



# Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

September/October 2009

**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 4th  
December 2nd  
January 6th, 2010  
7:30 p.m. - Union Hall  
**Retirees Meetings:**  
December 9th  
January 13th, 2010  
12:30 p.m. - Union Hall

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## President's Report

It has been a very busy time here at the Branch 2184 office since I last reported to you. The months of September and October have all but flown by with the Holidays closing in fast. I will go over some of the highlights since my last report.

### 50 / 60 Celebration

At our September Branch meeting our National Business Agent Pat Carroll was present for the gold card presentation for our 50-year members. He also passed out letters of congratulations and pins to those who have attained the lofty goal of 60 years as a NALC member. We had eight members who reached their respective milestones in Unionism that attended the meeting. Brother Carroll read the letters to each member and presented them with a framed plaque from our National President, Fred Rolando. This year's inductees were a special bunch and one of the largest groups the Branch ever had in one year. This year we had 24 members who qualified for their 50-year gold cards as well as 15 members who reached the 60-year milestone. A large group of well wishers and members attended the meeting to congratulate the eight 50 year members who attended (Earl Jones, Raymond Kornak, Edward Methot, William Salisbury, Charles Sanders, and Robert Vogler) as well as our two 60-year members (John Jaynes and Austin Sibley). Congratulations again to all those who achieved their Union milestones!

### Labor Day!

Once again your Branch participated in the annual Labor Day Parade held on September 7th in downtown Detroit. We were joined by many of the other Branches here in Southeast Michigan who marched under the banner of the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers (MISALC). The parade went off without a hitch. State President Dan Florkowski coordinated the festivities, which included bus transportation

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### Officers

President .....	Mark Judd
Executive Vice President .....	Jim Wolstencroft
Vice President .....	Carol Clark
Recording Secretary .....	Cindy Trzeciak
Financial Secretary Treas .....	Cathy Tondreau
Sergeant at Arms .....	Walt McGregory
Health Benefits Rep.....	Jim Powell
Retirees Officer.....	Leonard Zawisa
Trustee .....	Patricia Linna
Trustee .....	Gloria Warthen
Trustee .....	Casey Pennington
Editor .....	Leonard Zawisa
Branch Scribe .....	Joe Golonka
Web Site Design .....	Jim Hales
Injury Compensation .....	Joe Golonka

### Stewards

Belleville .....	Bruce Prevost
.....	Gregory Bodziak (alt)
Dearborn (Main) .....	Darryl Clay
.....	Jacqueline Wiggins
.....	Ed Williams (alt)
Dearborn (Annex).....	Melvin MacDonald
.....	Roderick Leental
.....	Tom Klecha (alt)
Dearborn (Teleford).....	John Czuchrak
Dearborn Heights.....	Jim Hales
.....	James Wolstencroft
.....	Denise Viola (alt)
Dundee.....	Deborah Standifer
Flat Rock .....	Gloria Warthen
Grosse Ile.....	313-295-1640
Inkster .....	Bryon Hendricks
Lincoln Park .....	Scott Watts
.....	Dave Reise (alt)
Monroe .....	Erik Venzke
.....	Chris Carmon (alt)
Northville.....	Bridgette Sams
.....	Beth Maleszewski (alt)
.....	Jim Holland (alt)
Plymouth.....	Don Oziemski
.....	Dan Marek
.....	Bob Venning (alt)
.....	Patricia Linna (alt)
.....	Heather Childers (alt)
Rockwood.....	Gloria Warthen
Taylor .....	Bob Parisi
.....	Andrea Smith
.....	Michele Szafran (alt)
Temperance .....	Kari Guthrie
Trenton .....	Gwen Heffinger
.....	Casey Pennington
.....	Anthony Conley (alt)
Wayne.....	Walter McGregory
Westland.....	Joan Hicks
Canton.....	Dianne Daley
.....	Lois Fritz
.....	Kathy Hayes (alt)
Ypsilanti .....	Rick Rider
.....	Mike Treadway
.....	Alan Grajczyk (alt)
.....	Malcolm Muscato (alt)



*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**

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## President's Report

to and from the starting and ending point of the parade. A special thank you goes to NALC Branch 1 for the coffee and donuts that got the marchers off to a good start. Thanks also to the MISALC for the lunch that they provided. If you did not get a chance to join this year's parade be sure to make plans for next year and join in Union solidarity.

