

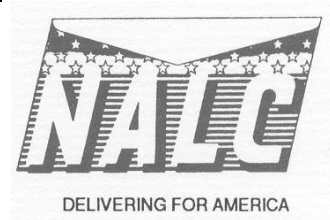
908 News
NALC Branch 908
AFL-CIO
PO Box 1223
Blackwood, NJ
08012

Bill Revak Branch 908
South Jersey Letter Carriers

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Newsletter Com: Litty, Lipski, Graff Ph: 906-2838 Fax: 227-0516 www.nalcbranch908.com December 2024

Presidents Report

We Don't Work for Free!

I would like to take this time to wish everyone a **Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year**. I was checking my files and reported last year at this time we were still waiting on a contract and looked like we were heading to arbitration. What a difference a year makes. Well, we are now waiting on the Tentative Agreement to be sent to the membership for a vote, and then see what happens. I would like to thank EVP Shawn McBride, for holding down the fort last month at our most attended meeting I can remember, and answer everyone's questions and concerns with regard to the T.A. As we have said all along, we will not be like some other branches and give a recommendation, because we have always been a one vote per member branch. We will give you the facts and answer your questions, but never force you to vote one way or the other. I will be happy to discuss this T.A. at our December meeting if that's what the membership desires, so please come out and enjoy the shrimp and wings, and anything else that is on your mind.

Next, I have some sad news to report, as our brother and Health Benefits Officer, **George Greenwood** passed away the day before Thanksgiving. For those who attended our meetings, George was the guy who always started his report with the "Hello Folks." George was battling some health issues that he just couldn't beat. Our prayers go out to his family at this time. This is the second brother we have lost in the past couple of months, as we said goodbye to **Steve Lipski**, last month. George will be sorely missed as he has been our HB officer for the last 12 plus years.

Next, with the election craziness over, we can now focus on continuing our fight by holding the next group of politicians accountable for getting our issues dealt with. I have always said, the NALC Pac is the best by far in reaching across the aisle in getting our issues heard and acted on. If you have been watching, the **Social Security Fairness Act** was passed overwhelmingly on the floor, and hopefully, by our next meeting I will be able to report the Senate has passed it as well. This 30-year fight has finally got to the point where we have representatives on both sides finally agreeing this blatant unfairness must be reversed. This is why I never give up hope when we are trying to get things done through Congress, because our legislative group is top notch. Once we get this bill passed, we will move on to the other ones that are a priority for the membership.

Next, open season ended on December 9, and hopefully, everyone is where they should be, and I hope everyone took a look at the NALC Health plan and joined with a lot of your brothers and sisters. This is our plan, which is solely for the membership, and what I believe is the best plan out there. I fielded a lot of questions and calls regarding this, and hopefully everything went smoothly. As I always do at this month's report and meeting, I try to keep it short and simple because this is our busiest time of the year, and I want everyone to take a breather from all the chaos around us. I hope we get another great turnout at our Christmas meeting where we can enjoy the food, drink, and comradery. I know we all may not agree on things, but that's what makes this union so great, we can discuss and disagree, but in the end, we are all in this for the same reason, to do what is best for the membership. See you at the meeting!

President-Gary DiGiacomo

I would like to start off by thanking all the members who showed up last month, it was a tremendous turnout. We are the greatest Branch in the country. You all were professional and endured the amount of time it took to read through this Tentative Agreement. My hope is everyone felt like they had ample opportunity to be heard and speak. Thank you once again for a great meeting, keep it up come out this month and be heard again. We always have great food and drinks (shrimp and fresh wings from the Golden Nugget Bar this month) afterwards, this meeting is a celebration for all of us members after a long year.

Now unfortunately we had another loss to our Branch, Health Benefits Officer **George Greenwood** has passed away. George was a tremendous leader and excellent former Shop Steward and current Health Benefits Officer. If anyone had any questions or concerns about benefits, George always answered the phone or spoke to people in person. He would take his time to research, make calls to the National, attend any training so that he could always give the membership the right advice. Same can be said when he was a Shop Steward he would fight and grieve it all to great results. He will be missed it's a very sad time for our branch.

