

Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

January/February 2009

Branch 2184 National Association of Letter Carriers

AFL - CIO 6969 Monroe Taylor, MI 48180-1815 (313) 295-1640

Fax: (313) 295-4134

E-Mail :

NALC2184@sbcglobal.net Web Site www.nalc2184.org

Office Hours:

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday

Calendar Branch Meetings:

March 4th April 1st

7:30 p.m. - Union Hall

Retirees Meetings:

March 11th April 8th 12:30 p.m. - Union Hall

In this issue:

Presidents Report	1-3-4
EVP Report	4-5
Political Activism	6
Activities Report	7
Treasurers Report	8
COLCPE	10
Injury Comp Report	11
Retirees Report	12

President's Report

Term Ending Report

In accordance with Article 6, section 1 of the Constitution for the Government of Subordinate and Federal Branches, I hereby submit the Branch's Term Ending Report.

The following is an overview of the Branch operations for the last three years. I have also asked the Branch officers to submit summaries from their areas of responsibility. The last three years have been both challenging and rewarding. They have been challenging in the respect that our business has been in a state of constant change and flux. They have been rewarding because of the way that we have met every challenge head on and have managed to succeed as an organization.

Financial Report

During the last term we were able to stabilize the financial situation we inherited in January of 2006. The Branch membership played an important part in securing our financial future when it approved a By-law change regarding our dues structure. Through aggressive money management and prudent investments in long term certificates of deposit we went from a starting balance of \$94,442.03 to an end of term balance three years later of \$153,729.09. Financial Secretary Treasurer Cathy Tondreau has worked closely with me these past three years on our cost cutting efforts as well as diligently working to ensure that all our Branch funds and property were secure. I am pleased to report that we are in a very strong financial position with no outstanding debts or loans.

Capital Improvements

We have maintained a rigorous schedule of improvements of the Branch infrastructure to ensure that the property is well maintained and in a good working order. Some of the major improvements include: new railings and cement work including the ramp to the hall, new outdoor se-

(Continued on page 3)

Officers

President	Mark Judd
Executive Vice President	Jim Wolstencroft
Vice President	Carol Clark
Recording Secretary	
Financial Secretary Treasurer	
Sergeant at Arms	Walt McGregory
Health Benefits Representative	Jim Powell
Retirees Officer	Leonard Zawisa
Trustee	
Trustee	Gloria Warthen
Trustee	
Editor	Leonard Zawisa
Branch Scribe	Joe Golonka
Web Site Design	Jim Hales
Injury Compensation	

Stewards

Belleville	
Dearborn Main	
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
Dearborn Annex	
Teleford	
Dearborn Heights	
Flat Rock	
Grosse Ile	
Inkster	
Lincoln Park	
Monroe	
Northville	
Plymouth	
Rockwood	
Taylor	
Temperance	Kari Guthrie
Trenton	
	Casey Pennington
Wayne	
Westland	
Canton	
Ypsilanti	
	Jim Riddle (alt)



Branch 2184 Speaks is published 6 to 10 times a year by Branch 2184, National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO.

The opinions expressed in this publication, January/ February 2009, 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

curity lighting around the entire perimeter of the building, new energy efficient windows, new gutters and downspouts, painting of the building both inside and outside, along with miscellaneous plumbing work throughout the building. We have been able to maintain this improvement schedule while still managing to end with a yearly surplus.

Membership

We started the new term in 2006 with the merger of Monroe Branch 750. Along with the new National Agreement allowing for the hiring of TE's our membership totals have held steady with a slight increase. We currently have approximately 856 regular members with an additional 284 retired members.

Activities

In 2006 we re-instituted our annual Branch picnic, since then we have had an increasing amount of interest from our members who enjoy getting together for a picnic and having some fun. This family event is growing each year, which is a very good sign. MDA, our national charity has finally been given the attention that it so rightly deserves, with added attention from both the National Office and from Branches across the country including ours. This year we raised the largest amount in Branch history for MDA having raised over \$8,000! We have also continued the tradition (re-started in 2006) of marching in the annual Labor Day parade, this event like the others mentioned is building in momentum with more members taking part each year. We continue to actively participate in the NALC's National Food Drive each May. Even in these economically difficult times, the Branch's total food collected has increased each year. Our Branch Activities coordinator and Recording Secretary Cindy Trzeciak has done an outstanding job in coordinating these many events.

