

The GARDEN STATE LETTER CARRIER



"123 Years Serving Letter Carriers"

Official Publication of the New Jersey State Association of Letter Carriers

Volume LXVIII, No. 1

WWW.NJSALC.COM

Issue #1 2017

First Vice-President's Report

Nelson Gaskill



The best battle plan is to plan. As of this moment, we do not know publicly that the new President will attack our collective bargaining rights. But, we do know there are many forces out there that have been unsuccessfully attacking the Postal Service and trying to peel off the financially lucrative parts of the Postal Service.

So, we could just sit back and whine and moan or think it won't happen or think, "I'm near the end of my career and I'll just ride it out". This is exactly what the pariahs out there are waiting and hoping for, our disengagement. Whether you are a new City Carrier Assistant (CCA) or a long term Full-Time Regular (FTR), if you don't get involved, all you hope for, all you are working for, or all that you have worked for can be taken away with the stroke of a pen.

Everyone must get involved by going to Branch meetings and learning what is going on, not just on the contract; but equally as important, what is happening in the Halls of Congress and the corridors of the White House. The new

President believes most businesses, other than his own, are run inefficiently. I believe he knows nothing about the Postal Service and we must fear he will only listen to other business leaders, such as FEDEX and UPS.

Let's plan now by joining the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF), a payroll deduction for as little as \$ 5.00 per pay would go a long way in protecting your family's future. Let's plan now by signing up for the NALC ACTIVIST, a great publication that always has informative articles concerning topics that cover your everyday concerns; articles about CCA Rights, OWCP, grievance preparation, and many topics that we very rarely encounter but it's just good to know. These are easy to do from either the NALC.org website or by asking your shop steward or branch leaders to guide you through the sign-up process. While you are on NALC.org download the new NALC app for your smart phone, you will be privy to a whole new world concerning your career. By the way, make sure you permit notifications from the app for constant updates about your career.

Together, let's plan to contact our members of Congress whenever our Branch leadership asks us to. If a Congressperson doesn't hear from us he/she may assume we are okay with legislation, even if it causes great harm to the Postal Service. Also, "Thank You" calls mean a lot to a legislator that has already supported our position. ☐

The 2017 Annual NJSALC Congressional Conference

April 26, 27, and 28, 2017

Hyatt Regency Washington, DC on Capitol Hill

400 New Jersey Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20001

Please go to NJSALC.com for further details

THE GARDEN STATE LETTER CARRIER
 Published by the N.J. State Association of Letter Carriers
 Four times a year
 Jeffry M. Fox, Editor
 Richard P. O’Connell, Jr., President
 -Affiliates-
 National Association of Letter Carriers— AFL-CIO
 The opinions expressed in these columns are not necessarily
 the views of the Editor, State Association or its members.
 Advertising rates will be sent upon request.

Non-Profit postage paid at Lakewood, NJ 08701
 NJSALC circulation office:
 P.O. Box 333, Teaneck, NJ 07666
 The Garden State Letter Carrier is paid for through membership dues
 ISSN-0745-1970

OFFICERS 2015- 2017

- President**
 RICHARD O’CONNELL, Jr.- Branch 38
 Livingston - (973) 714-7361
- First Vice-President**
 NELSON GASKILL - Branch 903
 Cape Atlantic - (609) 214-3970
- Second Vice-President**
 ED DECKER - Branch 5420
 Brick - (732) 267-4376
- Secretary**
 JOE MOONEY - Branch 380
 Trenton - (609) 890-0641
- Treasurer**
 JEFFRY FOX - Branch 425
 Teaneck - (201) 981-0790
- Director of Education**
 CHRISTINE STRASSER - Branch 38
 East Brunswick - (732) 266-1565
- Sergeant-at-Arms**
 DAN SZUCS - Branch 38
 Edison - (848) 219-6337
- Director of Retirees**
 CHARLES CONNELL - Branch 38
 Manahawkin - (732) 634-6104

VIEWPOINT

Jeff Fox, Editor



As most are aware by now, Donald J. Trump was elected the President of the United States this past November; as most of you are also aware, I could probably write quite a bit on my opinion of that development. But, my mailbox also shows that quite a few of our members disagree with my opinion; so, I will not discuss President Trump in this issue of the GSLC (I’ll get you next time).