We have reached the Month of December hopefully the Tentative Agreement will be mailed out soon, there has been no date as of writing this article when that may be. Like I said last month, the only way for you the member to have a say, is to be active and vote. Whatever your decision on this deal, the fact is that whoever votes will be what matters. Also, from the standpoint of work floor rules during this crazy month. Please don't allow management to ignore the contract just because there is a period of penalty exclusion, and or the fact that data from this month doesn't count. They will tend to think there is no article 8 rules this month, and the delivery of parcels with giving credit to the routes they belong to. Be mindful that the contract is very much still the controlling document every month and every day. If you are on either work assignment or 8 hours only lists, and management tries to get you to work on other assignments or do parcels runs not for your route, please notify your Shop Steward immediately so we can address this and get it corrected ASAP or through the grievance procedure. If you attended last month's meeting, you heard me reading all the current work our Stewards are out there doing to help the members. The list was extensive and the results as usual were great. We have great representation who will fight for the members and will not allow management's attempt to intimidate and break the rules. We are extremely fortunate to have representation like we have in this branch, I am very proud and appreciative of the Stewards.

I have for the last few months been asking for feedback or for carriers to write to us and have your voice heard. This month **Rome Polk** a Letter Carrier in the Deptford Post Office has submitted an article. Please take a moment to read it in this month's newsletter. He gives some insight into the life of a CCA. I thank you Rome for stepping up and writing it, my hope is that this leads to more doing the same we want to hear from you all this helps us as well as you the members. We all learn from experiences; I hope this promotes a dialogue with the members. We have had internal discussions about having another CCA/PTF night to open more platforms for members to come out and be heard, we have done these prior with great success so be on the lookout for the announcement of when this will be. Probably in the months following the holidays.

On another note, constant issue are Carriers that don't take breaks or lunches. What I would like to point out is the money you lose when you choose to do this. **Based on \$36.20/hour (top step) skip 1 break lose \$6.03, skip 2 breaks lose \$12.06. Skip lunch lost \$18.10. Skip lunch/2 breaks lost \$30.16 a day. Add that up weekly \$150.80 lost. Add it up monthly \$603.20 lost. Annually \$7,238.40 lost, 25-year career lost \$180,960.00.** I don't know about you, but I can find a lot to do with that amount of money, one thing for sure is not donating to this company. For anyone who reads this please pass this information on to others. The NALC has worked hard to negotiate and fight for your rights such as this, so please be safe and take your rest breaks and meal breaks you sure have earned it. Also, for anyone who reads this and says I ask for no lunch, your lunch is automatically deducted so highly doubtful they go in and fix that. If you have any questions on this, please reach out to me. I will be more than happy to explain. If I don't see you at this month's meeting, I would just like to wish you all a happy safe Holiday season, enjoy it, don't get too stressed here at work. Always remember their bad day is not yours, they also have a responsibility to follow the rules. **Stay Strong, Strength in Numbers. Executive Vice President Shawn McBride (856)649-9317**

Comments from the VP

The Holiday Season is upon us and since it is that time of year to be Joyous and Happy, I will not be addressing any of the atrocities at the Camden Annex. I want to wish all our active and retired members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Safe, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year. It has been a privilege to serve as your Vice President and Steward at the Camden, aka shit-hole Annex, for the past year. Next, approximately seven years ago I got our branch involved in a program for underprivileged children called the Angel Tree. Tags are placed on the tree representing these children's Christmas wishes. Donors pick a tag from the tree and shop for the perfect gift for the selected child. We have provided gifts to approximately 140 kids. I want to thank the following members and their families for selecting a tag this year, **Bobby Olszewski** and **AJ Rybicki** (Bellmawr Office), **Bill Kyser**, **Rico Jackson**, **Zach Trucksess** and **Greg Solly** (Haddon Heights), **Ozzie Lecky** and **Dan Burkhardt** (Westville), **Mike Powell** and retiree **Joe Sloan** (Gloucester), **Jill Skidmore**, **Mike Hoopes** and **Joe Powell** retiree (Mt Ephraim), **John Andrioli** supervisor and a retired member who wishes to remain anonymous. I also want to recognize the shop stewards of our branch for the great job they have done for our members this past year. I want to thank the Vomas at the annex, **Doug Smith** and **Sean McGowan**, for the excellent job they have done this year. Finally, I would like to wish our new brothers and sisters from Clementon a Merry Christmas and a Safe, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year. If any active member, Cca or retired member needs my assistance on any issue please contact me any time at **856-906-2026** or **908vp@comcast.net**. **Proud to be Union. -Mike Powell-Vice President**

Health Benefits

Open season has been extended until 12/13. If anyone needs an optical fund reimbursement please send your receipt along with your name, address, office or retired to: Branch 908 optical fund P.O. Box 1223 Blackwood NJ 08012. Each member is eligible for \$20 once a year for glasses.

