

Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

January/February 2023

President's Report

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:
 March 1st, 2023
 Via WebEx

Retirees Meetings
 Cancelled
 (12:30 p.m. - Union Hall)

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CONTINUED VIRTUAL MEETINGS

We are still dealing with cases Covid-19 and different strings of the Flu that are preventing us from meeting in person safely. For everyone's safety, I have decided to continue our meetings virtual via WebEx until further notice. The branch remains fully functional and will continue to provide services to the membership such as retirement counseling, OWCP assistance and contract enforcement.

GOODBYE TO BRANCH OFFICER GLORIA WARTHEN

Branch 2184 family, we have lost one of our own. Long time NALC Activist, Branch Trustee and Grosse ILE shop steward Gloria Warthen passed away on Sunday January 22, 2023. Gloria became a Branch Trustee in 2006 and proudly served in that position as a Branch Trustee until she passed away. Sister Gloria was a fierce union advocate and always stood up for letter carriers. Anything that the union asked of sister Gloria, she proudly participated and was apart of with NALC. Sister Gloria was always one of the top donators in the branch to COLCPE/LCPF over the years. I'm going to truly miss our sister as she was always a sister you could call or speak to about anything. Rest easy sister. We will carry the load from here on.



Please keep her family and loved ones in your prayers.

BRANCH APPOINTMENT

I have appointed Branch 2184 Contract Administration Unit (CAU) Member Erik Venzke as Trustee to fill the remainder of the term of sister Gloria Warthen. Brother Erik is a veteran Contract Enforcer who will work hard for the membership on the executive board as a Trustee.

BRANCH 2184 RETIREE CELEBRATION

After years of not being able to meet face to face at our local union

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Officers

President.....	Walt McGregor
Executive VP	Jacqueline McGregor
Vice President	Darryl Clay
Recording Secretary.....	Melvin MacDonald
Financial Secretary Treas	Cathy Tondreau
Sergeant at Arms	Phil Ashford
Health Benefits Rep	Jim Powell
Retirees Officer	Leonard Zawisa
Trustee.....	Tracy Mitchell
Trustee.....	Erik Venzke
Trustee.....	Felicia Davis
Editor.....	Leonard Zawisa
Arbitration Advocate.....	Walt McGregor
Route Adjustment Specialist.....	Dave Reise
Branch Scribe.....	Joe Golonka
Injury Compensation.....	Erik Venzke
Injury Compensation	Joe Golonka
Web Page Design	Jim Hales

Branch Contract Administration Unit

Joe Golonka	Chairperson
Walt McGregor	Member
Jackie McGregor	Member
Darryl Clay.....	Member
Dave Reise	Member



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.

Stewards

Allen Park	Mark Owen
.....	Kris Shaw (alt)
.....	Karen Russell (alt)
.....	Tod Lilla (alt)
.....	Ryan Zyngier (alt)
.....	Scott Russel (alt)
Belleville.....	Bryon Hendricks
Dearborn (Main)	Darryl Clay
.....	Symone Coleman
.....	Yvonne Jackson (alt)
.....	Karl Tamburro (alt)
.....	Damon Green (alt)
Dearborn (Annex).....	Melvin MacDonald
.....	Jacqueline McGregor
.....	Rose Miller (alt)
.....	Jillian Hudgins (alt)
Dearborn Heights.....	Shaun Fowlkes
.....	Marwan Ghoiteimi (alt)
.....	Jacqueline McGregor (alt)
.....	Melvin MacDonald (alt)
.....	Chanal Harrison (alt)
Dundee.....	Melvin MacDonald (alt)
Flat Rock	Lillian Bogosian
Grosse Ile.....	Tracy Mitchell (alt)
.....	Kim Bumbul (alt)
Inkster.....	Phil Ashford
.....	Scherrie Lacey (alt)
Lincoln Park	Scott Watts
.....	Mark Owen (alt)
Monroe	Jacqueline McGregor (alt)
.....	Melvin MacDonald (alt)
.....	Keith Benedict (alt)
.....	Darryl Clay (alt)
Northville.....	Valerie Watkins
.....	Beth Bays (alt)
Plymouth.....	Kristie Nelson
.....	Diego Forshaw (alt)
Rockwood.....	Courtney Duran
.....	Tracy Mitchell (alt)
Taylor	Keith Benedict
.....	Victor Siemiesz
Temperance	Melvin MacDonald (alt)
Trenton	William Douglas
.....	Jeffery Webb
.....	Tracy Mitchell (alt)
Westland.....	Ananias Epps
.....	Felicia Davis
.....	Nakia Whitfield
.....	Katrina Jones (alt)
.....	Walt McGregor (alt)
Canton	Ramon Robinson
.....	Denise Viola
Ypsilanti	Paul Bordine
.....	Mike Tredway
.....	Danita Hill (alt)

(Continued from page 1)

Presidents Report

hall, we are getting together outside of the union hall to celebrate our retirees of Branch 2184. The last time we were able to safely meet and celebrate our retirees before the Covid-19 pandemic was back in September of 2019. Well save the date of Sunday March 19, 2023! This will be the Branch's 1st Retiree Celebration at the Prestige which is located at 6600 Allen Road, Allen Park, MI 48101. It will be from 2:00pm to 6:00pm. Tickets are available until March 5, 2023. All Branch 2184 Retirees plus one guest is free. (NON-TRANSFERABLE) Branch 2184 Members rate is \$30.00 per ticket. This is an event for adults 21 and over as there will be alcohol available. Come on out and celebrate our retirees with us! There will be a Live DJ, cash Bar, conversations, dinner and a great time. We are working on getting a National Officer to come out and celebrate with us! Hope to see you there!

