

Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

September/October 2010

Branch 2184
Western Wayne County, MI
National Association
of Letter Carriers
AFL - CIO
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Office Hours:
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Monday through Friday

Calendar
Branch Meetings:
November 3rd, 2010
December 1st, 2010
(7:30 p.m. - Union Hall)

Retirees Meetings:
November 10th, 2010
December 8th, 2010
(12:30 p.m. - Union Hall)

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President's Report

Vote or Consequences?

Once again letter carriers and working families across the nation face another crucial election cycle. This midterm election might be the most important. Not wanting to sound like the Branch President who constantly cries wolf every time an election is near, let's take a step back and try to analyze this one. The Party of "NO" (Republicans) and their partners in this election cycle, the "Teabaggers" are rubbing their hands in glee as the election approaches as the polls all show widespread voter discontent with incumbent candidates of either Party. The Democrats who seemingly control all the levers of power have been unable for a host of reasons to make the electorate happy and now face the real possibility of losing both the House and the Senate. The anti-worker Republican and Teabagger Parties have a motivated base according to the talking heads, and can't wait to cast their votes against the Party in power. They say that the Democrats have failed to energize their base and are sure to face a tidal wave of voter disapproval, while their most reliable voters stay home and sit this election out.

So where does this leave us and why should we even care? Would it not be easier just let them throw all the rascals out and to start over? Unfortunately for Union members, and us (Federal Employees) the Republicans have shown their anti-worker agenda, and the "bullseye" has been placed on our collective backs. As the old saying goes, actions speak louder than words, so let us review the actions the Republicans who wish to return to power have taken so far, or have had a hand in:

On September 16 a group of conservatives and a Republican strategist took to the airwaves on the Fox Business channel where they discussed the relevancy of the USPS, and discussed privatization. The strategist then went on to say that postal workers were "thoroughly unskilled labor who should be bumped down to drive cabs" comparing us with unskilled Nigerian taxi cab drivers.

(Continued on page 3)

Officers

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Financial Secretary Treas	Cathy Tondreau
Sergeant at Arms	Walt McGregory
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Trustee	Gloria Warthen
Trustee	Casey Pennington
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.....	Jacqueline Wiggins
.....	Ed Williams (alt)
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.....	Roderick LeLental
.....	Tom Klecha (alt)
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.....	Chris Tostige
.....	James Wolstencroft (alt)
.....	Denise Viola (alt)
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Branch 2184 Speaks is published 6 times a year by Branch 2184, National Association of Letter Carriers.

The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editorial staff or the officers of the branch.

We invite all members to contribute articles for publication. Copy should be typed, double-spaced and signed by the contributor. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit, delete or reject the article for the good of the branch.

In the hope that material contained herein may be of benefit to the goals of the NALC, permission is hereby granted to copy or use material in this publication with our best wishes.

Address Correction Requested

When you move, change your name, leave the letter carrier craft, retire, or your phone number changes, we need to hear from you. Your member benefits, newsletter and other mailings may be affected if we don't have the new information. It only takes a phone call or drop us a note. We will do the rest.

Call 313-295-1640

(Continued from page 1)

President's Report

On September 20 the ranking Republican member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Congressman Darryl Issa wrote an opinion piece for *The Washington Times*. In it he urges Congress not to "bail out" the Postal Service. He goes on to say that it is up to management and Congress to demand concessions from postal employees. Issa goes on to say "if compromise fails, Congress has an obligation to fix the Postal Service's budget imbalance not through a bailout, but through new mandates to cut costs and revise labor agreements." **Congressman Issa would be the Chairman of this influential Committee, which has a direct oversight over the USPS.**

On September 27, *The Wall Street Journal*, Opinion / Editorial piece regarding the possible 2 cent increase in postage rates warned the American public about "The Post Office Hustle." The article goes on to say that today the average postal worker makes \$83,000 a year in wages and benefits, roughly 50% above the average compensation for private workers, according to Federal wage data.