Retirement

Branch Retirement Officer Leonard Zawisa has done a fine job fielding the many calls regarding the myriad of retirement issues that our members have faced. In addition to regular retirements the early out VERA offered by OPM has consumed a lot of his time as he has helped them research the right retirement option for them. Despite the many requests for help and information we have managed to help each and every one with nary a complaint. In the last three years we have had over 45 members who have retired and taken up our offer to help. Leonard has worked hard with shared services and prospective retirees to make the process as seamless as possible. We have even arranged for prospective retirees to receive their telephone retirement counseling from USPS Shared Services at the Branch office with our Retirement Officer present.

OWCP

Another successful program that we have instituted is to make our workers compensation specialist Joe Golonka available to members who are having problems with their claims. With Joe's help our members have been able to navigate the maze of forms, doctor's notes and letters to (Continued on page 4)

Calendar of Events

Branch Meeting	March 4th at 7:30pm
Steward Meeting	March 10th at 7:30pm
Retirees Meeting	March 11th at 12:30pm
Steward Meeting	March 23rd at 7:30pm
Executive Board	March 30th at 7:30pm
Branch Meeting	April 1st at 7:30pm
-	April 1st at 7:30pm April 8th at 12:30pm
Retirees Meeting	_
Retirees Meeting Steward Meeting	April 8th at 12:30pm

(Continued from page 3)

Presidents Report

OWCP. Since we have made this help available, Joe's record on behalf of our members has been perfect. Over 90 members have come in for help with job-related injuries, and each one has had their claim accepted. Joe reports that total wage compensation returned to our members over the last three years has been over \$500,000. This is quite an accomplishment, considering the variety of claims we have handled.

Contract Enforcement

Our Branch continues to be blessed to have such a highly motivated team of stewards and Step A Designees. The Branch continues its commitment and support of our contract enforcement team by providing the training and funds necessary to have well trained Stewards and Step A Designees. We now have more Stewards and Step A designees than any time in our Branch history. Three years ago we instituted a grievance tracking system to keep a log of all grievances that had been appealed to Step A. This year EVP Jim Wolstencroft has taken it a step further by putting into place a tracking system for all grievances filed. The last three years have been a challenge as we changed the way we recorded and filed the grievances after they were turned in, but the challenge was well worth it as we now have the ability to scan every settlement into our computer base. This additional technology has led to a streamlined approach to handling the many grievances that are filed each year.

In closing, it has been my pleasure to work for and with each and every one of you these last three years. I hope and expect that during our next term we can be equally as proud of the accomplishments we have achieved as part of this great labor organization.

-- Mark Judd President

EVP's Report

THE LAST 3 YEARS (2006-2008)

During the last three years the Branch has made many changes that have benefited our members. This extends to helping with retirements and OWCP claims on a personal basis. What has remained the same though is the dedication and work of enforcing contractual agreements on the workroom floor. As EVP, my role is to see that the stewards have what they need to do their job and know their responsibilities. When I started as EVP my focus was to have steward meetings that would be informative and open for discussion. Stewards can talk about problems that are happening in their installations and receive feedback from the group in attendance that night. Also, a Steward can get insight as to what might be coming soon to their installation. We currently have two steward meetings a month that cover the hot issues that have been reported to the Branch. We also review any new information obtained from the National Business Agent's office. Attendance by the stewards and officers has been outstanding.

As always there is room for improvement and we are currently working on changing the tracking of grievances that have been filed in the branch. This will serve as a guide to the Stewards when there is an overload of grievances and let the Branch know what issues are being grieved.