TIAREAP

Technology Integrated Alternate Route Evaluation and Adjustment Process (TIAREAP) TIAREAP has reached our Branch 2184 offices. Belleville is now scheduled for the fall of 2023, Dearborn Main, Ypsilanti, Taylor, Monroe and Inkster are all scheduled for the first couple months of 2023 to have their Live Week of the TIREAP process. I have long time Branch 2184 Route Inspection Officer David Reise (Retired) working with co-Branch 2184 Route Inspection Officer Erik Venzke, to educate the membership on how to protect their routes as professional letter carriers every day. The Branch will continue to put on Route Adjustment training throughout the year for the membership.

TIAREAP TRAINING

Congratulations to Taylor Steward Keith Benedict, who just recently completed the TIAREAP training put on at the USPS Training center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, January 23, 2023 through January 27, 2023. Brother Keith is one of Branch 2184's many rising stars. Brother Keith continues to assist the branch wherever he is asked to go and whatever he is asked to do. Brother Keith joins sister Beth Bays of Northville and brother Mark Owen of Allen Park that have received TIAREAP training.

ARBITRATIONS

We still are seeing a lot of removals at the arbitration level regarding irregular attendance. I stated it in the past. Attendance discipline is the hardest to defend. Arbitrators are upholding removals even when management has made some technical errors in the case. Management is able to show that they in fact more times than not, worked to try and correct the irregularities in attendance before resulting to attempting to remove letter carriers for abuse of the USPS Attendance Policies. I encourage all active carriers to utilize the FMLA protections afforded to you by LAW if your absence(s) qualify. See your steward or call the union hall at 313 295 1640 if you need FMLA paperwork. We can email it to your personal email the same day you request it.

BRANCH 2184 FACEBOOK PAGE

As of 2/06/2023, there are 188 members. The page is growing daily. If you are on Facebook, please search for our page. You have to answer a few questions like who is your steward(s) and what building do you work out of or retired from and you will be approved. There is up to date information to what is going on within your branch, at the state, regional and national level of NALC. There are always contractual updates. Current active and retired Branch 2184 members only.

We are in the beginning months of 2023, on behalf of the Officers and Stewards at Branch 2184, we wish you and your loved ones a safe and Happy New Year.

-- *Walt McGregory*
President

EVP's Report**Security Breach**

The Postal Service learned of fraudulent websites intended to trick postal employees into providing their Lite Blue login credentials. These websites did this by appearing in popular search engines with similar names and web addresses to Lite Blue. Unfortunately, some postal employees have fallen victim to these fraudulent websites within Branch 2184. Employees had their entire paychecks

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EVP's Reboot

or a portion of their check rerouted to the criminals' bank accounts, instead of being deposited into their own.

To improve the security of Lite Blue, the Postal Service has implemented multifactor authentication (MFA) when logging in. MFA provides an extra layer of security by confirming a code received via text message or through an app.

Effective Jan. 15, when employees sign in to Lite Blue, they will be required to reset their Self-Service Profile (SSP) password, verify the last four digits of their Social Security Number (SSN), and set up their multifactor authentication preference.

Be sure to check you are on the genuine website before entering any credentials. Users can avoid fraudulent Lite Blue sites by typing the web address directly www.liteblue.usps.gov.

Please let your steward know if you have been affected so the appropriate grievances can be filed.

MUTUAL RESPECT

This is an issue that arises on the workroom floor daily. Employees are being treated without dignity and respect by management in many instances. It is managements responsibility to create a harmonious working environment for all craft employees.

M-39 sect 115.4 Maintain Mutual Respect Atmosphere

The National Agreement sets out the basic rules and rights governing management and employees in their dealings with each other, but it is the front-line manager who controls management's attempt to maintain an atmosphere between employer and employee which assures mutual respect for each other's rights and responsibilities.

Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace; deemed enforceable through the grievance procedure by Arbitrator Snow (C-15697): Management may not intimidate, harass, bully or threaten carriers. Making the numbers is not an excuse to abuse anyone. Those who do not treat others with dignity and respect will not be promoted, and if the behavior continues they will be removed from

their positions.

Article 14: Management is required to provide safe working conditions ELM 666.2: Employees, which includes management, are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which reflects favorably on the Postal Service.

