

908 News

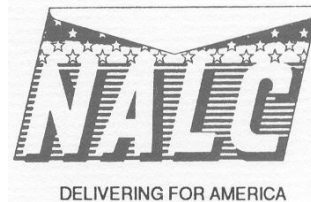
NALC Branch 908
AFL-CIO
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Bill Revak Branch 908 South Jersey Letter Carriers

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President's Report

Well, the results are final. Arbitrator Dennis Nolan has issued his award on the expedited arbitration case for our new agreement. I won't go into detail in this month's newsletter, but some of the highlights are as follows. **The new agreement is for 36 months** as opposed to the 42 months in the T.A. This eliminates one C.O.L.A. that would have been a part of the new agreement, if the T. A. was accepted. Steps AA and A will be eliminated from Table 2, raising the starting career pay by 4.5%. The T.A. had eliminated Step B, but this agreement does not. **CCA's converted to career PTF position will see wages rise by more than \$4.31 per hour.** Also, the annual rate at **Step P in Tables 1 and 2 will be increased by \$1000.00.** Career carriers will get a little more in general increases. The original T.A. gave 1.3% increases. **The new agreement gives 1.3%, 1.4%, and 1.5%** for the 3-year period. **CCA's will receive 3 additional 1.0% increases in their cumulative general wage increases of 2.3% (Retroactive) from November 2023, 2.4% for November 2024 and 2.5% in November 2025.** Within 180 days of this award, the CCA's will also receive an additional \$.50 per hour pay increase. This increase is in addition to their cumulative general increase. The CCA's are getting a little more than the T.A. gave them, which was 2.3% each year, this award gives them 1% more for the final 2 years. These are the economical portions of the award, which we kind of knew wasn't going to be much different than the original T.A. It also appears we won't be seeing the new pay rates until May and the retroactive pay won't be seen until the fall. The remaining non-monetary items appear to be the same as the T.A. I know this is not what many members were expecting, since they overwhelmingly rejected the T.A. but when our leaders chose an expedited process, this is what happens. All I can say is we need to move on and concentrate on our future and try to do better the next round, which will be here in 2026. I will once again go over the rest of the agreement at this month's meeting.

Speaking of our futures, we held our "**Hell No**" rally on March 23rd, which was a huge success with our brothers and sisters from Branch 540 and 769 along with many families and friends from all works of life, to inform the public that we will not allow the postal service to be privatized or sold off. We had media coverage that got the word out to the area, and was very informative to those who stopped by. I want to give **Chuck Goushian**, president of Branch 540 a shout out for organizing the event in Collingswood. We had a huge turnout of our Bill Revak Branch 908 membership, and want to thank all of you who saw the importance of this event by taking time out of your Sunday afternoon, to show how important these rallies are to secure your future and the future of the postal service. This is just the start of our fight to keep the postal service alive and thriving in the future. We will be ready when and if the time comes to mobilize again to put pressure on our elected leaders to say "**Hell No**" to privatization.

Next, we just received a monumental arbitration award for our Hammonton NJ Installation. The results are posted in this month's newsletter, and I want to explain to you what perseverance and hard work can come to those who continue to fight. Back in April of 2022, shop steward **Frank Ingemi** filed a grievance on the secondary mail in the DPS that was not in order. He had the local management agree to cease and desist and to have it corrected. This was the beginning of three different grievances on this issue, which was supposed to be

fixed after a pre-arbitration was agreed upon in May 2023. After finally getting management to agree they violated not complying with the remedy of fixing the issue, the only issue that remained was the monetary remedy the union was requesting. Since management didn't believe the union was entitled to any monetary remedy, the case was scheduled for arbitration. I can tell you management was extremely arrogant in believing no arbitrator would grant a monetary remedy in this instance. Our advocate even offered a modest settlement, which they turned down. This led to a huge payout that will be forthcoming to the carriers in Hammonton. If you do the math for this case, it looks like we will be getting between **70 and 100 thousand dollars** in total after they finally correct this issue. I will go into more depth at this month's meeting, but the moral of this story is patience and an arbitrator who saw through managements blatant disregard of 3 cease and desist agreements! There is a God. I was starting to think we would never get a case like this to be heard, but just as soon as I gave up hope, we prevailed. Great work Frank and our advocate Jon Calloway.