I want to talk about loss, the loss suffered by everyone who knew Bob Paccioretti, a member of NALC Branch 38; Bob passed away on March 23rd after a long, valiant battle with cancer. Bob was a tireless advocate for letter carriers, a deeply religious man, and a gentleman; losing him has been difficult for so many of us.

After serving four years in the Navy, Bob began his career with the Postal service in 1979 and carried mail in Garfield, NJ; as an NALC representative, Bob represented the letter carriers in Garfield and Branch 38 until February 2004 when both Bob and I were trained to work as Step B representatives in the Dispute Resolution Process. Since that time, Bob and I worked together at Step B. Our management partners would change, but you could always count on Bob being there. Many of you have received Step B decisions with Bob’s signature on it and whether you agreed or disagreed with the decision, it was always well thought out and thoroughly explained. Bob was a more compassionate man than I ever could hope to be; he always looked for the good in those who may have found themselves in a bad situation and he fought passionately for them.

He cared about everyone; he was selfless; and of constant assistance to those in need. It’s just who he was. We had a conversation just prior to his cancer recurring; he explained to me that he was thankful for a period of good health following surgery. But he was thankful because it afforded him the opportunity to be there for his ailing and elderly father; not for himself, but for the opportunity to be there for his father. Like I said, it’s just who he was.

Since I became the editor of the Garden State Letter Carrier, not one issue was sent to the printer without Bob first proofreading every word of the newsletter. I hope he can read this edition; if he can, I hope he knows how much our hearts are broken by the loss of our friend. ☹️

EXECUTIVE BOARD

- PETE BEDNARZ - Branch 38
 Clifton - (973) 650-4636
- GARY DIGIACOMO - Branch 908
 South Jersey - (856) 906-2838
- CHRIS ECK - Branch 370
 Atlantic City - (609) 432-9708
- RAY GIANOTTI - Branch 2128
 Toms River - (908) 910-4093
- CHUCK GOUSHIAN - Branch 540
 Camden - (856) 745-5228
- KEITH HEMMINGS - Branch 38
 Orange - (973) 223-6740
- DONALD HILL - Branch 120
 Paterson - (862) 823-1677
- GARY LANGE - Branch 444
 South Amboy - (732) 771-6691
- JOE RUTKOSKI - Branch 38
 Mt. Arlington - (908) 456-1463
- STEVE SZCZESNY - Branch 42
 Jersey City - (908) 202-2623

Attorney-at-Law
 DONALD MILLMAN
 111Northfield Ave., Suite 201
 West Orange, NJ 07052
 (973) 669-9776

National Business Agent, Region 15

Larry Cirelli



As I sit and write this, we are just getting over what I hope is the last snowstorm of the winter. The Northeast Area, with some input, did the right thing and closed all the affected Districts. I am sorry to say that the South Jersey District, out of the Eastern Area, remained open. I believe while the storm was not as severe in that District, they still put the

carriers in unnecessary risk just to deliver some mail that could have waited another day. While most carriers escaped the Tuesday storm, we will be feeling it for a week or more, the delayed mail, no parking spots, walkways not clear and the general difficulty of delivery after a storm of that size. The winter did go out with a bang.

Going out on a high note, going out with a bang is what I am going to talk about. 2017 is shaping up to be one heck of a year. We have the National Contract Negotiations wrapping up. As of this writing, we are close but nothing is final until the Carriers or the Arbitrator decides. We have a new Congress and President putting in a lot of changes. So far, nothing directed at the USPS and the NALC. We have a few important bills in Congress waiting to be addressed

and voted on. We have some of the poorest climate on the workroom floor that I have seen in decades. Mismanagement is rampant and there is a lack of knowledge by many of the people in charge of running the post offices. I call this a lack of "Institutional Knowledge." We simply do not have people in management that understand the rules and regulations that we are supposed to live by. M-39, M-41, the ELM and the National Agreement is all but unknown to them. Time frames for meeting on grievances, completing forms like the Ca-1, Ca-16 and others are not in their general knowledge.

I am hoping the new contract addresses this. I am hoping the USPS on its own addresses this but I am not waiting. We are going to make this year go out with a bang. Do I want to work together and resolve issues before grieving like we did in closing the Districts due to the storm? Yes. Am I hoping that they are going to train their people better? Yes. Am I going to wait until this happens? NO!!! We cannot wait. We cannot hope others improve things. We cannot sit back and let things happen.