If you believe that you are experiencing any type of workplace harassment please see your steward so the appropriate grievances can be filed. We all the right to work in a hostile-free environment.

CCA UNIFORM BANK

The branch is always in need of slightly used uniforms and winter gear for our new brothers and sisters. If you would like to contribute to our CCA uniform bank and you are an active carrier, please bring in your uniforms/carrier gear to your office and give to your union steward. He/she will bring them over to the hall. If you are off on your NS Day or a recently retired carrier and are in the neighborhood, stop by and have a cup of coffee with the President or whatever office is working that day, drop off your donation(s). We will make sure you get your name mentioned in the next 2184 Speaks.

CCAs only need to be employed in one of our twenty Branch 2184 offices for forty five (45) days, after which the CCA can call the union hall to make an appointment to come over and shop at the CCA Uniform Clothing Bank. A mask will be needed to enter the union hall for the carrier's as well as the officer's safety from Covid-19.

Thanks to Monique Shorter out of the Westland Main office for her recent donation which included a brand-new postal coat. Thanks to Retiree Mary Taylor out of the Trenton office for her donation to the CCA Uniform bank. Thanks for stopping by to drop that donation off at the hall.

-- *Jacqueline McGregory*
Executive Vice President

**OUR ADVERTISERS ARE YOUR FRIENDS
MENTION YOU SAW THEM IN OUR NEWSLETTER.**

VP's Report

TIAREAP

The latest joint route adjustment process is here. TIAREAP (Technology integrated alternative route evaluation adjustment process). This process uses our scanner to adjust our route. The data is captured every second as we do our routes.

The REAT's (Route evaluation and adjustment team) uses data from the last seven months, taking 1 week from each month to evaluate. The months of June, July, August and December have been excluded. The selected weeks have been mutually agreed upon by the national team members. This data is combined with the "Live Week". The "Live Week" is the week you will be notified that your route/ station will be evaluated. To prepare for the live week, we should make sure our Red Books are in the right sequence. Delivering our routes in order is important. Routes should be setup for a continuous flow. Jumping from one part of your route to another part of your route may throw up a red flag.

My office, Dearborn Main, just finished our live week. One of the things I learned is that note taking is very important. When you have your initial consultation about the live week, having things that occurred such as break times, lunch times, customer contacts, or why you need extra relay time at a particular loop will be very helpful. You will be able to point at that time in your notes. Notating anything in your day that is not what you usually do is key. Always have your scanner with you.

The next consultation is the evaluation consultation. Followed by the adjustment consultation. Yes, there are three consultation between you and the Route adjustment and evaluation team (REAT). I'll keep you all informed as my office goes through the process.

I'd like to thank the branch route adjustment officer, Dave Reise, for his help with the process throughout the Branch.

Remember to always be professional. Carry your route everyday as if the supervisor is with you... because they are... the scanner.

YOUR BRANCH

Branch 2184 has developed and implement-

ed several services above and beyond most Branches. We offer OWCP assistance, comprehensive Retirement Assistance, a Branch Facebook page, a uniform bank for CCA's who have 45 days or more of service and a 1st class Branch website, www.NALC2184.org. to name a few. Soon we will have a Mutual Benefits Association officer that will be able to assist our membership with the plans offered by the NALC; Life Insurance, Disability Insurance, Retirement Saving Plans and so much more. We are all proud of everything Branch 2184 has to offer its membership. We do all of this for you, the membership.

These member services are second to the core mission of the Union. The consistent enforcement and the uncompromising defense of letter carriers' contractual rights is what we do best! Thank you to All the Stewards and officers of this Branch for the outstanding jobs you do. We do it All for you, the membership.

-- Darryl Clay
Vice President

Retirement Counseling

If you are planning on retiring from the USPS, Branch 2184 is offering Retirement Counseling Assistance. Our Branch 2184 Retirees Officer will have a one-on-one with you on the phone and will answer questions and assist in filling out your retirement papers.

It is recommended that you order your Blue book at least 90 days in advance of your retirement date.

After you get your blue book contact the branch office so we can help you fill out the proper forms and schedule your HR Shared Services retirement counseling appointment.



Proposed Bylaws Change

Meetings

Article III, Section 1

Current Language: The regular meeting shall be held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at a location approved by the membership. In the event that the first Wednesday shall fall upon a legal holiday, the regular meeting shall be held on the second Wednesday of the month. There shall be no regular meetings during the month of July and August.

Change To: The regular meeting shall be held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at a location approved by the membership. **Alternatively, when circumstances warrant and as determined by the President, meeting shall be conducted online through an internet forum such as WebEx, Zoom, etc. with appropriate advance notice provided.** In the event that the first Wednesday shall fall upon a legal holiday, the regular meeting shall be held on the second Wednesday of the month. There shall be no regular meetings during the month of July and August.

Darryl Clay - Erik Venzke - Tracy Mitchell

Proposed Bylaws Change

Officers

Article IV, Section 1

Current Language: The officers of the Branch shall be a President, Executive Vice President, Vice President, Financial Secretary-Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Health Benefits Representative, Retirees' Officer who shall be a retired member, Sergeant at Arms, and three (3) Trustees. These officers shall comprise the Executive Board of the Branch.