The totals on the following page are the number of grievances filed from each office and are recorded at the union hall from 2006 to 2008. As for 2009, we are starting right where we left off in 2008 and in my opinion will surpass last year's busy year. Every office on this list is currently shorthanded and overtime grievances seem to be the number one issue. Many carriers are being improperly forced overtime and should be filing grievances if this happens. The only way to make management properly staff installations is to hit them in the pocketbook. This also has an adverse action with the employer, by paying carriers for not working.

So then, why does management keep forc-

(Continued on page 5)

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(Continued from page 4)

ing OVERTIME? It's the easy way out for them to force you rather than to hire another carrier.

If you don't know your rights you don't have your rights. If you think that you have a grievance talk to your Steward. The worst thing that could happen is that you might learn your rights.

-- Jim Wolstencroft Executive Vice President



Branch 2	184 Grievance	s 2006 - 2008	3
Office	Branch	Individual	Total
Belleville	0	6	6
Dearborn Annex	131	218	349
Dearborn Main	175	236	411
Dearborn Teleford	1	5	6
Dearborn Heights	45	69	114
Flat Rock	1	3	4
Grosse Ile	23	62	85
Inkster	6	52	58
Lincoln Park	21	69	90
Monroe	22	56	78
Northville	43	88	131
Plymouth	140	177	217
Rockwood	1	3	4
Taylor	120	211	331
Temperance	0	0	0

POLITICAL ACTIVISM - A FEW SMALL STEPS FOR BRANCH 2184'S LETTER CARRIERS

During the past three years the political landscape has changed dramatically for letter carriers and for America's working families. Two historic National elections have returned control of the Legislative and Executive Branches of the Federal government to those who are committed to the interests of working families. The enemies of labor have been soundly defeated - for the time being.

In Branch 2184 and within the NALC as a National Union, we have "grown up" somewhat in the political arena, having survived a relentless political assault on everything of value for letter carrier families, not the least being the continued existence of the USPS as a delivery service in America.

Many Branch 2184 members worked to elect labor-friendly candidates to political office during the 2006 and 2008 elections. Many of our active and retired members have contributed and continue contribute



COLCPE (Committee On Letter Carrier Political Education), the NALC's political action fund.

However, our success in reclaiming America for her people is only illusory if we collectively fail to take the next steps. Enormous damage has been done to our nation and to her people by those who hold the interest of America's working families in utter contempt. Despite their defeat at the polls, our political enemies have merely retreated and they are already regrouping, promising an allout effort to obstruct and sabotage every attempt by the new Administration to move America forward again. For those now consigned to the political wilderness, obsession with regaining political power and waging class war on America's working families takes absolute precedence over the greater good of America and its people.

Thus, for Branch 2184's letter carriers and all Americans for whom patriotism is more than a flag pin, and instead means working for the common good of ALL of America's people as well as doing something meaningful for our nation each day of our lives, the real work is just beginning. Each of us will soon be called upon to help restore the American dream which has been stolen from us by greed, selfishness, and political avarice. During the 1930s through the 1960s America's greatest generation brought our nation back from its darkest hours. As unionists and as true American patriots, we once again owe our nation and each other no less.

-- Joe Golonka NALC Congressional District Liaison

NALC HEALTH BENEFIT PLAN PHONE NUMBERS

Main Office NALC HBP	1-703-729-4677	
Customer Service	1-888-636-6252	
7 days a week, 24 hours a day		
24-hour Nurse Line	1-800-622-6252	
Mental Health	1-877-468-1016	
Substance Abuse	1-877-468-1016	
PPO Locator Service	1-800-622-6252	
Hospital Precertification	1-800-622-6252	
Prescription Drug Program	1-800-933-6252	

For additional information, visit the national website at www.nalc.org/depart/hbp

Activities Report:

Food Drive – This will be the 16th year that Branch 2184 has participated in the NALC annual Food Drive. Fellow Branch Food Drive Coordinator, Cathy Tondreau, and I are always amazed at the dedication of the local Food Drive Coordinators of our branch, as well as the overwhelming number of letter carriers that volunteer to pick up food. With or without Managements' cooperation, Food Drive totals continue to increase. In the last three vears our Branch has donated nearly 900,000 pounds to local food banks.