File grievances. Make complaints. Get people treated properly. **MAKE NOISE AND GO OUT WITH A BANG.**

We can and will correct things. We can and will fight for what is right. **BANG.** ☒

Concern Now!

Donald Hill, Executive Board



Concern Now! If you are concerned about life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, you are always concerned. There are issues in life that require a vigil of caring. A standout instructor who instructed me during my military

training was concerned about the potential my classmates and I had in our military compacity we served at the time. She made it part of our curriculum to review and analyze literary passages and essays. Two assignments are worthy of note, reading of Banality of Evil and Perils of Obedience. My instructor knew far too well what lied ahead in our future should we further our military careers.

Fast-forward to today, we would all benefit from our understanding of those literary pieces now. Is evil prevalent? Are we prone to follow instructions like lambs waiting to become kababs? It is difficult for some who are living in the

moment to grasp the complexity of life's events and historical context. We all should step back, breathe and ponder "What's Going On!" Through a rudimentary or a cursory understanding, we should realize; we need to galvanize the good in the collective.

Sister and brother letter carriers, our consciousness needs to be reenergized and awakened. A nefarious force in government is gaining momentum. Nefarious because their aim is to roll back production earned from hard work, tough negotiations, and organization. Let me elaborate legislation has been introduced to move from a high three retirement calculation to a high five, legislation has been considered to disband all federal labor unions and to decrease government contribution of their share of our health insurance to name a few.

In short, our political activism needs to be stepped-up, our political dollars need to be stepped-up or we will be stepped-on! ☒

The Road to Meaningful Postal Reform

Christine Strasser, Director of Education



NALC President, Fred Rolando, is steadfast in his commitment to have meaningful postal reform adopted, in order to continue to have a viable Postal Service, regardless which party controls the White House and Congress. President Rolando has testified in front of committees, and has written endless editorials in an effort to educate the public on the stability of the Postal Service. Finally, Rolando's efforts have paid off, and positive Postal Reform is on its way.

The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform approved the Postal Reform Act of 2017 (H.R. 756) and the Postal Service Financial Improvement Act of 2017 (H.R. 760). Bipartisan sponsors of the bills, Chaffetz (R-UT), Cummings (D-MD), Meadows (R-NC), Connolly (D-VA), Lynch (D-MA), and Ross (R-FL) are all optimistic that H.R. 756 can "put the Postal Service on a sustainable path, rather than dismantle the Postal Service, our bill will give it the authority and flexibility to thrive in the 21st century."

While the passage out of committee of the two bills was a positive step for letter carriers, the gloom and doom from former committee chairman Representative Darrell Issa (R-CA) again reared its ugly head. Darrell Issa attempted to have four amendments attached to H.R. 756, which would leave the Postal Service struggling to survive. Bipartisan committee members voiced objections to Issa's amendments, and would not support the bill with such amendments. The committee did vote favorably on H.R. 760, after some minor amendments. Both bills, H.R. 756 and H.R. 760 will be sent to the House committees on Ways and Means and on Energy and Commerce because of Medicare related language in them.

Meanwhile, not all of the members of the House of Representatives from New Jersey have signed on in support of three continuing bills to protect letter carriers. H.R. 15, a resolution to maintain six-day delivery, is supported by eight of the twelve representatives. H.R. 28, a resolution to continue door to door delivery, is supported by nine of the representa-

tives. H.R. 31, a resolution to improve the service standards of the USPS, is supported by eight of the twelve representatives. We have bipartisan support for all three bills, but we need that support to be unanimous. If your Representative hasn't signed on as yet, please contact their office and ask that they join us.

For more information on all the resolutions and co-sponsors, please visit NJSALC.com or NALC.org/government-affairs/legislative-activities.