Change To: The officers of the Branch shall be a President, Executive Vice President, Vice President, Financial Secretary-Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Health Benefits Representative, **Mutual Benefits Representative**, Retirees' Officer who shall be a retired member, Sergeant at Arms, and three (3) Trustees. These officers shall comprise the Executive Board of the Branch.

Darryl Clay - Erik Venzke - Tracy Mitchell

Proposed Bylaws Change

Officers

Article IV, Section 5(b).

Current Language: Retirees being compensated on an hourly basis will be paid at the current lowest pay rate of a City Letter Carrier hired prior to January 12, 2013-City Schedule RSC Q1 (NALC)

Change To: Retirees being compensated on an hourly basis will be paid at the current **top level (non carrier technician)** pay rate of a City Letter Carrier hired prior to January 12, 2013-City Schedule RSC Q (NALC)

Leonard Zawisa - Catherine Tondreau - Joesph Golonka

Proposed Bylaws Change

Duties of Officers

Article VI, New Section 10. Mutual Benefits Representative

The Mutual Benefits Representative shall perform such duties as the NALC Constitution and Mutual Benefits Association (MBA) may require; and shall counsel, advise, and assist participation in the plans.

He/she shall make themselves knowledgeable of all MBA programs and be available to assist members.

Section 10. **Becomes New Section 11**

Section 11. **Becomes New Section 12** (**See Additional Section 12 Amendment Below)

Section 12. **Becomes New Section 13**

Section 13. **Becomes New Section 14**

Section 14. **Becomes New Section 15**

Section 15. **Becomes New Section 16**

Section 16. **Becomes New Section 17**

Darryl Clay - Erik Venzke - Tracy Mitchell

Proposed Bylaws Change **Stewards**

Article VI, Section 11.

Current Language: Stewards will receive an annual sum equivalent to twenty-four hours of wages, to be paid in December and contingent upon submission of a voucher and attendance at a Contract Enforcement Committee (Steward) meeting during each of ten or more months during that calendar year. Stewards will not be penalized if they are on approved leave.

Change To: Stewards as well as members of the Branch 2184 Contract Administration Unit will receive an annual sum equivalent to twenty-four hours of wages, to be paid in December and contingent upon submission of a voucher and attendance at a Contract Enforcement Committee (Steward) meeting during each of ten or more months during that calendar year. **Stewards/CAU members will not be penalized if they are on approved leave. Stewards or members of the CAU who also hold other positions will not receive double payments.**

Darryl Clay - Erik Venzke - Tracy Mitchell

Branch 2184 Web Site www.nalc2184.org

"FMLA" forms

Grievance Guidelines

Grievance Issue Statements

JCAM, MRS, M-39, M-41

Newest Covid 19 Relief Plan

Retirement Information

Contract Agreement

Grievance Forms

E-COMP for Covid

National Agreement

2184 Memo of Understanding

CCA Information

OWCP Information

Carrier Pay Chart

National Association of Letter Carriers

100 Indiana Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20001-2144

Memorandum

Telephone:
(202) 393-4695

January 12, 2023

2023 FECA COLA: 6.3%

Based on the release of the December 2022 CPI-W (1982-84=100), the 2023 FECA COLA projection is 6.3%. The December 2022 CPI-W of 291.051 was 6.3% above the December 2021 base index (273.925).

FECA COLAs are applicable only in cases where death or disability occurred more than one year prior to the adjustment's effective date.

Contract COLA: Accumulated COLA is \$0 through December 2022

The projected accumulation toward the seventh regular COLA under the 2019-2023 National Agreement was \$0 in January following the release of the December 2022 Consumer Price Index.

On January 12, 2023, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced that the CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W, 1967=100) stood at 866.953 in December, 121.577 points above the base level of 745.376 in July 2019. The accumulated COLA through December stood at 0 cents per hour or \$0 annually.

The seventh COLA will be based on the increase in the CPI-W between the base index month and January 2023, less any previously calculated COLAs, and will be payable the second full pay period following the release of the January 2023 index. The six COLAs that have been calculated under the 2019-2023 National Agreement, totaling 312 cents per hour, are as follows: the 1st COLA, 8 cents per hour (\$166 annually), the 2nd COLA, 9 cents per hour (\$188 annually), the 3rd COLA, 20 cents per hour (\$416 annually), the 4th COLA, 93 cents per hour (\$1,934 annually), the 5th COLA, 64 cents per hour (\$1,331 annually), and the 6th COLA, 118 cents per hour (\$2,455 annually).

2024 Retiree COLAs Projection: 0% as of December 2022

The 2024 COLAs for CSRS and FERS benefits are based on the increase in the average CPI-W between the 3rd quarter of 2022 (291.901) and the 3rd quarter of 2023 (TBA).