R.I.P George Greenwood. Thank you for your years of hard work and dedication to the members of Branch 908.

NJ Election Day Results, Sen. Booker Legislative Update

Election Day was November 5th in New Jersey, and the results of some key races are officially in. In Congressional District 3 (Andy Kim's old seat), the top 2 candidates were: Dr. Herb Conaway Jr.(D) and Dr. Rajesh Mohan(R). The final vote total was Conaway Jr. (161,289, 53.3%) to Mohan (134,716, 44.5%). Interestingly, both Conaway Jr. and Mohan have medical backgrounds. Hailing from Monmouth County, Mohan has held many medical positions over his 20-year career including a Chief Medical Officer and Chairman of The Department of Medicine. Conaway Jr.'s medical field is a primary care physician, while Mohan's is a cardiologist. On the other hand, Conaway Jr. has been in the legislative game longer than Mohan. Since 1998, Conaway Jr. has served in the 7th Legislative District as an Assemblyman. The 7th Legislative District covers 17 Burlington County towns and cities such as Burlington City, Moorestown and Riverton. The office of Riverton is Branch 908's lone 7th Legislative District town. However, the offices of Marlton and Riverton are part of the 3rd Congressional District (Conaway Jr.'s new position). Another feather in Conaway Jr.'s cap is, he's a Veteran. Conaway Jr. was in the U.S. Air Force and rose through the ranks to become a Captain in the Medical Corps at McGuire Air Force Base. Born and raised in Burlington County, Conaway Jr. graduated from Bordentown Regional High School. As Conaway Jr. begins his new term as Congressman in January, I'm intrigued to know what his stance is with City Letter Carriers. After the new year, I will be contacting his office to set up a formal meeting with him and his staff. Please continue to check for updates on this matter. In addition, the 2 other Congressional District races that cover our Branch 908 offices got good news last month. Incumbents Donald Norcross (D, District 1) and Jeff Van Drew (R, District 2) won their respective races.

In other election news, former Congressman Andy Kim won the New Jersey Senate race against Curtis Bashaw. The New Jersey Senate seat was open after longtime Senator Bob Menendez resigned in August because of federal bribery and corruption charges. The final numbers were Kim (53%, 2,159,141 votes) and Bashaw (44%, 1,772,206 votes). As a successful businessman, Bashaw's background is in the real estate and hospitality industries. Bashaw is a lifelong New Jersey resident who grew up in Camden County. Since 2019, Andy Kim has served as a Congressman in District 3 in New Jersey. Prior to being a Congressman, Kim has held positions in The Pentagon and The State Department. Under his term as Congressman, Kim has co-sponsored the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R.7629), Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R.5995) and The Social Security Fairness Act (H.R.82).

Speaking of H.R. 82, On November 27th I received an important message from Mackenzie Belling (South Jersey Director, Sen. Cory Booker). The long-awaited Social Security Fairness Act passed overwhelmingly in the House 327-75 on November 12th. The bill is currently in the Senate waiting for a vote. Mrs. Belling said, "Sen. Booker is cosponsoring it, it may be passed on its own or included in a larger year end package. Will reach out if/ when I get any updates". Please call Sen. Booker's office and tell him to sponsor The Social Security Fairness Act. **Sen. Booker's number is (202) 224-3224.** Furthermore, please call our Junior Senator George Helmy. **Sen. Helmy's number is (973) 645-3030.**

Finally, I want to thank this month's LCPF contributors: **Jesse Casares**, **Ronald Iulucci**, **Michael Rofrano** and **Ang Sesorko**. My phone number is **(856) 220-8658**. I want to wish you and your family a Happy Holiday season and Happy New Year!