I cannot stress enough the importance of favorable postal reform, needed to protect active and retired letter carriers. The battle for positive postal reform is far from over. We need everyone to be involved. We recently celebrated the forty-seventh anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970. During that strike, many men and women sacrificed and risked everything. Certainly, we should be able to provide an email address to our union, and make a monetary contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. Just as our brothers and sisters were in 1970, we need to be unified in our efforts to achieve positive postal reform. ☐

I

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 756

To restore the financial solvency and improve the governance of the United States Postal Service in order to ensure the efficient and affordable nationwide delivery of mail, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 31, 2017

Mr. CHAFFETZ (for himself, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. MEADOWS, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. CONNOLLY, and Mr. ROSS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To restore the financial solvency and improve the governance of the United States Postal Service in order to ensure

Preserving Our Future

Tony Perconte, Congressional Liaison
NJ 7th District



Calling all Union Leaders! The election is over, and I would like to thank the branches that helped with phone banks and showed up in Philadelphia to knock on doors. While the election outcome did not go our way, I want all of you to know that your time and effort did not go unnoticed. We could talk about what took place

back on November 8, 2016, but I rather talk about what we do moving forward. I have some good news to report, you are a member of the NALC! We all have the opportunity to make a difference now and in the future, but we have to educate and motivate our members about how they can help to secure our future as USPS employees. I would like to take this opportunity to explain what the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) is and how you can help build the PAC.

The Letter Carrier Political Fund (formerly known as COLCPE) is a non-partisan political action committee (PAC). It was established by the NALC in 1975 for the purpose of electing qualified candidates who support letter carriers and who are committed to maintaining a strong and innovative U.S. Postal Service. Some of our members may ask why we need a PAC or why the NALC does not use our union dues instead of building a PAC? Simple, union dues can't be used to support candidates for political office and the NALC relies 100 percent on member contributions to the LCPF. We need to let our members know this important fact, and explain to them what the LCPF is all about. How can we inform our members about the LCPF? This is where we can make a difference at the local level, by having One on One conversations with our members. There should be One on One conversations taking place in each and every branch across the country, not just in New Jersey. What does it cost to take a few minutes to talk to your members? How about at your branch meetings?

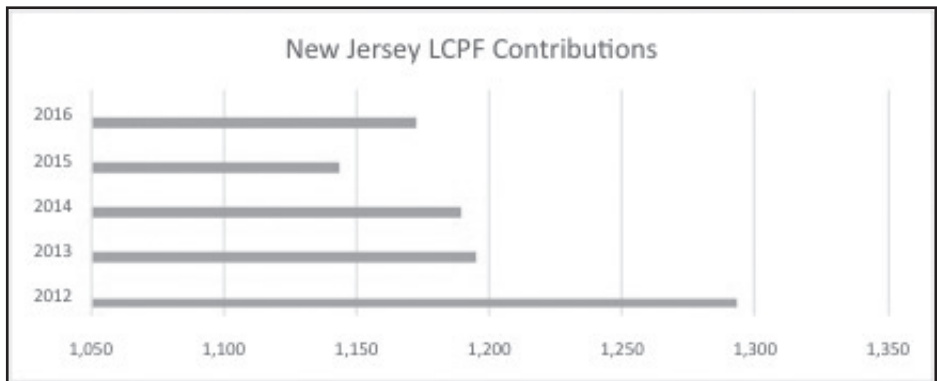
Let's take a look at the LCPF over the last five years. In NJ our PAC was

at 10.37%, or 1,293 members that contributed to the fund. Last year in NJ we were at 9.62% or 1,172 members making contributions. So, over the last five years the NALC last a net loss of 121 members that contribute to LCPF. If each member was to give \$5.00 a pay, that would be a loss of \$15,730.

Members that contribute to the LCPF before retirement, must talk to their local Union about how they can continue their LCPF contribution after retirement. Another problem we are having is with the CCAs. If a CCA goes on their break of service, he/she MUST sign up again for LCPF as their automatic contribution ends when they have a break in service.

I am confident that we can work together to increase our PAC in NJ, but it will take a combined effort from all branches to make LCPF a priority in 2017. If you are having a meeting, social event, seminar or any other gathering within your branch, make sure you have a plan to provide the members an opportunity to sign up at the event. As I meet carriers from one state to another, carriers are telling me that they did not know how our PAC was used or why we needed it. You may be surprised how far a One on One conversation will go when explaining the LCPF with our members. Please remember this conversation must take place off postal property while not on the clock. If your branch needs assistance to help sign up members for LCPF, please ask your Branch President and he/she can always contact me if further assistance is needed.