Next, we are now hearing management is beginning to monitor carriers wearing their seatbelts, or not wearing them, while on their routes and driving their vehicles. I am not sure if everyone is aware of this being done, but for the life of me I don't understand why carriers would not be putting on their seatbelts. We are seeing many disturbing reports on this issue, and you can bet there will be discipline starting to be issued shortly. Please don't be the one who starts this easy catch for management. Buckle up and take the time you get to do your job safely! We have had stationary events, and now it is the seatbelt report. Big brother is watching!

Lastly, now that the arbitration award is out, the division in our union is now getting more and more revved up. I have spoken about this ad nauseum, and now we must all address the elephant in the room. There is another group out there who is getting their slate together to run against our national leaders. I have no issues with anyone who wishes to run for any position in this great union, but the manner in which it is being done really concerns me. I won't go into detail here, but I ask everyone to be very careful on how you handle what you are hearing and do your own research. I have been around here a long time, and can see through the clouds here. One thing I ask you to consider when trying to figure out who are the new candidates that want to represent us. Where do they hail from and who is the real leader behind this? I will have more to say going forward, but let's concentrate on keeping the postal service viable and keeping this great union together. Hope to see you at this month's meeting.

Gary DiGiacomo – President

We Asked For Leaders And We Found Them

Thank you all for stepping up and showing up on March 23rd, for our rally to save the Post Office. The turnout was tremendous, we had television news coverage, and newspapers as well, thank you **April Litty** Recording Secretary for contacting those outlets. I asked you last month to identify yourself as a leader to step up and stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity creating an immovable wall, you folks did that for sure. I would like to thank Branch 540 President **Chuck Goushin**, Vice President **Anthony Guddo** for hosting, Branch 769 President **Bill Philips**, Branch

903 President **Mike Calise**, former President and current Vice President of the State Association **Nelson Gaskill**, APWU **Mike Wright** New Jersey State Business Agent, **Jeff Swanson** APWU Trustee, **Beth Kemp** APWU Alternate Steward, and our Branch 908 President **Gary DiGiacomo** for working together to organize this huge event it was fantastic. Of course, all the officers and stewards as well and most importantly you guys the membership. We will need to continue to show up and organize, this did not go unnoticed, it did prompt a response from the White House. The rallies were nationwide, and it was great to see. To all that didn't show up, if you didn't have another obligation then shame on you, I have no words for you. This was not asking for anyone to choose a political side at all, this was informational for the public to become aware of what we are facing that's all, was not a contractual picket either so if your decision to not show up was because of your view of the National leadership, then you made a huge mistake and you failed not just your coworkers but yourself! On April 1st there will be a change to the standards of processing and moving mail. The Postal Service will be choosing not to process mail every day to sections of the country, they will no longer count off days like Sunday and holidays as days the mail moves. This will greatly slow the service down. This will also create public opinion that we are not reliable and not sustainable. This is by design to dismantle us, so please be aware of the challenges we face more than ever before. There are profits to be made, that's why private companies want to own us. Enough of my rant, we have a new contract that was awarded by Arbitrator Nolan. Whatever the opinion is of it, the fact is it's over and it's here. We will go over it at the general membership meeting, there are many new provisions please come out and get all the information and updated status on our new pay scales and backpay. On April 1st as well the branch will hold a CCA/PTF night hopefully we have as good or better turnout as the last one, this is a great opportunity to come out to learn and feel free to ask questions. 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 to help them achieve a bonus on your pivot 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 days are 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 extend my congratulations to Branch 540 President **Chuck Goushian**, who retired on March 28th. Chuck has been a dedicated advocate for carriers' rights in the Camden Annex and has supported me on several occasions when management attempted anti-union tactics. On April 12th we will be honoring our branch retirees at our annual retiree and award banquet. A few days ago, I had to have Executive Vice President, **Shawn McBride** come to the **Camden, aka shit hole, Annex** to represent me for a PDI. The PDI was for a stationary event. I stopped at my house, an approved lunch location on my route. I placed my scanner on the sink while using the bathroom. When I finished doing my deed, I left my house and returned to the shit hole. Upon arrival, I realized that I had left my scanner at home. I informed the closing supervisor of the incident, and he instructed me to retrieve the scanner. Management found my explanation unreasonable and decided on a PDI. What was unreasonable about my explanation? The answer is nothing!! Although I have not received any discipline yet, this type of management action contributes to low morale, increased sick leave among carriers, and the ongoing intervention. 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**