Based on the December 2022 CPI-W (1982-84) of 291.051, the 2024 CSRS and FERS COLAs are currently projected to be 0%. The 2024 retiree COLA calculation will be finalized in October 2023 with the release of the CPI-W for September 2023.

CSRS annuities receive full COLAs; COLAs for FERS annuities are payable for retirees 62 and older and may be reduced by up to one percentage point from the increase in the CPI.

BRANCH 2184

RETIREE CELEBRATION!!!

**Branch 2184's First Annual Retiree Celebration will
take place on SUNDAY, MARCH 19, 2023**

from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. at

The Prestige

6600 Allen Road, Allen Park MI 48101

**This Event is Free to ALL Branch 2184 Retired Mem-
bers, plus one Guest (non-transferable).**

**Tickets are \$30.00 each for Non-Retired Branch 2184
Members and Guests, and All are Invited!**

Age 21 and Over, Please. No Refunds on Tickets.

**There will be Dinner, a Cash Bar, a Live DJ,
and LOTS of Union Solidarity and Great
Conversation!**

**Tickets are available until March 5,
2023**

**RSVP By Calling the Branch 2184
Union Office at 313-295-1640**

Question Everything!

My childhood and adolescence during the 1950s and 1960s began during an era of social and political conformity and stifling conservatism and ended during a turbulent period of widespread social and political change. As the firstborn child of a Polish/Irish/Catholic family I directly experienced both of these cultural periods in America, but I also had one distinctly "counter influence" that has served me quite well during the succeeding decades and especially throughout my letter carrier and union careers. That influence was a mother who did not neatly fit into the social mores of either the regressive 1950s or the more progressive 1960s.

The prevailing wisdom as well as a commonly used phrase during those years was that "children should be seen and not heard." However, throughout an otherwise structured and strictly parented childhood, our mother taught my siblings and me to be *both* seen and heard. We were taught to question the answers, though always in a respectful and appropriate manner. Perhaps this was due to Mom's background of intellectual and social activism - she helped to lead a strike against Michigan Bell Telephone Company in April, 1947, just a few months after her 21st birthday.

The valuable habit of questioning everything – and especially of questioning authority was quite engrained in me by the time I began work as a letter carrier in Plymouth in June 1971. The newly renamed United States Postal Service (as of July 1, 1971), was at that time a much different work environment than what is commonly found in most post office stations today. Although disputes did occasionally occur, in general the workplace atmosphere was much more professional and customer service-oriented. Most of all, most delivery supervisors actually knew the job, which included a thorough knowledge of work rules as well as how to correctly apply them.

My first delivery supervisor, the late Fred Carter, was such an individual. Fred was dedicated to the Postal Service and to the efficient processing and delivery of mail. If you asked him a work-related question, he actually knew the correct an-

swer. He had a no-nonsense approach and expected hard work from his employees, but Fred was also even-tempered and always fair in his demeanor. Fred's professionalism did not prevent a newly appointed young steward who still had some growing up to do from sorely testing his patience on occasion. Fortunately for me, Fred tolerated my belligerence while I grew into the steward job.

Looking for Answers in all the Wrong Places

Letter carriers in today's antagonistic and disrespectful Postal Service environment seldom have the opportunity or the benefit of dealing with knowledgeable and professional management representatives such as Fred, although some still do exist. Instead, they must deal with an all too frequently ignorant and quite often arrogant USPS management corps. Far too often the Postal Service seeks out and promotes emotionally immature and personality-defective men and women that have little or no knowledge of anything other than the obsessive numbers driven mantra of upper-level USPS management. Many if not most of them don't have a clue about actual USPS work rules and procedures - and they don't care to know.

This is why a personal policy of *always* questioning the answers is so essential in today's dysfunctional post office work environment. **Much more often than not, your supervisor is NOT the person to ask about work rules, policies, and procedures as detailed in our Collective Bargaining Agreement as well as applicable USPS handbooks and manuals.** He or she doesn't know, doesn't care, and will usually provide you with the wrong information – either through ignorance or even deceitfully by intent.

Finding the Answers in all the Right Places

This is also where your Union comes in. Branch 2184's members have some outstanding resources and other significant advantages for countering management misinformation and disinformation. As always this begins with your stewards, who are provided with the information, training, and other

resources to defend your rights and to ensure that work rules are consistently applied and enforced. We have a rich tradition spanning many decades of being the best in the business when it comes to topflight contract enforcement. Additionally, our members have other valuable resources such as this publication and the *Postal Record*, along with comprehensive Internet information that is available on our Branch website, the NALC National website, and the NALC app.

In summary, it is wise to *always* make it your personal policy to question everything, especially the validity and the veracity of *anything* that Postal Service management that tells you. You can be sure that your Union will always be there to provide the correct information – and if this is not immediately available, we will get the correct information. By all means, do also question information provided by the union. Unlike postal management, we can and will back it up, the first time and every time. To use a saying commonly heard in Branch 2184 for many decades, “that’s what we do!”

