

# 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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### Presidents Report

Well brothers and sisters, what a difference a month makes. Last month we were discussing how the membership overwhelmingly rejected the tentative agreement that was sent out, and where we were going to go next. It now appears we will be trying to take this contract to an expedited arbitration process to try and get an agreement in place sooner rather than later. The reason we will be trying this type of process is because of issues we have been experiencing with the new Congress and President and his ideas for the postal service. Our national believes by having a contract in place will make dealing with the new administration much more favorable in our fights going forward. Having an agreement in place will give us more strength in dealing with the issues that we will be dealing with. Just so everyone is aware, the national president will have the sole authority to agree on certain terms of a new agreement as per our constitution during this expedited arbitration process. I know there are a lot of members who believe the rejection of the TA was a huge win for the membership. Looking back now, I am wondering if that rejection was in the best interest for the members considering where we may end up now! Time will tell.

As we have always said, elections can have serious consequences if the right people that are for our issues don't get elected to the right positions. At this point in time, the Republicans have the majority in both chambers, but that doesn't really matter because we want those members who support our issues, whether they are democrat, republican or independent. That is why our LCPF is so important to belong to. Please consider signing up ASAP, your future depends on the strength of this PAC to get our issues heard and to the floor for a vote. We understand politics is a dirty business, but in order to be a participant in this game, we need money to buy the votes, plain and simple!

With that being said, our national has asked local branches to try holding a local rally to say "Hell No" to the dismantling of the postal service. With the hard work of Branch 540 president, **Chuck Goushian**, he has been able to find a spot to hold the rally. Along with branch 540 and branch 769 and Bill Revak Branch 908, our local, we will be gathering on March 23, 2025, at the Collingswood Post Office, located at 970 Haddon Ave 08108, at 1pm. Please show your support to tell the administration, **HELL NO**, to dismantling the postal service. If you can attend, please let us know so we can order you T Shirts for the event. Hopefully, everything will go off without a hitch. Please stay tuned for the updated information about the rally. I hope to have everything firmed up at this month's meeting.

Next, we have good news to report for those Social Security affected retirees who are waiting on news of their back pay and change in pay status. On February 24, 2025, the Social Security Administration announced it will start making retroactive payments and increase the monthly payments effective immediately, instead of the original release that it may take up to a year to get this adjusted. They have stated if your case isn't complex, you should start seeing these changes by April, if not sooner. They say to wait until April before inquiring about your status. This is great news for those affected. Another reason why giving to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) is so crucial.

Also, PMG DeJoy has given his notice to the board of governors that he will be stepping down and they should begin a new search for his replacement. He promises a smooth transition to his successor, whoever that turns out to be. It seems very strange to me why he has decided it was his time to move on after he started this 10-year plan, which isn't even halfway through. I am wondering if he knows something is coming that he isn't on board with, or does he believe what he has started will be able to be accomplished without him being involved! Time will tell for sure.

We will be attending our Region 12 Training seminar this month, where we should be getting more information on the issues we will be facing this coming year and also where our national stands on many other internal issues that are still a concern to the membership. I still believe there is a big gap in the division in this union that cannot be ignored even with all these distractions that are out there. We still can't ignore the elephant in the room. I still believe the tension that exists in our union is not going away and can't be pushed to the side because of the events that are ongoing. Someone better figure this out or we are doomed! Hope to see you at this month's meeting. **Gary DiGiacomo – President**