On September 29, despite the best efforts of Senate Democrats, Senate Republicans voted unanimously to block a measure that would have deferred \$4 Billion of the \$5.5 Billion required to pay for future retiree benefits.

September 30, the Postal Rate Commission rejected the two-penny increase the USPS asked for. Not even a week later, on October 2 in a *Wall Street Journal* interview the man who would be the next House majority leader talked about the GOP agenda if they win this election. When asked what their agenda would be if elected, he went on to say "We will cut programs, we will try to rein in the size of the bureaucracy (read Federal employees). We will bring Federal pay scales that have become so exaggerated into line with market rates".

Some might think that this was just a run of bad luck for the USPS and its employees or maybe just a mere coincidence. I think not. These are

career politicians who have an anti-labor, anti-worker agenda and who are beginning to flex their muscles. Still think you should sit this election out? The challenge that faces us at the polls is not insurmountable, we have done it before. We need to make sure we turn out in numbers on election day, make sure your family and friends vote. If we do our part we can hopefully take the target off our backs once and for all. Vote like your job and way of life depends on it!

Because maybe it just might.

--Mark Judd
President

EVP's Report

There is no time like the present

If what is happening to the USPS of late doesn't get you concerned then you may never be concerned. There is no better time to put forth any kind of effort in protecting your job than now. Within the next couple of weeks many letter carriers will be doing their part to make sure that we as federal employees have a Congress that is willing to support the USPS in the future.



There are things you can do as a member with a minimum amount of effort. The first and foremost is that you get out the **vote**. On November 2, 2010 the state and national elections will take place. As in most non-presidential election years

(Continued on page 4)

the voter turnout takes a decline. This is why it is even more important to either vote by mail or vote at your local precinct. We cannot afford any excuses as to why you missed or forgot to vote on this day.

The stakes are as high as they have ever been with many in Congress wanting to get rid of the Postal Service as a government agency. The writing is on the wall, in the air and written in the newspaper. The evidence is what happened in the last couple of weeks in September. The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) flat out rejected the USPS proposal to increase postage rates. In their report they point to the fact that the overfunding of the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) fund by as much as 75 Billion dollars is what needs to be taken care of first. If these 75 Billion dollars were transferred to the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund then this would offset the 5.5 Billion dollars the USPS is required to pay at the end of each fiscal year till 2017. This is the legislation known as The 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. Only Congress can make this change happen. No other corporation or government agency has such heavy handed requirements.

To make things even more clear as to the writing on the wall is what happened just days before the USPS was to pay this years 5.5 Billion dollars. Majority Leader Harry Ried introduced legislation to the Senate that would have deferred 4 Billion of the 5.5 Billion dollars that was required at the end of the fiscal year. This was basically the same legislation that was approved last year. This year (election year) was totally different. Senate Republicans to a man/woman voted against this resolution unless a group of other provisions were including. So the USPS on September 30, 2010 made the required 5.5 Billion dollar payment. This is a clear attempt to make the USPS look like they are more financially unstable than it seems. So when you hear our adversaries talk on how much the USPS is losing and they should do away with the agency, you can see the spin that is perpetrated.

So become an E-Activist, join the Carriers Corp, and give to COLCPE. Give some time to a carrier friendly candidate or participate in one of the phone banks on October 26 and 27 6pm-8pm at the Branch hall. I'm pleading with each and every member to do something to protect **our** jobs in this election cycle. If you chose not to, you will only have yourself to blame if in the next election there is no USPS.

-- Jim Wolstrencroft
Executive Vice President

LEGISLATIVE LIAISON REPORT

In May 2009 I was appointed by the President of the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers to serve as the NALC's legislative liaison for the 11th Congressional District here in Michigan. Our Congressional representative for the 11th District is Thaddeus McCotter. It has been my task to keep in touch with his office on a regular basis to inform him of any legislation that potentially affects letter carriers, either directly or indirectly. Further, I make every effort to assess his position on those issues.