-- Joe Golonka

Branch 2184 Contract Administration

Never Complain, Never Explain

These words are popularly attributed to automotive legend Henry Ford II, although the original version of the saying actually came from 19th Century British statesman Benjamin Disraeli. They also have a timely application to letter carriers in the excessively micromanaged USPS environment that currently exists.

It is important to initially note that all postal employees are required to cooperate in postal investigations, per the provisions of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual, section 665.3. If you are brought into an actual investigative interview or told that one is forthcoming, **just be sure that you ALWAYS invoke your Weingarten Rights and request that union representation is provided.** Once you have made this request, you are not required to participate until a union representative is present. **Also be aware that you must request union repre-**

sentation is such situations; it is not automatically provided.

However, there is a significant difference between a legitimate postal investigative interview and the inane and pathetic badgering that many letter carriers receive from some supervisors, sometimes on a daily basis, i.e., “what took you so long?” or “you’re the slowest carrier in the office” etc. The intent of such verbal harangues by management is to pressure a letter carrier into running their assignment, working unsafely, and skipping or cutting into their lunch and break times.

But you can effectively respond to this nonsense simply by staying cool and by answering in a direct and truthful but simple manner; for example, “I’m doing the best that I can,” or more directly, “that was the time that I needed.” **Never get into an extended discussion with management in an attempt to justify your daily work.** Unlike your supervisor, you actually have a real job that actually fulfills the mission of the Postal Service. Instead, merely repeat the answers above or words to that effect.

If a supervisor persists in belligerent and pointless questioning, immediately request your steward and have him/her investigate the need for a potential dignity and respect/workplace abuse grievance. Don’t get upset, keep your voice down, and let your union do the work of appropriately responding to arrogant and obnoxious supervisory behavior.

Finally, some letter carriers are much too forthcoming with personal details about their lives and related matters. Think before sharing this information on the work floor, especially with supervisors. **It’s all about “need to know” – and they don’t need to know, period. Not now and not ever.** Your work for the USPS is merely your job, a means of providing for what actually matters in life. Your work is NOT and it should never become life itself.

-- Joe Golonka

Branch 2184 Contract Administration



March 12th
2023



SIGN ME UP!

How to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund using your retirement ANNUITY

Using your **Annuity**, retired NALC members can contribute directly from their CSRS or FERS annuities to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC’s PAC) on a monthly basis. This is a convenient way to make regular donations to the political action fund similar to the payroll system available to active carriers.

Enroll by Phone

Call the NALC Retirement Office at 202.662.2877 anytime or toll-free at 1.800.424.5186 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon or 2 to 4 p.m. (ET). (Note: you will need your CSA retirement Claim number.)

Enroll Online

1. Go to www.servicesonline.opm.gov
2. Enter your CSA number, beginning with the letter A and ending with a zero. SAMPLE: A22222220
3. Enter your PIN (Personal Identification Number). If you don’t know it, click Using Services Online for help with one.
4. Once you’ve entered your CSA number and PIN, click Log In.
5. On the next page, click ALLOTMENTS TO ORGANIZATIONS.
6. Click START
7. Select the Letter Carrier Political Fund (Formerly COLCPE)
8. Enter the amount of your monthly contribution. (Maximum yearly amount is \$5,000)
9. Click SAVE
10. On the next page click YES (if correct), then print the next page for your records.

Enroll by Mail

Complete this form and send to:

NALC Retirement Department, Attention: Letter Carrier Political Fund, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144

I, _____ (your name) wish to contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. I

authorize the Office of Personnel Management to withhold the amount below from my *monthly* annuity payments:

\$30 \$25 \$20 \$15 \$10 Other: \$_____ (Maximum amount per year is \$5,000) and forward that

amount to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (NALC’s PAC). I make this authorization voluntarily and may revoke it at any time by notifying the Letter Carrier Political Fund in writing.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Full Name (please print): _____ Branch: _____

CSA: _____ Phone: _____

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. Any guideline amounts are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, name of employer and occupation of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

Branch 2184 New Members

Maged Aldanit	Dearborn Main
Mofadhal Alhalmi	Dearborn Main
Theodore Austin	Westland
Krista Barber	Dearborn Main
Shae Cardenas	Grosse Ile
Alicia Clark	Westland
Devon Clark	Westland
Ajha Davis	Inkster
Darryl Dortch	Northville
Kevin Holmes	Westland
Julian Neal	Westland
Erik Pierce	Taylor
Nisreen Samad	Westland
Eugene Scandrick Jr	Grosse Ile
Marjorie Schannault	Inkster
Jacob Sprietzer	Taylor
Tanisha Williams	Dearborn Main
Houssan Berry	Dearborn Annex
Steven Ferguson	Westland
Amber Greene	Dearborn Heights
Daja Johnson	Allen Park
Vanessa View	Dearborn Annex
Sherkira Lowery	Taylor
Gwendolyn Marks	Canton
Delisha Talley	Belleville
Patricia Davis	Dearborn Main
Joshua Graham	Dearborn Heights
Jason Hernandez	Taylor
Dominique Jackson	Plymouth
Jolene Kacy	Plymouth
Sherrhond Miller	Inkster
James Swierb	Canton
Brandy Taylor	Dearborn Main

Welcome



Retirements

Retirements from pay periods

25, 26/2022 01, 02, 2023

Robert Willbanks Allen Park

Michael Chevillot Westland

Elizabeth Baptist-Jones Dearborn Heights

Mary Sottile Monroe

Karl Close Flat Rock

Deaths

Recent deaths of retired/active members

Gloria Warthen Grosse Ile

Alexander Haykus Dearborn

Cynthia Burke Dearborn



Branch Uniform Bank Now Open!