### Who Do We Look To As A Leader

Leadership is the mindset and behavior that aligns people collectively in a direction that enables them to work together and accomplish shared goals in an ever-changing environment. That leader is you, your coworker, your friends at work, it's every single one of us. Sadly, the problem is most people don't want to lead. As an individual your silence will have no impact on the issues we will face and are facing, they are real. But if we all align collectively in the same direction we will be heard, and it will be loud and strong. We are a force, we face adversity every day we walk into work, there is not a harder job than ours mentally and physically. We need each and every one of you to step up and lead, get involved, get mad. Find that inner drive to want to fight for what is yours. When I say what is yours, I mean when you work, we are compensated not at a reduced pay, not benefits reduced, not retirement reduced. If you are retired your fight is needed, do you want your cost of living taken away, your benefits reduced if not taken away. No one who works or retires from this agency is exempt from this fight. I personally have worked here for 27 years, I have destroyed my body in my dedication to this job, surgeries, arthritis, aches and pains daily, and I still strive to work and fight for my job. I want to be able to retire and enjoy my life. I can't imagine any of you don't want the same. I want to stand shoulder to shoulder with each and every one of you creating an immovable wall of solidarity. You must understand this is a fight even though you didn't ask for one, but you have one please step up. What the National has asked of you all is very minimum as easy as taking action, contacting politicians and the White House. They send us the links it takes less than a minute to do. It shocks me how many people don't do it, I just can't understand what is more important than one minute of your time, one minute! Think about how aggravating it is someone cannot spare that to help themselves and all of us. There is no excuse, absolutely zero reasons to not do that minimum task. The service we provide to the communities across the country is amazing, six days a week. Prove me wrong. There are close to 890 active and retired members in this great branch, every single one of you

needs to lead and step up collectively to accomplish a shared goal our career. The branch has the links posted on our website and Facebook page if you haven't, please go to both and follow us. As far as on the workroom floor, as I say every month 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**

### **TILL DEATH DO US PART** **(Originally published in March '24)**

We live in a world that catapults by us at breakneck speed; never stopping to revel in the past only lunging toward the future. That famous quote from George Santayana was never more apt than today. "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Nothing screams the bloody history of the labor movement more than this statement and should serve as a warning to all union activists: Till Death Do Us Part. The Chicago Teamsters strike of 1905, which lasted 105 days, was one of the most violent labor strikes. Casualties totaled 21 killed, over 400 seriously injured and 1100 Brothers & Sisters arrested. Although not exclusive to this strike, this event brought the advent of the Strikebreaking firms. James Farley and Pearl Bergoff established strikebreaking as a national business. Farley allegedly commanded an army of forty thousand men ready to do his bidding. It was widely known that Farley kept "Captains" in all large cities who could send a cavalry of strikebreakers into a strike with a few hours' notice. They were armed to the teeth with clubs and guns. Strikebreaking became a bloody and life-threatening occupation. However, the strikebreakers ironically became upset with the level of pay and living conditions during the strike. The men complained of being loaded like cattle and forced to eat spoiled meat. Men were suffering from malaria and cholera, sleeping in cots a few inches apart and fed food a starving dog wouldn't eat. Strikebreakers finally realized why strikers needed a union.

One of the most influential strikes was the Pullman Railroad strike of 1893. After George Pullman laid off hundreds of employees and cut wages by 30% for the rag tag employees who were left, Pullman workers walked out in May of 1894. On July 2nd Federal troops were dispatched to Illinois to halt the strike. With the arrival of Federal troops, the Pullman strike turned bloody. On July 7th National Guardsmen fired into a mob killing as many as 30 and wounding many others. Federal troops were recalled from Chicago on July 20 and Congress subsequently enacted a federal holiday for a Monday in September called "Labor Day".

These strikes were just the tip of the iceberg in the evolution of organized labor. To chronologize the entire maturation of the labor movement would take volumes of text to give it its just due. To give up the power of airing your grievances as a brotherhood as opposed to an individual, let's take a look at our own work stoppage 50 years ago. Employees of the US Postal Department grew frustrated after years of low pay, long hours and very few raises. Many employees resorted to signing up for welfare because of the pittance of wages they were paid. Although it was illegal for federal employees to strike, in March of 1970 that's just what they did. What started as a strike in New York City became the longest-ever walkout by federal government employees. Because of the brave men and women of the Postal Department the right to bargain collectively was born as was the United States Postal Service and a strong and vibrant National Association of Letter Carriers!

