

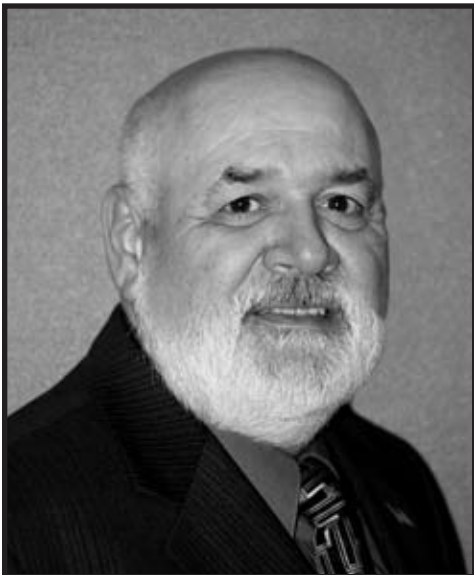
*The Official News Letter of
NJ Merged Branch 38, NALC*



THE SENTINEL

Volume XXXV, Issue 4, August 2009

Special Retiree Issue



President Pete Maglio

Greetings to our retirees! The executive board thought it would be a good idea to publish a special edition of the Sentinel just for our retirees. We wanted to bring you up to date on issues and events especially affecting you. We hope to continue this practice on an occasional basis.

I first want to tell all of our retirees how grateful I am for everything you have done for this Branch. No organization has ever had a more loyal or more dedicated membership than NJ Merged Branch 38!

In the time that I have served as President, I've watched our organization's efforts to increase contributions to COLCPE

intensify. COLCPE, as you know, is the NALC political action fund that supports legislative candidates who stand up and fight for issues affecting letter carriers and their families. A strong and well funded political plan is crucial for the continued survival of the Postal Service, letter carrier jobs, and the retention of benefits for both active carriers and retired postal annuitants. I truly believe that you are the ones who deserve a good share of the credit. When asked, our retired members have always stepped up to the plate. They are always eager to lend a hand and play a part in whatever task is before us.

We need your help again! Whenever possible, you have given generously. Many of you already have COLCPE contributions taken directly from your monthly annuity, and I thank you for your support. For that and more, every member of Branch 38 owes you a special debt of gratitude.

There are some who have not signed up as automatic contributors to COLCPE. I urge you to do so. We must join together to strengthen our power base. COLCPE is the foundation upon which our influence in Washington is fashioned. I know that these economic times are not easy. 2009 has proven to be a difficult year and we will need everyone to come together to take on these challenges. We

need to keep representatives in Washington who will fight to protect all of our benefits. I ask all of you to please help me to meet this challenge. Feel free to call the Branch Office (973-564-7244) if you wish to sign up and become involved in our legislative efforts!

Finally, Jim Eagan, Branch 38 Director of Retired Members and Health Benefits Representative will be retiring at the end of this year. Jim has always worked tirelessly for the membership of this branch. Those of us who work with Jim know the compassion he holds for each and every member. I can not express in words our appreciation for the caring and devoted service he has given to all of the members of Branch 38. He will be missed, and we truly wish him well.

I thank you for your steadfast commitment to Branch 38. May these years of retirement bring you good health and much happiness.



NEW JERSEY MERGED BRANCH 38

National Association of Letter Carriers

**374 Morris Avenue
Springfield, NJ 07081**

**Phone
973-564-7244**

**e-mail
NALC38@VERIZON.NET**

**FAX
973-564-7673**

Branch Officers

Pete Maglio	President
James Stasse	Executive Vice President
Paul Biggs	First Vice President/Treasurer
Michael O'Neill	Second Vice President
Tony Massa	Third Vice President
Ralph Silvestri	Director of City Delivery
John Sheridan	Corresponding Secretary
Pat Flannery	Recording Secretary
Jim Eagen	Director of Retirees/HBR
Peter Bednarz	Sergeant-At-Arms

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Joe Rutkowski	John Dock

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Keith Hemmings	Richard Mitchell
Richard O'Connell Jr.	William Trudell
Dominic Walton	

NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT

Larry Cirelli 212-868-0284

BRANCH 38 ATTORNEY

Donald Millman, Esq. 973-669-9776

MUTUAL BENEFIT REPRESENTATIVE

Martin Spielman Jr.