As our new CCA Brothers and Sisters join us as new members, Branch 2184 is asking our retired and active carriers to donate new or used uniforms that they no longer need. If you would like to donate please bring them to the Branch office or give them to your Steward to drop off.

Even during this pandemic, you can still make donations to the uniform bank by bringing in gently used uniforms and gear to your office. Give it to your steward and he/she will make sure your donation gets to the Branch 2184 office.

Thank you to **Mary Taylor** (Trenton), **Scott Watts** (Lincoln Park), **Jackie McGregory** (Dearborn Annex), **John Dainus** (Dearborn Annex), **Robin Koral** (Dearborn Main), **Arleen Blanchard** (Lincoln Park), **Monique Shorter** (Westland) for their donations.

Lets make our new members feel welcome.

For more information call
313-295-1640

About Us:

The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) represents 295,000 active and retired letter carriers who live or work in virtually every community in the country. We serve as the exclusive collective bargaining representative for the 205,000 active city letter carriers employed by the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) and champion the interests of some 90,000 retired members. NALC is also dedicated to ensuring the Constitutionally-mandated Postal Service remains the most trusted and efficient provider of universal mail service in the world.

Contract Corner:

Headphones and Other Letter Carrier Safety Matters

A discussion of issues related to the performance of letter carrier letter duties in darkness or near darkness appeared in a previous edition of our Branch publication. Although that is primarily a late fall and winter concern, there are other important letter carrier safety issues and delivery rules that are applicable the year round. This is a brief review of two of the most important but also commonly ignored USPS safety rules.

First, regarding the use of headsets while delivering mail, including the use of earbuds: USPS Handbook EL-814 (Employee's Guide to Safety), section 1.G states that "The use of headsets is permissible only for employees who perform duties while seated or stationary and only where headset use does not interfere with performing duties or constitutes a safety or health hazard. **Do not wear or use headsets while walking or driving, while near moving machinery, while involved in oral business communications, or while in contact with or in view of the public.**"

To be clear, **this language directly prohibits the wearing of headsets of any type while performing any aspect of letter carrier delivery duties.** While performing delivery duties, undivided attention to your work is necessary at all times. Any avoidable distraction from your focus, whether visual, audible, or mental, increases the risk of accident or injury. Additionally, letter carriers that are engaged in extraneous conversation unrelated to their work while delivering mail present a poor customer service image for the Postal Service.

A related safety issue that is commonly observed with letter carriers during the delivery of mail, especially while performing curblines (mounted) deliveries, is the **very dangerous practice of fingering mail or holding it in a letter carrier's hands or on their lap while driving between deliveries.** This is expressly prohibited by the EL-814, section 10.E.1; "Never finger mail or hold it in your hands while you Drive," as well as in the M-41 Handbook (City Delivery Carriers Duties and Responsibilities), sec-

tion 812.4; **“Do not finger mail while driving or hold mail in your hands while the vehicle is in motion. You must use the mirror to check for pedestrians ahead, in back, and on both sides before placing the vehicle in motion.”**

In summary, **you should never be touching or even looking at the mail in your vehicle unless the vehicle is at a complete stop.** Otherwise, you are not in full control of the vehicle and are not fully attentive to driving conditions. Thus, you cannot respond as quickly or effectively should conditions warrant an immediate response. **It only takes a split second of inattention for a serious accident to occur. What’s your hurry, anyway?**

Employer Claims

A letter carrier that receives a notice of indebtedness from the USPS (sometimes known as a “letter of demand”) has several options, one or more of which should always be initiated in a timely manner by the recipient of the notice. Article 28, section 4.A of the NALC/USPS Collective Bargaining Agreement allows for a grievance to be initiated in response to any notice of alleged indebtedness. However, this must be done in a timely manner – no later than 14 days after the employee receives this notice. As long as this is done, collection of the debt must be delayed for as long as the grievance continues to advance through the grievance procedure, until the final disposition of the grievance and the exhaustion of all contractual and administrative remedies.

Additionally, many USPS claims of indebtedness against employees involve mistakes in which carriers were overpaid through no fault of their own. Section 437 of the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) gives letter carriers the right to file for waiver of the claim for overpayment. Under this process the carrier files a PS Form 3074 “Request for waiver of Claim for Erroneous Payment of Pay.” The 3074 and accompanying supporting information must then be investigated by the installation head (postmaster or officer-in-charge) of the station where he/she works. The installation head writes a report of the investigation and the entire file is sent to USPS Human Resources and then on to the Eagan (Minnesota) Accounting Service Center, where the claim of indebtedness can be waived if one of the conditions set forth in the ELM 437.6 has been met.