In March's Newsletter article, I mentioned that the current administration is looking to make changes to The United States Postal Service. The proposal (Or Ideology#1) is to place the federal agency in the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC). The DOC's key functions are: facilitating trade, supporting innovation and technology, providing data and statistics, ensuring fair trade, protecting national economic security, supporting sustainable development, assisting business and communities (I will get to why that makes sense in a moment), granting patents and registering trademarks, developing policies and conducting research on telecommunications, supporting fisheries stock assessments and economic development, maintaining the official U.S. Time and collecting, storing and analyzing data. Under the function of assisting businesses and communities, it reads as follows: "The Department provides assistance and information to businesses and communities, helping them grow and thrive". To this administration it makes total sense because we work for a federal agency (in this case looking through one's eye, a business) that serves every town and city (a community). To further support this case, this administration is looking to save every penny they possibly can (even if it doesn't make sense!). To prove this theory, current DOC Secretary Howard Lutnick came out with a brilliant financial saving proposal on March 10th. Instead of hiring temporary workers to do Census Bureau Surveys, he would like to see City Letter Carriers take on this duty. **LIKE OUR JOBS ARE ALREADY DEMANDING ENOUGH!!** The Census Bureau's parent agency is, yes you guessed it...The DOC. Before his hiring under this administration, Lutnick's background is a two-letter curse word we have heard so many times before, "American Businessman". The bottom line is this, the administration heading our country is full of these types of 2 letter individuals that want to gain control and put their hands in every single little cookie jar!

Now let's talk reality, the proposal to place us in The DOC is illegal and unlawful. (REALITY#1) On August 12, 1970, The Postal Reorganization Act Of 1970 was signed into law. The law allowed three major provisions. First, The Post Office Department changed to a new independent government agency, The United States Postal Service. Two, the agency was granted financial and operational freedom (that means the taxpayer would pay \$0 dollars). Lastly, postal employees were established collective-bargaining rights. That means The N.A.L.C. A.P.W.U. (American Postal Workers Union), N.P.M.H.U. (Mail Handlers Union) and the N.R.L.C.A. (Rural Letter Carriers Union). In my opinion, this is the most important provision because the administration is not a fan of a union period! (I will discuss more on this theory in May's Newsletter Article). (REALITY#2) We as postal workers are protected under the most sacred American document, The Constitution. In Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7: it reads "Congress to establish Post Offices and Post Roads". Think about this, we are a part of the fabric and history of this country. However, the ideology and ideas we read and hear need to be taken seriously. We need to continue to fight for what we have!! (WHATEVER IT TAKES). That means calling our representatives, contributing to The Letter Carrier Political Fund and doing rallies.

Speaking of which, we had a "National Rally Day" on Sunday March 23rd in Collingswood. The rally was in protest towards the administration's proposal in privatizing The Postal Service. I want to thank Branch 540 President, Chuck Goushian for organizing the event. There were 3 area branches that took part: Camden Merged (Branch 540), Cherry Hill/Haddonfield (Branch 769) and us, 908 (that I'm proud to say was well represented). The final count of attendees was nearly 300 people. I want to thank all who sacrificed their Sunday by coming out to protest and educate the public on a subject we need to pay very close attention to in the coming months. Also, I want to send a special thank you to Nick Feldman (District Representative, Con. Norcross's Office) for reading at the event a handwritten letter by the Congressman showing his full support in not privatizing our organization.