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.)*

Special Guest Column

Hello postal family. My name is **Rome Polk**, CCA currently stationed at the Woodbury/Deptford Post Office. First off, I want to thank **Shawn McBride** and **April Litty** for considering and giving me this opportunity to share my experience as a CCA. I'm a former FedEx driver and also did pizza delivery as a side job. I decided to make the move to join the post office because I wanted a better long-term career. When I signed up for this job, I just thought I'd be signing up to be a mailman, I think I can speak for most saying I had no real clue what I was getting into. You understand more when you actually start working after training. Unfortunately, I signed up to start at a smaller office because of the distance from my house but that office didn't have the hours I needed to provide for my family, so I was blessed and lucky enough to transfer to a busier office that needed me. Being at the right office that fits you helps a lot. It's tough being CCA but I truly enjoy the job, my fellow carriers, stewards and union overall have made this experience the best it can be. **Rome Polk-CCA Woodbury**

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, December 18th @ 8 pm** at the American Legion Hall, 502 Colonial Ave. 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 second 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, December 11th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now at \$250

Had they been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, November 20th, Istvan Kovacs**, a member out of the **Vorhees** Office, would have been the recipient of the **\$225** attendance prize. The prize now increases to **\$250** and will be won by a member in attendance at the December 18th meeting!

Turkey Drawing Winner

At the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, November 20th, Jim Powers**, shop steward in our **Vorhees** Office was the winner of the Annual **Jack Bittner** Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway. Thanks to Assistant Treasurer **Jim Comuso** for donating this year's turkey.

Proposed 2025 Branch Budget

The proposed 2025 Branch Budget, which has been approved by the Executive Board, was presented for the review and consideration of the membership in attendance at the regular monthly meeting on November 20th. The proposed budget will be open for review, discussion, consideration, and vote at the regular monthly Branch meeting on December 20th.

Penalty Overtime Exclusion

As referenced in Article 8, Sections 4 and 5 of the National Agreement between the NALC and the USPS, the December period during which penalty overtime regulations are not applicable consists of four consecutive service weeks. This year, the December period begins **11/30/24 and ends 12/27/24**.

Kid's Christmas Party

Santa is coming with American made toys!

There will also be food, crafts, games, and the Grinch! Sunday December 8th, 12-3pm @ the American Legion 502 Colonial Ave, Woodbury.

MDA

The Texas Roadhouse gift card fundraiser ended 12/9. The results will be in the next newsletter. The next MDA fundraiser will be

a block pool for the "Big Game" and a raffle for PS5 Digital edition with NBA 2K25 Bundle. More details after the New Year.

Housing Chairman

Hello Brothers and Sisters, my name is Steve Elias and I have the privilege of being your Housing Chairman for Branch 908. Part of my duties include setting up for the meetings and also running the uniform closet in our union hall basement. If you are new to the city letter carrier craft, or if you need something to carry you over until your next allotment, please stop by every third Wednesday of the month at 8pm to pick up some uniforms. Also, if you are retiring and want to donate your gently used uniforms you can do that as well. Lastly please join us on 12/18 for our big shrimp and wings meeting, I hope to see everyone there. Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays! -**Steve Elias**

The Importance of Your Vote

At last month's meeting we got to hear a lot of different opinions and perspectives on this tentative agreement, which is great, but your opinion won't mean a thing if you do not vote. You may have heard or read in previous articles that this Branch stands by "One person, one vote." It means that each of us counts but if you don't vote your voice doesn't get heard. 245 million Americans were eligible to vote in our most recent Presidential election and close to 90 million did not vote. The past few NALC National elections have had incredibly low voter turnout. As did our own Branch election last year, only about 34% of our ballots were returned. Please don't take for granted your right to vote and let other people decide for you. Make your voice count, whether it's NALC related or for national and local political offices. -**Recording Secretary April Litty**

Tentative Agreement

Ballots to vote on the agreement will be mailed out on 12/9. The deadline to return them is 1/13/25.

The Officers and Shop Stewards of the Branch would like to take this opportunity to personally wish You and Yours a Happy Holiday Season and a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year!



If you would like to submit an article or original artwork for consideration for a future newsletter, send it to: aprillitty@gmail.com
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