVP’S FYI**

 This month I thought would be a good opportunity to give some updates on some issues that I have written about over the

past few months. Your representatives **(Shop Stewards)** have been very busy defending against management’s endless desire to try and discipline carriers, along with violating the contract constantly. A few months back I wrote about management walking carriers and not following **MOU 01983.** The proper grievances have been filled by just about every office in our branch. If you were walked, please notify your steward, any questions about the process and if you wish to contact me feel free to. The grievances that have been filed we are receiving decisions to cease and desist the violations and all data to be spoiled as a result of this. This is a fantastic job by those stewards protecting their office. I will update you again as we move forward with these grievances and advance them to non-compliant because management just flat out ignores these decisions and continues to violate the **MOU,** here is hoping our National holds the line for us when they see how many of these types of grievances we are sending up. Next has been the issues of management thinking they have a right to annotate on our PS Form 3996. Our stewards have filed grievances on this issue and yet once again we won. Management has no right to do this. Let’s hope that ridiculous notion is done. On to the next issue we have spoken about in the past, stationary events the new flavor of the month. First, I am sure most of you have been approached and questioned about alleged stationary events. If this happens, please pose this question to them prior to answering any questions, always ask **“could this lead to discipline?”** Make them declare if it could and if they say it could, then ask for representation prior continuing the conversation with management. We have had carriers recently follow this advice which afforded the carriers their due process. We properly grieved these issues and successfully had the discipline rescinded and expunged. That is what your representation is there to do, and our stewards do a great job defending the membership. Any discipline management issues must meet Just Cause; the term Stationary is not in itself a contractual violation. Lastly, we will be heading into prime-time season very soon. The term pivot will be used daily I’m sure, it is your responsibility to determine your day, work safe and be mindful of the heat. You are not obligated to run around just to make their made-up times. Management cannot set your pace; know your rights, they are there to protect you not them. Please notify your Shop Steward if you need any guidance with dealing with pivots. We have great Stewards they are prepared to fight this if it occurs. 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**

I would like to congratulate all our retirees who were honored at our Annual Retiree and Award Banquet held at Elizabeth’s Ballroom in Gloucester City on April 13. Those retirees in attendance were **Richard Bergbauer** (Hammonton), **John Bobo** (Marlton), **Anne Freshcoln** (Sewell), **Joy Melita** (Williamstown), **Valerie Murphy** (Williamstown), **John Sharkey** (Sewell), **Andrew Steen** (Deptford), **Thomas Zaremba** ( Deptford) , also the following retires were unable to attend, **LeeAnn Boschetto** (Pennsville), **Nadine Casella** (Swedesboro), **Edward Herda** (Stratford), **John Prelas** (Deptford). I would like to thank the following members **Phil Haas,** **Chuck Patel**, and **Jason Dempster** for their help with the banquet. A big thank you to **Joe Townsend** for taking hundreds of pictures and DJ **Jake (the Snake) Evison**. Also, a big thank you to all the members who donated door prizes. Next year the banquet will be held on April 12, so be sure to save the date. It is important to remember, when you do retire, you must sign form 1189 to remain a member of the NALC. Form 1189 authorizes the (OPM) Office of Personnel Management to deduct union dues from your annuity. Branch 908 dues for a retiree are $1a month. I want to encourage all our active members, retired members and CCAs to try to attend our monthly meetings. Knowledge is Power! 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 of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, May 15th @ 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, May 8th** @ **7:30** and **8pm** respectively.

**Attendance Prize Now at $125**

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, April 17th,** **Benjamin Bowman,** a member out of the Pennsville Office would have been the recipient of the **$75** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **$100** 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 sisters and brothers. We blinked, and the temps hit 90 degrees. Please remember safety, heat illness/injury/, and drink them fluids as the season takes a big turn always safety first, protect yourself, get the OSHA heat app too. Speaking of protecting...here's a link for MBA to look into another form of protection. MBA's Individual Disability Income, and Hospital Plus Insurance. Cover yourself for any off-the-clock injuries with either one of these policies**.** [**https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/mutual-benefit-association**](https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/mutual-benefit-association) Offered to you, owned, and operated by you, the NALC Mutual Benefit Association (MBA). Lastly don't forget your $20 annual Optical Expense reimbursement. Bill Revak Br. 908 has an account set up to reimburse any member in good standing one $20 annual reimbursement for optical expense. Send me a paper copy of your expenses with your name, address, and office/retired. Send it to **George Greenwood, 1083 Chews Landing Rd., Laurel Springs, NJ 08021**. Any questions on any of the above always feel free to give me a call anytime.**856-304-8665**. Take care, and be safe folks...