Branch Picnic – Our Branch Picnic continues to grow in success. In addition to the growing attendance through the last three years, there has been an increase of volunteers to work the picnic. In the past I depended heavily on the Executive Board as volunteers. And in perfect form they always came through. But, for the second year in a row there has been a substantial number of members come forward to volunteer. Our Branch Picnic is also an MDA fundraiser. With the sponsorships that President Judd acquires from Congressmen and businesses that we support, we average about a \$1,500 donation to Muscular Dystrophy with each picnic.

Labor Day Parade – In 2006, and for the first time as a Branch activity, we marched in the annual Labor Day Parade in downtown Detroit. It was such a success that it has now become a Branch tradition

MDA – Our Branch has always participated in the Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon canister drive. With the encouragement and support of President Judd, we have increased our participation in MDA fundraisers. In 2006 we added the Branch picnic, and an occasional raffle. In 2007 we held a Texas Hold 'Em and added a calendar fund raiser. In 2008 we expanded our activities even more and I am proud to report that Branch 2184 donated \$8,747.83 to MDA, a Branch record high.

-- Cindy Trzeciak Activities Coordinator



Support the Company that Supports Letter Carriers

- Brookfield replaces uniforms lost due to fire and natural disasters!
- Brookfield, along with State and Local NALC Branches, has raised over \$500,000 for COLCPE.
- Brookfield provides assistance for Conventions, Seminars, and Charity fund raising events!

Contact Your Brookfield Representative! Robert Kreager

Branch 2184 Retired

1802 Ford Blvd. Lincoln Park, MI 48146-3956 313-386-0527 (voice) 313-386-3270 (fax)

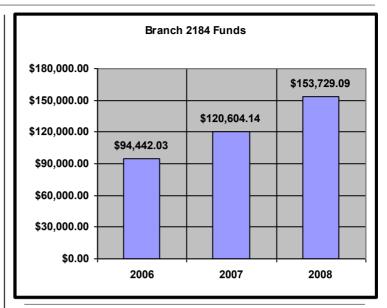
Report for 2006	
Savings - Assets	
Check Book Balance	63,599.10
Convention Account	15,286.79
D&R Account	13,015.37
Savings Account/CD's	2,540.77
Total Assets	\$94,442.03

Report for 2007	
Savings - Assets	
Check Book Balance	14,107.43
Convention Account	3,814.63
D&R Account	8,527.87
Savings Account/CD's	94,154.21
Total Assets	\$120,604.14

Report for 2008	
Savings - Assets	
Check Book Balance	65,795.67
Convention Account	5,248.09
D&R Account	8,583.70
Savings Account/CD's	74,101.63
Total Assets	\$153,729.09

Treasurers Term Report:

During the past three years Branch 2184 has achieved an approximate 40% increase in our financial balance, putting our organization in a strong financial position in these difficult economic times. Every Branch financial obligation has been paid in a timely manner. All required monthly and yearly financial reports have been completed and submitted, and all Branch assets have been fully accounted for. During the past three years I worked with the Branch Trustees to



undertake and complete six thorough audits of Branch 2184's finances and property. Our books are in perfect balance and every authorized expense has been accounted for and duly recorded. The branch has made some changes in the way we order supplies, we now use a "just on time" method of ordering supplies, which has allowed the Branch the flexibility needed so as not to tie up Branch funds.

I have attended all necessary training to ensure that we as a Branch are up to date on all Labor Department reporting requirements. I expect that Branch 2184 will be able to maintain its strong financial position throughout the next three years.