As today's labor activists it is very important not to forget or ignore the past. The lessons learned from our predecessors are valuable lessons indeed! Lessons on where we have come from and how we got our Union. We must learn from the past until the mantra "Till Death Do Us Part" is a product of Labor Law and not excepted as the norm!

Where we have come from and the distance we have travelled to get where we are today are invaluable lessons to say the least.

**Steve Lipski**

### **Comments from the VP**

I want to highlight some points about FMLA this month. To be eligible for FMLA, an employee must have completed 1,250 hours of work within the 12 months prior to the start of the leave. Employees may utilize up to 12 weeks for conditions covered under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The types of leave that can be used include Annual, Sick, Leave Without Pay (LWOP), or a combination thereof. Depending on medical necessity, the leave may be taken in one continuous period or intermittently. This is a brief synopsis, but hopefully it answers some questions on FMLA. I encourage all active members, retired members, and CCAs to attend our monthly meetings. These meetings provide an important opportunity to receive valuable information about Branch activities, pose questions, and express any concerns to your elected officers. Additionally, attendees can enjoy refreshments and socialize with both new and long-time friends. Should any active member, CCA, or retired member require assistance on any issue, please do not hesitate to contact me at **(856)-906-2026** or via email at **908vp@comcast.net**. **Proud to be Union-**

**Mike Powell-Vice President**

### **Are You Ready To Fight?**

In February's Newsletter under "The President's Report", **President DiGiacomo** wrote about the proposed 50-page document targeting The Federal Workforce under The Ways And Means Committee(WMC) in Congress. Just as I did at February 19th's General Meeting, I will go in more detail about the proposed changes. The committee that directly created this budget proposal is under the umbrella of The WMC called The Oversight and Government Reform Committee. On Page 40, The FERS(Federal Retirement System) Supplemental Payment would be eliminated. The supplement is the "bridge" monthly payment a retiree receives after their years of service in The Post Office, until the retiree turns 62 years old(The First Year to Collect Social Security). For example, if City Letter Carrier John started carrying mail at the age of 27 years and does 30 total years of service, John would be eligible. John would collect this payment starting at 57 to 62. However, the proposal would completely gut our monthly bridge payment. I want you to close your eyes and imagine John with 30 years of service under his belt. The wear and tear physically every step of every day this brother put in on the clock. The bending, lifting and carrying he put in hour after hour, day after day. Also, picture the mental side he had to deal with management. The arguments, insulting questions and reactions when John turns in his PS Form 3996. The "unexpected change of schedule surprises" when The Postmaster, Customer Service Manager or 204B drops off an extra 1, 2 or even 3-hour piece in the street. Now open your eyes. With this possible hand dealt to him, John is now being forced to carry mail until he turns 62 years of age. The question I ask you is, Is that completely Okay? **ARE YOU READY TO FIGHT** for your supplement?

Another item under this change would be to take The High-3 Salary and increase it to High-5. When a City Letter Carrier is putting in their retirement papers, it is calculated under the following to get one's yearly pension payment. First, you take the City Letter Carrier's average salary for The High-3(The average of the member's highest basic pay over 3 consecutive years). Next, you multiply the employees' years of service(0.1 for FERS and 0.2 CSRS:Civil Service Retirement System). Here are the problems with this ideology, when you do the High-5 computation, the average salary figure will be lower. Therefore, the annuitant loses hundreds upon thousands of dollars in their lifetime in their "golden years". Think about this, The Post Office's retention rate continues to be poor and lackluster. Besides The TSP(Thrift Saving Plan), there must be an attractive and significant security of retirement for individuals looking for a career in the agency. With that being said, **ARE YOU READY TO FIGHT** for your High-3!!!