Finally, I want to thank our latest LCPF Contributors: **Mike Borchmann** (Atco), **Steve Bradley** (Woodbury), **James Casey** (Clementon), **Bob Gaff** (Gloucester City), **Phil Haas** (Retiree, Westville and Sgt. Of Arms), **Matt O'Donnell** (Clementon), **Chuck Patel** (Retiree, Westville {Increase Adjustment}), **Maryellen McGuire** (Retiree, Marlton), **Tom Spearman** (Haddon Heights), **Carmen Zambrano** (Voorhees, {Increase Adjustment}) and one member out of Woodbury who wanted to remain anonymous (Increase Adjustment). My phone number is **(856) 220-8658**. Please don't

hesitate to reach out for my assistance in union matters (Active and Retired). **In Solidarity, Ozzie Lecky - LCPF 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.)*

PTF/CCA CORNER

Each month we would like to take a few minutes and go over some talking points for PTFs/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 new provisions from the National Agreement we just were awarded in arbitration for PTFs/CCA's.

New Employee Experience, Retention, and Mentoring

MOU Re: New Employee Experience, Retention and Mentoring Program – A result of two pilot programs conducted across the country, this program creates guidelines related to the onboarding, retention, and mentoring of new employees. This program would be implemented nationally after ratification of the National Agreement and includes guidelines such as:

- Prior to leaving Carrier Academy and reporting to their employing office, all newly hired city letter carriers will receive comprehensive contact information for the employing office, a defined work schedule for the first week in the delivery unit, and instructions for completing time reporting records.
- No later than the first day in the employing office, all newly hired letter carriers will receive an equipment package including a new USPS-branded reflective vest, mail satchel, and hat. They will also receive an introduction and familiarization with the employing office conducted jointly by USPS and NALC representatives.
- All CCAs and PTFs will now be guaranteed a minimum of one nonscheduled day each service week, except during the penalty overtime exclusion period for employees in their ninth week and beyond.
- Limited daily and weekly work hours and work locations for CCAs and PTFs during their first eleven (11) weeks following completion of the Carrier Academy. Effective week twelve (12) PTFs and CCAs are limited to 11.5 work hours per day (consistent with Employee and Labor Relations Manual, Section 432.32).
- All CCAs and PTFs will receive a defined work schedule identifying anticipated non-scheduled days, start and end times, and route assignments. This schedule will be posted by the close of business on the Wednesday of the preceding week.
- Newly hired city letter carriers will receive training on Sunday/Dynamic delivery procedures with an experienced employee prior to performing Sunday delivery services on their own.
- Progress reviews will be conducted at 30-, 60-, and 80-day intervals. Copies of these reviews will be provided to the local union.
- Employees will have access to updated route books and maps and provided reasonable time to review prior to delivering a new route assignment.
- To the extent possible, newly hired letter carriers will be provided with consistent route assignments.
- New employees are prohibited from performing work outside of the city letter carrier craft during their first 90 workdays or 120 calendar days, whichever comes first.
- A mentoring program that pairs new employees with a mentor in their office to help employees adapt to the workplace.

Thank you all for coming to CCA/PTF night, remember we've got your back!

Easter Ham Drawing Winner

There will be a ham given away to a member in attendance at the April 16th general membership meeting. Donated by **Joe Foreman**, retiree out of Marlton, in honor of **Norm Task** former branch COLCPE chairman.

Regular Arbitration Decision

Hammonton- Management violated Article 15 of the national Agreement and the Postal Service Policy Letter M-01517 via Article 19 by failing to comply with the settlement for Grievance filed on May 20, 2023, concerning the secondary address mail that is not in delivery order in DPS trays. As a remedy the following will be administered:

1. Finding the Service violated Article 15 when they failed to respond to the grievance at Informal and Formal Step A and offered arguments at Step B, Management is hereby directed to **cease and desist** committing similar violations in the future.
2. Management is additionally instructed to **cease and desist** failing to comply with grievance settlements.
3. Management shall **cease and desist** including secondary address mail that is not in delivery order in the DPS trays of the Hammonton Installation.
4. The identified grievants of the Class, with the exception of the 3 retired carriers, shall be paid \$25.00 per workday from February 28, 2024, continuing until compliance is achieved.
5. The arbitrator retains jurisdiction for a period of 180 days.