Thank You for your continued work on the LCPF, we can't do this alone. With your help we will build our PAC in NJ to surpass the 10.37% level of 2012! ☑



60th Annual Joseph Esposito Bowling Tournament

Sponsored by the NJSALC

Charlie Connell, Chairman



The 60th Annual Joseph Esposito Tournament will be held on Sunday, June 4, 2017 at Majestic Lanes, Woodbridge, NJ. The tournament will begin at 1:00 PM. Please allow enough time to check in and get your warm-ups in before starting time. All bowlers must be postal employees and Union members. Smaller offices may form teams with other small offices if necessary. The tournament will be governed by ABC rules, but due to cost factors, will not be considered a sanctioned tournament.

Handicap will be based upon 100% of the difference between your average and 200. Example: 200 minus 150 (your average) equals 50; you will receive a 50 pin handicap. All bowlers with an average of 200 and above will bowl "scratch", there will be no deduction.

Bowlers averages must be the highest attained as of March 31, 2017. Any bowler not having a league average must assume the following averages for handicap purposes: 140 for female and 160 for male. An absent bowler's score will be 10 pins below the registered ABC average for this tournament. The entry fee is \$85.00 per team. Entries must be received no later than May 27, 2017. Use this entry form for your convenience; if you need extra forms visit <http://www.njsalc.com> to print a new form. Also, requests to bowl against a specific team must be indicated on the entry form.

Directions to Majestic Lanes — 525 Route 9 North, Hopelawn, NJ — 732-826-6800

GS Parkway Northbound: Exit 127 to US rte. 9 North

GS parkway Southbound: Exit 129 following road to NJ Highway Administration Building which leads to rte. 184. Continue eastbound over Rte. 9, make right turn onto Laurel Street and continue to parking lot entrance on right.

NJ Turnpike: Exit 11. After passing through toll plaza take ramp to rte. 9 then secondary ramp branching from this one saying NJ Highway Administration Building. This ramp takes you to rte 184 coming up from jughandle to the right. Continue eastbound over rte. 9, make right on Laurel Street and continue to parking lot on right.

ENTRY FORM

Branch #: _____ Office: _____ Entry:# _____

Team Captain: _____ Phone #: _____

Home Address: _____ City and Zip _____

Requested Opponent: _____ Time: 1:00 PM _____ Amt. Paid _____

We will try to honor all requests to bowl against opponents of your choice. All requests must be made on this form!

Team Member	League & County	ABC #	Average
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
(SUB)			

Mail Entries and make checks payable to: Charles Connell, 1219 Ripple Avenue, Manahawkin, NJ 08050

13th Annual NALC Region 15 Golf Classic

To benefit the
Muscular Dystrophy Association

SCHEDULE

**Philip J. Rotella
Memorial Golf Course**

100 Theills Mt. Ivy Road
Theills, NY 10984

June 13, 2017

Registration and Breakfast: 7:00 AM

Shotgun Start:
8:00 AM

Raffle & On-Course Challenges
Throughout the day

BBQ Lunch & Awards Ceremony
Following Golf

\$140 per golfer

REGISTRATION

Name

Address

NALC Branch #

Email

Golfer Names for Foursomes

Name

Name

Name

Name

Please return form by May 20, 2017 to:

Michael Bagarozzi
C/O NALC Region 15 Golf
45 Blooming Grove Turnpike
New Windsor, NY 12553





Garden State Letter Carrier
c/o NJSALC
P.O. Box 333
Teaneck, NJ 07666-0333

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT # 586
LAKEWOOD
NEW JERSEY

PROOF: Okay As Is
 Okay With Change
 Give Revised Proof

Date: _____
Approved By: _____

New Jersey Manufacturer's Insurance Available for NJSALC Members

The New Jersey State Association of Letter Carriers (NJSALC) is associated with New Jersey Manufacturer's Insurance Company (NJM). As a member of the NJSALC you are eligible for discounted auto and homeowner's insurance through NJM, you must be an active letter carrier and an NALC member.

Unfortunately, this union benefit is not available for retirees, due to NJM company policy. However, if you're an active carrier and obtain a policy prior to retirement, you can carry it over when you retire. For more details, contact any NJSALC Officer or Executive Board Member.

Remember, this benefit is available for NALC union members only, membership in the NALC *will* be verified.