Recently, I had the privilege of attending our NALC National Convention as a delegate. While there, I attended the legislative class; and am now reporting to our members about how our upcoming election can affect us and the future of the Postal Service. Letter Carriers have two key issues that require us all to be informed of and consider when voting.

The first issue is the USPS obligation to fund retirement benefits. Currently there is a huge surplus (or over funding) in the CSRS Pension fund that could be better used to fulfill a legally mandated pre-funding of the retiree Health Benefit fund. Since the surplus transfer from the CSRS Pension fund would likely leave the Health Benefit fund fully funded, passage of (House Resolution) H.R. 5746 makes an irrefutable case for the repeal of the pre-funding obligation. For more informa-

tion, please see the NALC bulletin board in your office, where detailed information regarding this should be posted.

Second, there is the issue of maintaining a six day workweek. There has been a National campaign waged by the NALC during the last several months where letter carriers have been asked to participate in various ways. One way that we have helped influence the Postal Regulatory Commission before they make their recommendation to Congress, is to seek out business owners that agree we need to maintain Saturday delivery and ask them to sign a simple statement. Another way is for each of us to contact our Congressional representative. Most of Branch 2184 members live in either my District which is the 11th, represented by Thaddeus McCotter - phone #(202) 225-8171, or the 15th District, which is represented by John Dingell - phone #(202) 225-4071. Call them and tell them you live in their District and that you wish to have the Postal Service maintain the six day workweek. Be sure to ask them if they are taking a position on

the issue. Every phone call they receive from a constituent equals about 100 emails.

By the way, although both Congressmen were asked to sign on to the first issue - H.R.5746, Congressman Dingell agreed to support our issue and co-signed the House Resolution currently awaiting action. Congressman McCotter has failed to take a position as yet.

While I have your attention, I also hope to help convince more of our members to contribute to our political action fund, COLCPE. No member's dues monies may be used for any political purposes. Thus, this voluntary fund is set up and funded by interested members solely for the purpose of furthering efforts to maintain a letter carrier friendly Congress. Anyone interested in making a contribution to this fund can do so by talking to their Union steward or calling the Branch office and someone there will assist you.

-- Patricia Linna
Legislative Liaison



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Contact Your Brookfield Representative!

Robert Kreager

Branch 2184 Retired

1802 Ford Blvd. Lincoln Park, MI 48146-3956
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2010 General Election Endorsements

The Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers Executive Board and the Michigan AFL-CIO have voted to accept the following endorsements for the Tuesday, November 2nd General Election.

As our fight to preserve 6-day delivery continues we must encourage every member and their families to vote for candidates who will protect our jobs and the future of the Postal Service. Please mail in your ballots or go to the polls on Tuesday, November 2nd.

STATE

Governor - **Vergil Bernero**
Lt. Governor - **Brenda Lawrence**
Attorney General - **David Leyton**
Secretary of State - **Jocelyn Benson**

JUSTICE of the SUPREME COURT

Denise Langford-Morris
Alton Thomas Davis

U.S. CONGRESSIONAL

District #1 - **Gary Mc Dowell**
District #2 - **Fred Johnson**
District #3 - **Patrick Miles Jr.**
District #4 - **Jerry M. Campbell**
District #5 - **Dale Kildee**
District #6 - **Don Cooney**
District #7 - **Mark Scahuer**
District #9 - **Gary Peters**
District #10 - **Henry Yanez**
District #11 - **Natalie Mosher**
District #12 - **Sander (Sandy) Levin**
District #13 - **Hansen Clarke**
District #14 - **John Conyers**
District #15 - **John Dingell**

MICHIGAN SENATE

District #1 - **Coleman Young Jr.**
District #2 - **Bert Johnson**
District #3 - **Morris Hood II**
District #4 - **Virgil Smith**
District #5 - **Tupac A. Hunter**
District #6 - **Glenn Anderson**

District #7 - **Kathleen Law**
District #8 - **Hoon-Younh Hopgood**
District #9 - **Steve Beida**
District #14 - **Vince Gregory**
District #17 - **John Spencer**
District #18 - **Rebekah Warren**