<http://www.branch38nalc.com/>

DATES TO REMEMBER

BRANCH MEETINGS

September 2, 2009

October 7, 2009

November 4, 2009

December 2, 2009

SPECIAL EVENTS

September 7, 2009

Labor Day

October 12, 2009

Columbus Day Golf Outing

October 18, 2009

Retiree Breakfast

November 11, 2009

Veterans Day

December 19, 2009

Branch 38 Christmas Party

January 10-12, 2010

Shop Steward Training

Legislation That Will Affect Retired Letter Carriers



Michael O'Neill
Second Vice President

Retirees are often interested in keeping up with current events in the Post Office and the NALC. That's why we thought this special issue of the Sentinel was a good idea. We wanted to emphasize events and issues that are of particular importance to our retired members.

Issues such as six day delivery, H.R.22, the Employee Free Choice Act, and FERS sick leave reimbursement have dominated much of the space in both our local publication and information handed down from the national level. These issues are critical to the survival of the Postal Service and the future of letter carrier jobs and benefits. The support of our retirees as we pursue these agenda items is certainly welcome and has always been there when needed. We also want you to be aware of some legislative goals of the NALC that have a direct impact on retirees and their families.

Premium Conversion is a law that, if enacted, would allow Federal civilian and military retirees to pay their government health care premiums with pre-tax dollars. This is a privilege enjoyed by active letter carriers by virtue of the NALC collective bargaining agreement. This year H.R. 1203 has been introduced in the House and S. 491 has been introduced in the Senate. If passed, these bills will allow retired letter carriers to pay their government health care premiums with pre-tax dollars. That would result in tax savings of hundreds of dollars each year. The NALC is actively lobbying for its passage.

At the very least, it is important that we join together to protect the benefits we presently enjoy.

I'm sure you are all aware of the Windfall Elimination Provision enacted in 1983. This provision reduced Social Security benefits for many of those who receive an annuity under the Civil Service Retirement System and who also qualify for Social Security benefits. As a result, many retirees have been denied their fair share of the Social Security benefits earned over a lifetime of hard work. The NALC has consistently fought for the repeal or reform of the Windfall Elimination Provision and will continue to do so during the 111th Congress.

The Government Pension Offset is similar to the Windfall Elimination Provision in that it unfairly reduces or eliminates the Social Security spouse or survivor benefits for which a federal retiree may be eligible based on the Social Security record of his or her spouse. The NALC has repeal of this legislation at the top of its list of priorities. The Social Security Fairness Act of 2009 has been introduced in both Houses of Congress and will be fully supported by the NALC's lobbying efforts.

These issues are important to all letter carrier retirees, and those who hope to be listed in that category in the future. This is why the NALC and Branch 38 encourages all of our members, active and retired, to contribute to COLCPE by having your contribution automatically deducted from either your pay check or your annuity check. A small contribution from all of us may add up to large savings for each of us in the future. At the very least, it is important that we join together to protect the benefits we presently enjoy.

The attacks on federal retiree income listed above will most certainly not be the last. It is our job to be ready for them and to prevent their success. Information explaining how to sign up for automatic COLCPE contributions can be found elsewhere in this paper. Check it out and sign up for what ever you can. It is an investment in your future.

**Give To
COLCPE!!!**

RETIREES!

4 easy ways to start your allotment!

Contribute to COLCPE directly from your ANNUITY

Retired NALC members have the option of making voluntary COLCPE contributions directly from their monthly CSRS or FERS annuities, a convenient way to make regular donations to the political action fund similar to the

payroll system available to active carriers. The amount you decide to contribute will come out of your annuity *each month*.

Choose a method below. **Before you begin**, you'll need your **CSA retirement claim number**.

Phone: Call the NALC Retirement Office at 202-662-2877 anytime, or toll-free at 800-424-5186 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon and from 2 to 4 p.m. (ET).

Coupon: Detach and complete the coupon below and mail it to NALC Headquarters.

Mail: Send a letter to Office of Personnel Management, Retirement Operations Center, Boyers, PA 16017. Be sure to include your CSA number, the amount you want to contribute monthly, and the organization name: National Association of Letter Carriers—COLCPE.

Internet:

- Go to www.servicesonline.opm.gov
- Enter your CSA number, beginning with the letter A and ending with a zero. **SAMPLE: A22222220**
- Enter your PIN (Personal Identification Number). If you don't know it, click *Using Services Online* for help in getting one.
- Once you've entered your CSA number and PIN, click *Log In*.
- On the next page, click *Allotments to Organizations*.
- Click **START**.
- Select *Natl Assn of Letter Carriers - COLCPE*.
- Enter the amount of your *monthly* contribution
- Click **SAVE**
- On the next page click **YES** (if correct), then print the next page for your records.

For Retired Members

I wish to contribute to COLCPE, the political action fund of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

I understand the Office of Personnel Management will withhold the amount below from my *monthly* annuity payments.