- **George Greenwood, HBR**

**Ozzie’s Corner**

                                  On April 16th, The Social Security Subcommittee on Ways & Means held a hearing to readdress The Social Security Fairness Act. The 2 big elephants in the room on this subject continue to be The WEP (Windfall Elimination Provision) and GPO (Government Pension Offset). During the hearing, the committee invited different experts to address ideas on how to solve this financial problem. Among the witnesses who testified was a former Deputy Social Security Administration (SSA) Commissioner named Dr. Jason Fichtner. Dr. Fichtner proposed that The SSA needs to come up with a different formula or replacement rate on how to calculate the individual's benefit. Rachel Gretzler proposed 2 ideas to the panel. a benefit credit for married couples and a credit for stay-at-home spouses with children. Senior Research Strategist, Dr. Charles Blahous suggested that The SSA should come up with a more progressive benefit formula. Dr. Blahous proposed it would resemble a private pension system. The formula would have an individual accrue a benefit each year to their earnings, instead of taking the lifetime average of an individual's earnings. Also, Dr. Blahous emphasized that we need to start evaluating every beneficiary equally. The easiest way to start this new path would be to do an overview of an individual who has covered and non-covered earnings. The SSA can do an evaluation on the individual's non-covered earnings records. On the Subcommittee side, it was refreshing that New Jersey's own Congressman, Bill Pascrell (District 9) promised that he would never privatize Social Security, he would never vote "yes" to increase the age to collect Social Security and he would never cut Social Security benefits. At the end of the day, it is not just us as City Letter Carriers who bear the brunt of this over 40-year problem, it's the dedicated public servants who were policemen, teachers and firefighters. To view the meeting, please go to **https//ways and** [**means.house.gov**](http://means.house.gov)**.** Finally, I want to thank this month's LCPF contributors: **Mike Abate** (Pennsville) and **Charles Greene** (Retiree, Woodbury). My phone number **is (856) 220-8658** to reach me for any matters in the branch.  **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 deductable 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.)*

**Grievance Results-Step B Decisions**

**Gibbstown-** Management **DID NOT** have just cause to issue grievant a Letter of Warning for Improper Conduct/Expansion of Street time for the events on January 23, 2024. As a remedy, the Letter of Warning shall be rescinded and expunged from all files and records.

**Hammonton-** Management violated the Step 4 MOU-01983 by unilaterally performing PS Form 3999’s and not following the language of the Step 4 agreement and a Pre-Arb settlement. As a remedy, management will provide an unedited copy of the 3999 as well as the consultation to the carriers who had 3999’s conducted. Further, any data from the 3999’s in question should not be used for any route analysis/evaluation/ adjustment purpose unless the parties mutually agree.

**Hammonton-**Management **violated** M-00131 and Handbook M-41 Section 280 via Article 19 of the National Agreement, when they annotated in the carrier section on PS Form 3996. As a remedy, the DRT determines management will utilize the PS Form 3996 for the sole purpose of recording overtime and/or auxiliary assistance when requested by a carrier. Further, local management is directed to observe the instructions on the reverse of the PS Form 3996 and abide by the Step 4 Settlement(M-1301).

**Sewell-** Management **violated** section 271.g of the M-39 Handbook via Article 19 and 41 of the National Agreement, by failing to complete a special route inspection for Mantua 8 within 28 days of the date of the request. As a remedy, management shall complete a special route inspection for Mantua 8 pursuant to M-01982 as expeditiously as possible.

**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 students. 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.

**Branch Picnic**

The Annual Branch picnic at Clementon Park and Splash World will be held on **Sunday, September 8th**. Tickets are $25 and include amusement and water parks and free parking. The buffet includes hamburgers, hot dogs, wings, hoagie tray, soda, and beer. (children 36” and under are free) All tickets must be bought in advance; there will be **No Tickets Sold at the Gate**.

**All tickets must be purchased by August 16, 2024 – 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.

**Check out nalcbranch908.com for the latest branch info**

**Branch Attorneys**

**Uliase & Uliase**

**106 White Horse Pike, Haddon Heights, NJ 08035**

**(856) 310-9002**