Of importance, the two forms of response discussed above are NOT mutually exclusive. Where the claim of alleged indebtedness does involve overpayment, both a timely grievance and a PS 3074 “Waiver of Claim for Erroneous Payment of Pay” should be initiated by the carrier that receives the notice. Additionally, even if the carrier believes the claim is legitimate, no more than 15% of their net biweekly pay or 20% of their gross biweekly pay can be deducted each pay period to satisfy a postal debt, unless the employee agrees in writing to a higher amount.

Finally, there are some instances where management attempts to charge an employee for alleged loss or damage to mail or alleged loss or damage to USPS property or vehicles. In nearly ALL instances such attempts to charge an employee are contractually unsupported, as they fail to meet the requirements set forth in Article 28, sections 2 and 3 of the Contract. If you receive such a notice from management, immediately request to see your steward. Whether a claim of alleged indebtedness or a claim of alleged loss or damage, **NEVER just pay the Postal Service any money without fully investigating (and if necessary, challenging) the legitimacy of their claim.**

Blood Donor Leave

Paid time off for blood donations is specifically provided for in USPS leave regulations that are found in the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM), section 519.51. The specific USPS policy states that “All postal employees are urged to cooperate fully with the public blood donation programs for the health and security of their community. The time necessary includes the time required for travel and the time required by the medical facility to process the blood donations.”

This means that career as well as non-career postal employees may be excused for that period of time deemed reasonably necessary (up to 8 hours) to cover any absence from regular tours of duty to make voluntary blood donations. This does not apply to employees that voluntarily donate blood on their own time, off duty. It is appropriate to provide management with as much advance notice as possible after an appointment has been made to donate blood.

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

Contract Corner

Postmasters and other Installation heads may also make arrangements with mobile blood banks for on-site blood drives conducted at Post Office facilities.

Additionally, career postal employees who wish to donate bone marrow, stem cells, blood platelets, or organs may also be granted administrative leave. The maximum time granted to a fulltime career employee is 3 days for bone marrow, stem cell, and blood platelet donations, and 14 days for organ donations.

-- Joe Golonka

Chairperson

Branch 2184

Contract Administration Unit

March 17th



Attention

All Branch 2184 Members:

Branch Meeting Wednesday, March 1, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. This meeting will be conducted via WebEx.

To participate, call the Branch 2184 at (313) 295-1640 and provide your name, the office you work at or retired from, and the email address you want to use for the WebEx link to log in. The link will be sent at least two days prior to the meeting.

Meeting Agenda:

Branch Officer Reports

Committee and Activity Reports

Letter Carrier Contractual Information

Legislative Updates

Due to COVID-19 all Retirees Meetings are canceled until further notice.



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Carl Ramsey

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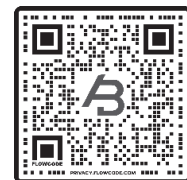
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Canton

- ✓ Check mark indicates you are signed up for automatic contributions.
- R = Retired members.

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By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, occupation and name of employer of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 per calendar year. Any guideline amount is merely a suggestion, and an individual is free to contribute more or less than the guideline suggests and the Union will not favor or disadvantage anyone by reason of the amount of their contribution or their decision not to contribute.

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.

Remember the magic words --

“I WANT TO SEE MY STEWARD”

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



BRANCH 2184 • WESTERN WAYNE COUNTY, MI
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS • AFL-CIO
6969 Monroe
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MEMBER BENEFITS

Mutual Benefit Association

U.S. Letter Carriers Mutual Benefit Association

100 Indiana Ave., N.W., Suite 510
Washington, DC 20001-2144
202-638-4318

The United States Letter Carriers Mutual Benefit Association (MBA), founded in 1891, was created for the benefit of National Association of Letter Carriers members and their families. The MBA is the life insurance division of the NALC. Today, the MBA has more than \$224 million of life insurance in force on its members.

Insurance plans offered by the MBA are designed to give NALC members and their families the best possible protection for the lowest cost. See [MBA Membership Qualifications](#) for details regarding eligibility for purchasing MBA products.

Only NALC members are eligible to purchase MBA insurance products.

Section 1. An applicant for admission to membership in the MBA must be a letter carrier or other nonsupervisory employee of the Postal Career Service who is a member in good standing of the NALC, or the spouse, child, grandchild or great grandchild of a member of the NALC. Employees of the NALC and its subsidiaries, their spouse and children are also eligible applicants for membership in the MBA.

Section 2. Each applicant for membership shall make application on the form provided for that purpose and, subject to the nonmedical limits in effect, be examined by some competent practicing physician.

Section 3. Should any applicant be rejected by the Chief Medical Examiner, he/she shall not be proposed or admitted within six months thereafter.