MICHIGAN HOUSE

District #2 - **Lisa Howze**
District #3 - **Alberta Tinsley Talabi**
District #4 - **Maureen Stapleton**
District #5 - **John Olumba**
District #6 - **Fred Durhal Jr.**
District #7 - **Jimmy Womack**
District #8 - **Thomas Stallworth III**
District #9 - **Shanella Jackson**
District #10 - **Harvey Santana**
District #11 - **David Nathan**
District #12 - **Rashida Tlaib**
District #13 - **Andrew Kandrevas**
District #14 - **Paul Clements**
District #15 - **George Darany**
District #16 - **Bob Constan**
District #17 - **Phil Cavanaugh**
District #18 - **Richard LeBlanc**
District #19 - **Joseph Larkin**
District #20 - **Joan Wadsworth**
District #21 - **Dian Slavens**
District #22 - **Douglass Geiss**
District #23 - **Deb Kennedy**
District #54 - **David Ruthledge**
District #55 - **Mike Smith**
District #56 - **Kate Ebli**

MI BOARD of EDUCATION

Elizabeth Bauer
Lupe Ramos-Montigny

U of M Regents

Paul Brown
Greg Stephens

MSU BOARD of TRUSTEES

Dennis Denno
Collen McNamara

WAYNE STATE U GOVERNORS

Brenda Moon
Ed Bruley

WAYNE COUNTY

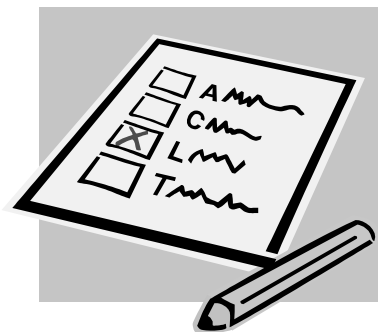
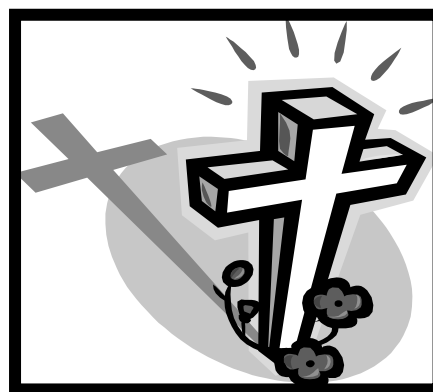
County Executive - **Robert A. Ficano**
Sheriff - **Benny N. Napoleon**
County Commissioner - **Diane Webb**

MONROE COUNTY

Road Commissioner - **Stan Lewinsky**
County Commissioner 4 - **Robert Lambert**
County Commissioner 6 - **Jerry Oley**

Candidates listed above are for Wayne county and the surrounding area. Active carriers and retirees living outside this area can

go to our website www.nalc2184.org to find a complete list of candidates in your district that are endorsed by the AFL-CIO of Michigan as labor friendly.

**Election Day****November 2nd****VETERANS DAY****November 11th**

Mistaking the Fake Trees for the Real Forest

"An opinion should be the result of thought, not a substitute for it." (Jef Mallett, Cartoonist)

And so the end game has begun. A very real Postal apocalypse is unfolding day by day. All that remains to be determined is what, if any semblance of a universal Postal Service remains in the United States a few years hence, as well as your job.

Is that an overstatement? Has Chicken Little taken over my computer keyboard? I think not. The 93% of NALC members who choose not to contribute to COLCPE apparently feel that their future is sunny, with guaranteed employment and continued good wages and benefits. The 90% of NALC members who choose not to get involved politically, never taking the slightest action to ensure their continued employment and standard of living, must also feel that the future is equally bright. However, this is simply delusional. In fact, our conservative enemies are circling like sharks, using misguided anti-government sentiment as a public weapon.