Mail completed coupon to: NALC Retirement Department, Attention: COLCPE, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Name (please print): _____ Branch: _____

CSA or Social Security number: _____ Phone: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I wish to contribute *monthly*:

\$25 \$20 \$15 \$10 \$5 Other: \$ _____

By making a contribution to the Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that it is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers nor a part of union dues. You may refuse to contribute without reprisal.

COLCPE 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 canceled through the Office of Personnel Management. **Contributions to COLCPE are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.**

A Special Thanks



Jim Eagen - HBR & Director of Retirees

I have been fortunate to have served the members of Branch 38 as Director of Health Benefits for the past thirty years and as Director of Retirees for the past six years. My time spent in these positions has been very rewarding. I have been

especially lucky over the years to have worked with and been associated with an extremely knowledgeable and dedicated group of officers and shop stewards.

As I prepare to retire from my position with the Branch at the end of this term, I want to express my gratitude to a number of people. I want to thank Past President Al Ferranto for having the confidence to appoint me Health Benefit Representative for Branch 991. He allowed me to continue in that role after we merged with Branch 38. I also want to thank the succeeding Branch 38 Presidents, Bruce Didriksen, Bob Borgognoni, and Pete Maglio, for their continued confidence in me. I especially wish to thank these men, and all of the Branch Officers with which I've been honored to serve, for their support and friendship. Most importantly, I want to thank the membership for your support over these many years.

I have a special place in my heart for our retired members. Not only have you built

this Union to be the wonderful organization it is today, you continue to support the efforts of the NALC in your retirement. You have always led the way when it comes to legislative action. You are always the first to contact your representatives in Congress when asked, and you have always done your part by making voluntary contributions to COLCPE, our political action fund. You retirees know full well the importance of our presence in the political arena. You also understand that our involvement and support of political candidates is based on issues rather than political affiliation. We continue to need the support of both retired and active letter carriers, especially in these difficult financial times.

Retirees have always led the way in the past. I am confident you will continue that leadership role as we fight to protect the rights we have struggled so hard to achieve. Thanks again to each and every one of you.



Tony Massa, President NJ State Association

Greeting to my fellow retirees!! Let me first thank all of you who have sent words of encouragement and good wishes while I was recovering from my operation. It's been a long haul, but I'm happy to say that

I feel better than ever and couldn't be happier to be back to work. Your thoughts and prayers got me through some of the tougher times. Thanks to all.

I also want to thank you for your continued support. I was re-elected this spring to another term as NJ State Association President, and I want to thank all of the letter carriers throughout the State, especially in Branch 38, for your continued confidence. It means more to me than you will ever know.

I would also like to express my congratulations and best wishes to Jim Eagen as he retires from his position with the Branch at the end of this term. I've known Jim for a lot of years now. I can assure you that there has never been anyone who cares more about the NALC

and Branch 38 than Jim. His dedication and hard work on behalf of the membership he represents is unsurpassed. His work promoting the NALC Health Benefit Plan has been rewarded with numerous accolades from the national level, and they are all well deserved.

Jim won't be spending much time at the Branch office any longer, but he assures me he'll keep in touch and will continue to attend many of our Branch functions. I look forward to seeing Jim around for many years to come, and I would encourage all of you to stay active and come out to the Branch functions as well. As you know, your leadership and guidance are assets long treasured by the NALC, and you are needed now more than ever. Thanks again for your tireless support.

Happy Retirement Jim!!!

Health Benefits

Open Season

November 9, 2009 -

December 7, 2009

If you haven't checked out the NALC Health Benefit Plan over the past few years, it might be time to do so. Under the leadership of HBP Director Tim O'Malley, the Plan has increased benefits and lowered premiums. We are now more than competitive with all of the more popular plans in the Federal System.

Many letter carriers, both active and retired, have made the change over the past few years. More members translate into even better benefits and even lower premiums. Do yourself a favor and check out the NALC Health Benefit Plan this open season.

A Very Special Gift

I recently received a card from a retiree from my own office, East Brunswick. His name is Joe Wallner, and he still resides in East Brunswick. Joe was the VOMA when I first came to work in EB, but he had been involved in the local union many years prior to my arrival.

Joe's note was very nice, wishing me and the other officers his best and letting us know that he was following the events of the Branch and the Postal Service closely. I know Joe keeps in touch with his fellow retirees, and he often makes the trip up to Belleville for the Retiree Luncheon each October.

Included in Joe's letter was a contribution of \$200 for the Richard O'Connell Scholarship Fund. Joe had read about the recent Scholarship Night, and that article had stirred fond memories of his time spent with Richie at various union

functions and conventions. We'll be adding Joe's contribution to the money already set aside for next year's scholarship.