-- Cathy Tondreau Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Branch 2184 Web Site

Visit our web site for:

Branch Calendar

Carrier Pay Chart

Online NALC "FMLA" forms

www.nalc2184.org

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Customer Connect

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

Greg Silvestri (Dearborn Heights) - \$5,000.00 Walt McGregory (Wayne) - \$25,000.00 Barb Allen (Westland) - \$3,000.00 Don Gutowski (Plymouth) - \$12,000.00 Tom Braun (Taylor) - \$144,000.00 Michelle Manley (Wayne) - \$20,000.00 Cynthia Gibson (Plymouth) - \$15,000.00 Don Gutowski (Plymouth) - \$7,500.00 Joyce Cole (Taylor) - \$19,000.00 Fred Tonks (Plymouth) - \$18,000.00 Billy Haynes (Northville) - \$1,000.00 Frederick Mueller (Northville) - \$500.00 Christina Scott (Canton) - \$30,000.00 Elizabeth Karsten (Northville) - \$500.00

The Weingarten Declaration

"If the discussion I am being asked to enter could in any way lead to my discipline or termination or impact my personal working conditions, I ask that a union steward, representative or officer be present. Unless I have representation I respectfully choose not to participate in this discussion."

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

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2009 COLCPE Contributors

Belleville

- ✓ Gregory Bodziak
- ✓ Bruce Prevost

Dearborn Main

- ✓ Kim Baker
- ✓ Darryl Clay Robert Kraus
- ✓ Daniel Smith
- ✓ Henry Strange Jackie Wiggins
- ✓ Ed Williams

Dearborn Annex

- Nancy Altman
- ✓ Timothy Bailey Hubert Brown Tony Calamita Joseph Caruana
- ✓ John Dainus Rhona Diamond David Gilbert*
- David Gilbert*

 ✓ Mark Judd
- Thomas Klecha
- ✓ Roderick Lelental
- ✓ Melvin MacDonald Carol Macieczni Darrin Mifsud Rosemary Miller Karen Regentik Jerry Taylor
 - ✓ Cathy Tondreau Scott Wandyg

Dearborn Teleford

- Michael Bergin John Czuchrak James Likeric
- → Alan Swinteck

Dearborn Heights

✓ Roger Corpolongo Anthony Gretch Frank Grosso ✓ Jim Hales Linda Pollock

- James Powell
- ✓ James Wolstencroft

Flat Rock

Grosse Isle

✓ Kimberly Bumbul
✓ John Nellis

Inkster

- Thad Dillard
- ✓ Roy McMahan

Lincoln Park

- Dave Reise Gayle Rohde
- ✓ Paula Hall Scott Watts

Monroe

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

Northville

Elizabeth Karsten

Plymouth

- ✓ Heather Childers
- ✓ James Crossey
- ✔ Patricia Linna
- ✓ Gary Macioce
- ✓ Dan Marek Don Oziemski Robert Venning

Rockwood

Felecia Wallace

 ✓ Gloria Warthen

Taylor

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- ✓ Katrina Jones
- ✓ Raymond Tobin Calvin Winbush

Canton

- ✓ Felicia BryantDianne Daley✓ Lois Fritz
- Gilbert Pruiett

Ypsilanti

- ✓ Alan Grajczyk
- ✓ Richard Rider
- ✓ Michael Miller

Retired

- ✓ Mary Abbott Bela Rito *
- Carl Belvees*
- Cary Black
- John Bostek*
- Patricia Davis James Garrell
- ✓ Joe Golonka
- James Kelly
- Joanne Kuzala William Lowe
- William Mason*
- William Mather
- Brian Rodden Clarence Schukofsky*
 - ✓ Gino Stellabuto

 - Margaret Zawicki
 ✓ Leonard Zawisa
- Check mark indicates you are signed up for automatic COLCPE contributions.

*Asterisk indicates that your yearly check contribution has or is about to expire. Renew your commitment to COLCPE.