Non-activist letter carriers comprise the majority of our members. In fairness, complacency and even apathy can quickly take over in our busy lives. However, it is that very responsibility to family and to others which allows no excuse - none whatsoever, for letter carriers who willfully choose, through their actions or more often, inactions, to work against their own interests.

It no longer matters *why* any letter carrier, no matter how gullible, chooses to sacrifice his or her future and that of their family to outright stupidity. Political wedge issues? Sure, they are out there. The Republican party is cynically doing everything possible to divide us, and thus far has been wildly successful at playing the American people for fools - including some letter carriers. Even some who should know better get caught up in the

utter nonsense of phony "issues" which generate so much heat and emotion. Just keep watching those fake trees, even while the forest all around you goes up in flames!

Right-wing hate radio, the Fox Republican propaganda channel, and clueless tea party types will continue to spew their ignorant garbage, smearing the United States President and tearing down anything in America that benefits the common good of workers and our families. Naked appeals to mindless fear, hate, and resentment will continue to be offered instead of substantive ideas or solutions. Enlightened letter carriers can choose NOT to be caught up in the willful ignorance of this right-wing nonsense, which thrives only when the fearful and the uninformed substitute the baseless opinions of others for rational thought.

Meanwhile, Postmaster General Potter is merely biding his time until he has a United States Congress ready to do his bidding. He is counting on January 2011 and the new 112th Congress as the final piece of his plan to dismantle the USPS, *and your job along with it.*

Some will choose to be the fools and continue to sit on their hands instead of fighting back. There is, of course, another option. The surrender monkeys among us may not care about their future. However, they don't speak for me, and they should never speak for you.

-- Joe Golonka
Retired Member

Happy



Thanksgiving

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9 a.m. - Noon, Saturday

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Customer Connect

Congratulation to the following Branch 2184 carriers who turned in customer connect leads which turned into sales.

Paula Hall (Lincoln Park) - \$1,00.00

Nancy Schafer (Dundee) - \$400.00

Bob Venning (Plymouth) - \$150,000.00

Paula Hall (Lincoln Park) - \$8,000.00

Michael Chevillot (Westland) - \$100.00

Paula Hall (Lincoln Park) - \$500.00

Amy Williams (Westland) - \$13,000.00

Through Customer Connect, letter carriers are taking advantage of their special relationships to encourage business customers to use USPS instead of private delivery services. Since the startup in mid-2003, letter carriers have generated more than **ONE billion** in new revenue.

Attend Your Branch Meetings

1st Wednesday of the Month

Branch 2184 Web Site

www.nalc2184.org

Retirement Information

OWCP Information

"OWCP" Forms

Branch Calendar

"FMLA" forms

Online "SPEAKS" Newsletter

Steward Resources:

Grievance Forms

Grievance Guidelines

JCAM, MRS, M-39, M-41

2184 Memo of Understanding

2010 COLCPE Contributors

Belleville

- ✓ Gregory Bodziak
- ✓ Bruce Prevost

Dearborn Main

- ✓ Darryl Clay
- Robert Panchenko
- ✓ Daniel Smith
- Jackie Wiggins
- ✓ Ed Williams

Dearborn Annex

- Nancy Altman
- ✓ Timothy Bailey
- ✓ Michael Bergin
- Joe Garcia
- ✓ Mark Judd
- Thomas Klecha
- ✓ Roderick Lelental
- ✓ Melvin MacDonald
- ✓ Carol Macieczni
- Rosemary Miller
- ✓ Karen Regentik
- Jerry Taylor
- Scott Wandyg

Dearborn Heights

- ✓ Roger Corpolongo
- ✓ Jim Hales
- ✓ Alan Swintek
- ✓ Christopher Tostige
- ✓ Denise Viola
- ✓ James Wolstencroft