In other news, Postmaster General Louis DeJoy informed the Board Of Governors(BOGs) that he is leaving the agency. The announcement came on February 18th. The reasons behind the resignation are not clear. You wonder if the December 10th Capitol Hill hearing was the final nail in the coffin(Read February's Newsletter). On the LiteBlue website, BOG Chairwoman Amber McReynolds thanked DeJoy for his leadership and said The BOG is committed to finding the next 76th Postmaster General. Finally, a report broke in The Washington Post(The week of February 16th) that President

Donald Trump plans to dissolve The Board Of Governors and transfer the agency into a separate department(The Commerce Department). On February 21st, The NALC posted a "TAKE ACTION" exercise telling all members to call the number (202) 224 3121. When you get a hold of the operator, you are asked to leave a message with the Speaker of The House, Mike Johnson telling him to block the alleged Executive Order this Administration is planning to do. If you need my assistance in the "TAKE ACTION" exercise, signing up to our PAC or increasing it please don't hesitate to call me at **(856) 220-8658. ARE YOU READY TO FIGHT!** **In Solidarity, Ozzie Lecky**

*\*(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.)*

### **Next Meeting**

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> @ 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 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, March 12<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

### **Attendance Prize Now at \$25**

On **Wednesday February 19<sup>th</sup>** at the regular monthly meeting, **Aundrie Suthard** a retired member out of the Bridgeton 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.

### **NALC Health Benefit Plan, Mutual Benefits, FMLA**

Eyeglass reimbursements should be sent to Branch 908 Optical fund P.O. Box 1223, Blackwood NJ 08012. Please include your receipt.

### **Branch Banquet**

Our Annual Branch 908 Banquet will be held on Saturday, April 12, 2025, 7 – 11pm at Elizabeth's Ballroom located at Highland Blvd. & Sylvan Ave., Gloucester City N.J. This is a great night to eat, drink, dance, and socialize with good friends and especially to honor those members who have retired in the past year as well as those who have been selected to receive Branch Awards. Tickets are \$20, \$10 for retirees. See your steward or contact **Mike Powell 856-906-2026**.

### **Branch Scholarship Drawing**

We will be drawing the winner of this year's Branch Scholarship at the regular monthly meeting on May 21st. 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 **Allen Muff 856-723-7434**. All previous winners that receive scholarship payments must submit any updated information to Allen 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.

### **Ham Drawing**

There will be a Ham given away to a member in attendance at our April 16th general meeting, donated by **Joe Foreman** retiree out of Marlton, in honor of **Norm Task** former Branch COLCPE chairman.

### **MDA Raffle**

Tickets are on sale for the MDA raffle. First prize is a PS5 Digital edition with NBA 2K25 bundle, Second place \$200 gift card, third place \$100 gift card. The Drawing will be held at the June 18<sup>th</sup> regular monthly meeting. Tickets are \$5 and are available through your shop steward or you can call/text **Jason Dempster 856-503-5007**. All proceeds benefit the **Muscular Dystrophy Association**.

### **CCA/PTF Night**

We will be hosting our second annual CCA/PTF night on Tuesday 4/1/25 @ 7pm. This meeting is specifically for you **CCA's and PTF's**. There will be presentations and opportunities for you to ask questions. There will also be food, drink, and a raffle. Contact **Ozzie Lecky** for more information **856-220-8658**.

*Each month we would like to take a few minutes and go over some talking points for PTF's and CCA's. It is so important to help you folks understand your rights; this is a great forum to do this in. We encourage you to please send us your input and any future questions we can list them and give answers to help you all. Below are a couple items from the Questions and Answers for PTF's and CCA's that the national put together, mainly the difference between CCA's and PTF's. Each month we will try to touch on different points.*