INJURY COMPENSATION - A VERY SUCCESSFUL THREE YEARS IN BRANCH 2184

There are few things more complicated and potentially stressful for a letter carrier than dealing with a job-related injury or medical condition. Many of the problems resulting from job-related injuries and medical conditions occur because of lack of awareness of procedures and responsibilities by the injured employee. However, many more problems occur because of the often deliberate obstruction and interference with the injured letter carrier's rights by USPS management. Management's frequent misconduct and sometimes illegal behavior involving employee injuries is well documented and includes (but is certainly is not limited to) their unlawful failure to provide the proper forms, obstruction of and interference with the injured employee's medical care, and improper contact with the injured employee's physician.

In Branch 2184 we have a long and proud tradition of actively assisting our injured members with the often complicated morass of necessary forms and procedures as well as intervening to effectively mitigate management's obstruction and game playing. This specialized service is available only to members in good standing. As our team of Branch officers and stewards begins a new term of office, a brief statistical analysis of the past three years is appropriate.

Since January 2006 the Branch 2184 office has provided assistance to more than 90 of our active members who incurred job-related injuries or who have developed job related medical conditions. Many of these injury claims have been complicated occupational illness/disease claims, which require extensive factual and medical documentation in order to be accepted by the United States Department of Labor's Office of Workers Compensation Programs (OWCP). We are very pleased to report that every Branch 2184 member that sought the Branch's assistance during the past three years

has ultimately had his or her claim accepted.

Branch 2184 members who were assisted by the Branch have received more than \$510,000 in wage compensation and schedule awards since 2006. The Branch has also provided representation and assistance for our members involved in the USPS National Reassessment Process (NRP) program. Our stewards have received training in basic OWCP procedures and are provided with the tools to respond to management's frequent violations of the Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) and USPS regulations pertaining employees with job-related injuries and medical conditions.

As 2009 begins, we remain committed to diligently assisting any member that requests our help with claims for job-related injuries or medical conditions. Call the Branch office (313-295-1640) for an appointment. As always, we can expect that management will work against the interests of our injured members. As always, you can expect that we will work to effectively enforce and uphold your rights when injured on the job.

-- Joe Golonka
Branch 2184 Injury Compensation Specialist

Attend Your Branch Meetings

March 4th 2009
April 1st 2009
7:30 p.m. at the Branch Hall

Retiree's Meeting March 11th @ 12:30 p.m. April 8th 2009 @ 12:30 p.m.

Branch's 2184 Retirement Assistance – Now Better Than Ever

Rapid changes in the Postal Service have resulted in an increasing number of letter carrier retirements during the past three years. The USPS has consolidated and centralized employee services during the past several years, with a corresponding loss of local assistance with retirements and other human resource matters. Because the decision to retire is one of the most important decisions in the lifetime of most USPS employees, it is critically important that all decisions are made only after acquiring detailed knowledge of the complexities involved

Branch 2184 has specialized retiree services available to our members in good standing who are retiring or considering retirement from the Postal Service. We provide accurate and comprehensive information and assistance with every aspect of the retirement process. This assistance includes the completion of forms and the option to utilize the Branch 2184 office and the assistance of our Retiree Officer for USPS telephone retirement counseling. The Branch office has a wealth of other resources and information available to our members. Thinking about retiring or just want to know more?

Call or stop in at the union office today!

Retired - 2006 thru 2008

Donald Ibershoff	James Garrell
Sally Green	David Klein
James Kelly	Joseph Golonka
John Stone	Mark Kelly
Terry Germany	Paul Diebolt
George Bruder	John Warner
Mark Sadows	Sandra Sullivan
Barbara Cox	Robert Folsom
Verna Mahabir	James Goodell
Ronald McHale	Mary Abbott
Dennis Grundy	Kim Gartz
James Linderman	Particia Davis
Katherine Lucier	Robbin Zeitz
Joseph Pare	Jerry Holowka
John Till	Debbie O'Brien
James Scodellaro	Norm Gagnon
Victor Micunek	Ray D'Aguanno
Bonita Hendricks	Cindy Trzeciak
James Wozniak	Nick Maraska
Linda Peterson	Cynthia Pickens
Susan Downing	

James Burt

Joanne Kuzala

-- Leonard Zawisa Retirees Officer

> 6969 Monroe Taylor, MI 48180

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