All of the officers of the Branch want to acknowledge Joe's generosity and thank him for his continued support, interest, and participation. It's guys like Joe that remind us what being part of a union is all about.

Michael O'Neill

In Memoriam

Vernon Baker

Retired letter carrier from the Clifton Post Office.

Retiree Breakfast - October 18, 2009

Branch 38's Annual Retiree Breakfast will be held at the Chandelier Restaurant, 340 Franklin Ave., Bellville, NJ on Sunday, October 18, 2009. This important legislative event will commence promptly at 9:00 AM.

All of New Jersey's Congressmen, Senators and Members of the House have been invited to attend and share their views regarding legislation important to letter carriers and retirees. National Business Agent Larry Cirelli and a Resident National Officer will be present and will bring us up to date on Postal Service issues at the national level.

Please join us for breakfast and an opportunity to meet with your Congressional Representatives. There is no charge for this event, however we do ask that you contact us in advance so that we are able to make arrangements with the restaurant. Please detach the form below and return it to us no later than October 1, 2009.

If you have any further questions, please contact Jim Eagan at 973-564-7244 (Ext. 21). We look forward to seeing you at the breakfast!

NJ Merged Branch 38 - Retiree Breakfast 2009

Name _____

Mail To: **Jim Eagan, Director of Retirees
NJ Merged Branch 38, NALC
374 Morris Avenue
Springfield, NJ 07081**

Office _____

Phone # _____

Number Attending _____

Stay Active

We Need You!!!



Charlie Connell

As Director of Retirees for the New Jersey State Association, I have the opportunity to attend many union functions over the course of the year. Foremost among these functions are those sponsored by my own Branch, Branch 38. I would encourage all Branch 38 Retirees to take advantage of these programs as well.

In April, at the Chandelier Restaurant in Belleville, Branch 38 hosted the annual

Retiree Luncheon honoring all of our members who had retired in 2008, as well as many fifty and sixty year members. The Branch has always made a point of honoring our retirees, and this year was no exception. The awards were plentiful, and the speeches, stories, and experiences were well received by all in attendance.

The Branch participates in many other events during the year such as the annual Food Drive in May, the Congressional Breakfast in March, the State Convention in May, and a Night at the Races at the Meadowlands in June. All retirees are more than welcome to join us at all of these functions. In fact, your help would be greatly appreciated.

Upcoming events on the Branch 38 calendar include the annual Columbus Day Golf Outing scheduled for October 12, Columbus Day and the annual Retiree Breakfast on October 18. These are social events that promote exercise and networking, both designed to keep you active and involved.

So come out and enjoy some of these activities. Stay active and let some of the young carriers know about the "good old days". I'm sure you all have great stories to tell, and we would love to hear them.

Phone Numbers Useful to Retirees

US Office of Personnel Management
1-888-767-6738

Thrift Savings Plan
1-877-968-3778

Social Security Administration
1-800-772-1213

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
1-800-633-4227

Internal Revenue Service
1-800-829-1040

NJ MERGED BRANCH 38 – COLUMBUS DAY GOLF OUTING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2009

BUNKER HILL GOLF COURSE - GRIGGSTOWN, NJ

FEE - \$95 per Golfer

Price Includes: Golf, Cart, Steak Dinner, Beer, Soda, Hot Dogs & Prizes

To reserve a spot for your foursome call:

Mike O'Neill 973-564-7244 (Ext. 18) or Charlie Connell 732-634-6104

All Proceeds Go To MDA

THE SENTINEL

NJ Merged Branch 38, NALC
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Springfield, NJ 07081

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Branch Meeting Information & Directions

Meetings are held at 7:30 PM on the first Wednesday of each month.

The Branch Meetings are held at:

ELKS BPO LODGE #2116
665 RAHWAY AVENUE
WOODBIDGE, NJ 07095
732-634-2116

Directions:

SOUTH on Garden State Parkway. Take Exit #129 to Route 9 North to Woodbridge Exit (Just after the Forge Restaurant on your right). At the end of the Exit Ramp, turn right onto Main Street (Route 514) and proceed until you reach a monument at City Hall. Bear left onto Rahway Avenue. The Elks is @1/2 mile down the road on your left.

NORTH on Garden State Parkway. Take Exit #127 to Route 9 North and follow directions above.

NJ Turnpike. Take Exit 12 (Carteret). Bear right after toll booth and turn left at light after overpass. Proceed through industrial park to Rahway Avenue and turn left. The Elks is 1 mile ahead on your right.