### **PTF Corner**

#### **QUESTION Annual leave:**

**ANSWER:** Career letter carriers earn annual leave based on their years of career service, and the number of hours in which they are in a pay status accrues as follows: • Less than three years = 1 hour for each unit of 20 hours in pay status • Three years but less than 15 years = 1 hour for each unit of 13 hours in pay status • 15 years or more = 1 hour for each unit of 10 hours in pay status Military veterans may submit their DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty to receive credit toward their years of service for earning annual leave. As career employees, PTFs may accumulate and carry over unused annual leave from year to year (instead of the terminal payout at the end of a CCA appointment), up to a maximum of 55 days, or 440 hours. In accordance with MOU Re: Annual Leave Carryover for Leave Year 2023 (M-09179), the maximum carryover from leave year 2022 into leave year 2023 has been temporarily increased to 520 hours.

#### **QUESTION Sick leave:**

**ANSWER:** PTFs earn one hour of sick leave for each unit of 20 hours in a pay status up to 104 hours per 26 pay period leave year. Sick leave for PTFs may be carried over from year to year and has no maximum accumulation limit.

#### **QUESTION Court leave:**

**ANSWER:** PTFs who have completed their probationary period (CCAs converted to career who have completed one 360-day term as a CCA do not have a probationary period) are eligible for court leave if the employee would otherwise have been in a work status or annual leave status. The amount of court leave for PTFs shall not exceed eight hours in a service day or 40 hours in a service week.

#### **QUESTION Military leave:**

**ANSWER:** PTFs who are members of the National Guard or reserve components of the armed forces are granted paid military leave. Paid military leave is an authorized absence from postal duties for hours the employee would have worked during his or her regular schedule, without loss of pay, time or performance rating, granted to eligible employees. Eligible PTFs receive one hour of military leave for each 26 hours in pay status. The employee must have a minimum of 1,040 hours in a pay status during the preceding fiscal year. Paid military leave cannot exceed 80 hours annually. The time spent as a CCA does not count toward meeting the 1,040-hour requirement.

## CCA CORNER

**QUESTION:** Do CCAs that are converted to career status carry their annual leave balance over when hired?

**ANSWER:** No. Currently, CCAs receive terminal leave payment for any leave balance at the end of the CCA appointment.

**QUESTION:** Are CCAs covered under the Memorandum of Understanding, Re. Bereavement Leave?

**ANSWER:** Yes, however, CCAs don't earn sick leave and therefore may only request annual leave or Leave Without Pay for Bereavement leave.

**QUESTION:** Does a CCA who receives a career appointment go through a 90-day probationary period as a career city letter carrier?

**ANSWER:** Yes, except in the following circumstances:

The employee has successfully completed two successive 360-day appointments as a CCA, provided the career appointment directly follows a CCA appointment. See memorandum of understanding, Re: Article 12.1 Probationary Period

The employee was a city carrier transitional placed into the CCA position following a one-day break in service in accordance with January 31, 2013, Memorandum of Understanding, Re: Break in Service. The TE service does not apply, but a completion of a total of 720 days as a CCA in successive appointments satisfies two successful 360-day appointments required the Memorandum of Understanding, Re: Article 12.1 Probationary Period.

When, during the term of the Memorandum of Understanding, re: Sunday Delivery-City Carrier Assistant staffing, the employee is converted to full-time career status and successfully served **a cumulative 360 days as a city carrier assistant directly before conversion to full-time career status.**

## Step B Decisions

**Bellmawr-**Management was in violation of Article 16.7 when they placed grievant in an emergency off-duty without-pay status. As a remedy, the EP is rescinded and the grievant shall be made whole for all lost wages, including missed overtime and benefits from November 20, 2024, until she is returned to duty, or a subsequent action ends the EP.

**Elmer-**Management **did not have just cause** to issue grievant the **Letter of Warning** for failure to follow instructions when they instructed her, a PTF Carrier, to report to another installation (Vineland) to deliver Amazon parcels on Sunday. As a remedy, the Letter of Warning shall be rescinded and expunged from all employee records and files effective immediately.