Step B Decisions

Elmer- Management violated Article 41.2 of the National Agreement when they removed the grievant from her hold down assignment. As a remedy, the grievant will be paid **5.98 hours** for being left home on the day in question.

Clementon- Management violated Article 15 of the national Agreement when they failed to abide by the Dispute resolution Teams decision dated 4/24/2024. Local management had tried to convert the grievant's Annual Leave to C.O.P. but was denied by upper management. As a remedy, the DRT states compliance with Step B decisions is not optional, but mandatory. Due to this blatant violation by upper management the Step B management representative will process the leave code adjustments converting the grievant's Annual leave to C.O.P.

Next Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Branch will be held on **Wednesday, April 16th @ 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 9th @ 7:30 and 8pm** respectively.

Attendance Prize Now at \$100

Had he been in attendance at the regular monthly meeting of the Branch on **Wednesday, March 18th, Mike DiGiacomo** a retiree out of the **Woodbury** 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.

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 **David Jonczak** or Assistant Recording Secretary **Allen Muff**. 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. If you have any questions, contact **Allen Muff 856-723-7434**



Deliver the Cure with MDA

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 18th 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.

Branch Picnic

The Annual Branch picnic at Clementon Park and Splash World will be held on **Sunday, September 7th**. Tickets include amusement and water parks, free parking, food, and beverages. All tickets must be bought in advance; there will be **No Tickets Sold at the Gate**. More details to follow. Contact **Phil Haas** with any questions or for more info: 609-868-3285.

Dates to Remember

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 aprillitty@gmail.com

**Check us out online www.nalcbranch908.com
And on Facebook NALC Branch 908
www.nalc.org is the National website.**

What If There Were No Unions?

There are plenty of people in this country who are all for doing away with unions. Saying we don't need them; or they are only there for the "problem" employees. Have you ever had a manager who didn't like you? For whatever reason, the two of you just don't get along. What if they could fire you just because of that? What if they view you as the "problem"? Maybe you're newer and can't keep up with someone who's been around for a while. Maybe you're starting to feel your age and your body just can't move as fast as it once did. Maybe you're having health issues, or exhausted from working so much, or moving slower because you're pregnant? If there were no unions, they could let people go for whatever reason they want. If we had no unions our wages would be less. You might think you would just get a better paying job. Where, UPS? If there were no unions UPS wouldn't have the pay they are getting now. Market forces tend to push wages down, without unions holding pay standards up it would be a downward spiral all the way to minimum wage. Minimum wage may not even exist without unions. There would be a decline in job quality all around, even in non-union jobs. Non-union jobs would no longer have to compete with union wages, benefits, and working conditions. After World War II labor unions' collective bargaining agreements were instrumental in setting standards for working conditions and wages. They were also a vigorous proponent of Social Security, Medicare, and unemployment compensation. So, if employers cut their staff the people left would have more work to do. Some might think that's not so bad a little OT pay. Without unions there would be no overtime pay, let alone penalty overtime. We are required to have a mail satchel; without unions we could be forced to buy our own. Who would control the cost of that? Maybe they let you buy it on credit, charge interest, and take it out of your check, along with gas, shoes, and anything else required to do the job. There may not be a paycheck left to cover it let alone feed you. This is how things were before unions. Without unions you can say goodbye to employer contributions to health care, and pensions. Vacations and sick leave? Companies would have no incentive to worry about that and instead focus just on their bottom line. "On-call" could be the norm for the working class. We all hear Ozzie talk about other unions having their own PAC (political action committee) and the NALC has LCPF. If we didn't have unions fighting for our interests in Washington who would? We would just have to depend on the goodness of the hearts of politicians and business owners. Personally, I'd rather depend on people who are like me. Who know what it's like to work their ass off. Who know what it's like to worry about paying bills, buying the kids shoes and fixing the car. I'd rather stand shoulder to shoulder with someone who believes in raising the standard of living for the working people and I don't want to even imagine the "what if".

April Litty-Recording Secretary

Branch Attorneys

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