Flat Rock

- ✓ Amy Degrand

Grosse Isle

- ✓ Kimberly Bumbul
- ✓ John Nellis

Inkster

- ✓ Bryon Hendricks

- ✓ Roy McMahan

Lincoln Park

- Dave Reise
- ✓ Paula Hall
- ✓ Scott Watts

Monroe

- ✓ Chris Carmon
- ✓ Kenneth Masserant
- ✓ Erik Venzke

Northville

- James Holland
- ✓ Beth Maliszewski

Plymouth

- ✓ Heather Childers
- ✓ James Crossey
- ✓ Patricia Linna
- ✓ Gary Macioce
- ✓ Dan Marek
- Don Oziemski
- ✓ Rosales Ricky

Rockwood

- ✓ Gloria Warthen

Taylor

- ✓ Carol Clark
- ✓ Bob Parisi
- ✓ Andrea Smith
- ✓ Michele Szafran

Temperance

- ✓ Kari Guthrie

Trenton

- ✓ Anthony Conley
- ✓ Gwen Heffinger
- ✓ Dennis Lucas
- ✓ Casey Pennington

Westland

- ✓ Barnes Michele
- ✓ Lori Boljesic
- ✓ Byron, Kenyatte
- ✓ Wenoia Clark
- ✓ Ted Gagnon
- ✓ Joan Hicks
- ✓ Caprice Hughes
- ✓ Katrina Jones
- ✓ Walter McGregory
- ✓ Ladonna Miller
- ✓ Sharonlynn Rould
- ✓ Edward Sikora
- ✓ Raymond Tobin
- ✓ Vicelli Tammy
- ✓ Amy Williams
- ✓ Calvin Winbush

Canton

- ✓ Felicia Bryant
- ✓ Dianne Daley
- ✓ Lois Fritz
- Kathryn Hayes

Ypsilanti

- ✓ Alan Grajczyk

- ✓ Timothy Bowsher
- Mike Radecki
- ✓ Richard Rider
- ✓ Michael Tredway

Retired

- ✓ Mary Abbott
- ✓ Thelma Balogh
- Cary Black
- George Bolash
- John Bostek
- ✓ Joe Golonka
- ✓ Karjala, Mike
- ✓ James Kelly
- William Lowe
- ✓ Joanna MacKinnon
- William Mason
- William Mather
- John Meleski
- James Powell
- Brian Rodden
- Leo Rosol
- ✓ Henry Strange
- ✓ Cathy Tondreau
- ✓ Cindy Trzeciak
- ✓ Margaret Zywicki
- ✓ Leonard Zawisa

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Committee On Letter Carriers Political Education
(COLCPE)

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Keep in mind if you do not **REQUEST UNION REPRESENTATION**, then you are considered to have waived this valuable right.

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Scholarship Winners Announced

Branch 2184 proudly announces the winners of this year's scholarships. Two \$500.00 scholarships were awarded to qualifying applicants that are children of Branch 2184 members in good standing.

This year's scholarship winners are: Beth Wright, daughter of Northville member Jim Wright; and Phillip J. McGuckin, son of Taylor member Frances McGuckin.

Congratulations to the winners of this year's Branch 2184 Scholarships! We wish them all the best in their future studies and careers.

-- *Mark Judd*
President
Branch 2184



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Director of Retirees Report:

The Branch recently received some information from the SOAR (Save Our Annuity Retirement) Coalition of Michigan regarding the upcoming general election. Included in this information were some issues to consider when you cast your vote. I cannot express strongly enough how important it is to vote for the candidates who support active and retired Letter Carriers. If they are defeated we stand to potentially lose the following benefits.

Federal Benefits

- Collective Bargaining
- Pension reduction
- Reasonable health care costs
- COLA's
- Saturday delivery

State Benefits

- Your tax free Federal annuity status (approximately \$600.00 per year)
- Making Michigan a right to work State
- Increase in individual income tax



VOTE!!! YOUR FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT



-- Leonard Zawisa
Retirees Officer

For more information about SOAR write
SOAR Coalition of Michigan
"Representing over 70,000 Active /Retired Federal and Postal Employees"
P.O. Box 47668, Oak Park, MI 48237



Taylor, MI 48180
6969 Monroe

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS • AFL-CIO