**Elmer-**Management **did not have just cause** to issue grievant the **7 Day Suspension** for failure to follow instructions when they instructed her, a PTF Carrier, to report to another installation (Vineland) to deliver Amazon parcels on Sunday. As a remedy, the 7 Day Suspension shall be rescinded and expunged from all employee records and files effective immediately.

**Williamstown-** Management **did not** have just cause to issue grievant a Letter of Warning for unsatisfactory attendance. The LOW will be immediately expunged from the grievant's records and files.

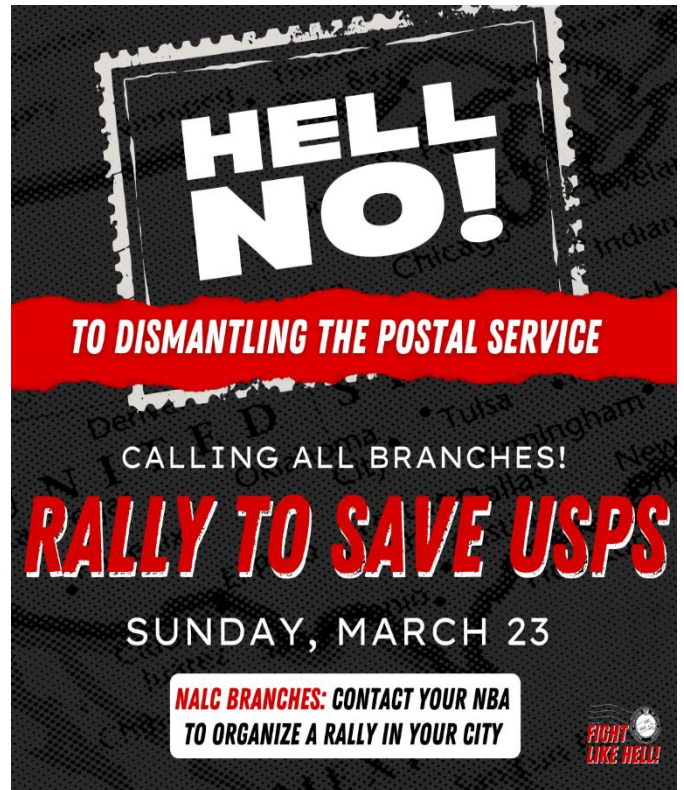
**Sewell-** Management had cause to place grievant in an off-duty without pay status pending an investigation. However, management **did not** have cause to keep the employee off-duty indefinitely. Since management had completed its investigation on January 7, 2025, as reflected in the case file, the DRT agrees the grievant shall be made whole for any lost wages and benefits beginning January 7, 2025, until such time as the grievant is returned to duty.

## Arbitration Decision

**Marlton-** 14-day suspension issued to a carrier in the Marlton office on June 14, 2024, for failure to follow instructions shall be fully rescinded and expunged from the Grievant's records and files.

## Hell No!

On Sunday March 23 we will be joining branches across the country and rallying to say Hell No! to dismantling the Postal service. We will be teaming up with Branches 540 and 769 at 1pm at the Collingswood Post Office. 970 Haddon Ave Collingswood, NJ 08108.



## Dates to Remember

- Region 12 RAP session 3/9-3/12
- Hell No! Rally 3/23
- CCA/PTF night 4/1
- Retirement dinner 4/12
- NALC Food Drive 5/10
- Scholarship drawing 5/21
- MDA raffle drawing 6/18
- Branch picnic 9/7
- Hops for Hope 10/12
- Kid's Christmas party 12/7

To share any questions, comments, original artwork or photographs send to [aprilittv@gmail.com](mailto:aprilittv@gmail.com)

Check us out online [www.nalcbranch908.com](http://www.nalcbranch908.com)  
And on Facebook NALC Branch 908  
[www.nalc.org](http://www.nalc.org) is the National website.



## Branch Attorneys

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