### Committee of Presidents

On September 20 and 21 the NALC Committee Of Presidents (COP) met here in Detroit. The meeting was hosted by Branch 1. Over 300 NALC Branch Presidents from around the country met at the Motor City Casino Hotel. We had the opportunity to discuss many issues affecting Branches across the country. The special guest speaker at this event was none other than our newly installed National President Fred Rolando. Brother Rolando made a presentation and took questions for over five hours on Sunday and Monday. Fred went over the pressing issues we face as an organization and answered tough questions put to him by the gathered Branch Presidents, ranging from the MIARAP process to the Dispute Resolution Teams. Most of the questions regarding the MIARAP pertained to the lack of oversight or input allowed in the process by the Branch Presidents, who feel that they are being held responsible for the process agreed to by the National Union, which local Branch Presidents have no control over. Brother Rolando promised to take our concerns back to National Headquarters and see if some of the changes suggested could be incorporated into any future plans involving route adjustments.

The other most talked about topic was the Dispute Resolution Process. The presidents voiced their concerns and frustrations over the process breaking down, as well as the inconsistency of the Step B decisions they are getting. With identical issues being resolved differently from one area to the next. Once again President Rolando said he

would take back our concerns and suggestions to see what could be done. On Monday afternoon we were invited to the Walter Reuther Labor Library at Wayne State University for a dedication ceremony to open the letter carrier exhibit, which will be on display for a year. NALC President Emeritus James Rademacher was in attendance as was our current National President. It was a great honor to have the opportunity to talk with President Rademacher and to discuss the turbulent times in the 1960's and early 1970's and what he and working letter carriers had to face. When you compare the March 1970 strike to what we are facing today as an organization it seems not to be so bad after all!

### Texas Hold 'em for MDA

For the second time this year the Branch sponsored the poker room at Taylor Lanes for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The Branch was responsible for the license as well as making sure the money and chips were handled for the three-day event, which ran from Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> through Monday the 28<sup>th</sup>. With the monies raised at the latest event it puts us well on our way for the best year we have ever had raising funds for MDA, the NALC's National sponsored charity.

### Scholarship Winners Selected

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of September the Executive Board met and selected this year's Branch Scholarship winners. Congratulations to Michael Cox whose father Steve works at the Dearborn Annex and to Karen Grajczyk, the daughter of Alan from Ypsilanti. The winners were selected at random from the many entrants we received. Each winner will receive \$500 from the Branch to use toward their tuition or expenses. On behalf of the Branch we wish you much success in your chosen fields of study.



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President's Report

### Congress Passes USPS Financial Relief Bill

On September 30<sup>th</sup> we were informed that the United States Senate had passed the long-awaited legislation that would defer the USPS payment of \$4 billion of pre-funding costs for future retirees' health care benefits. By a 61-39 vote the Senate adopted the legislation, that was then sent to the White House where President Obama signed it into law. The legislation passed in the Senate contained the same language that the United States House of Representatives already passed, in H.R.22.

### MIARAP Discussion

At our October 7<sup>th</sup> Branch meeting we held an open and frank round table discussion regarding the current route adjustment process. Team co-leader and Branch member Dave Reise led the question and answer session, along with the other four members from the Branch who currently serve on the route adjustment team with him. They are Darryl Clay, Jim Hales, Casey Pennington, and Andrea Smith. Each took turns answering questions, giving pointers on how the process works, and how to get the most from the process. The time allotted was well spent, as those members who attended all seemed to be a bit more knowledgeable about the process and about what they are facing in the next round of adjustments. Thank you to the team members for being here and patiently answering all the questions put to you as well as for the pointers you gave which will make the process more understandable and less daunting.

### KIM Region Training

Over the Columbus Day weekend (October 11-12) 18 Branch 2184 stewards and officers attended training in Merrillville, Indiana. The training was conducted and sponsored as usual by the

National Business Agent's office for the Kentucky-Indiana-Michigan (NALC Region 6) area. This year's training session was one of the largest ever held with over 500 attendees. The classes covered ran the gamut from beginning classes for newer stewards to advanced classes with topics such as COR, which is the Carrier Optimal Routing system currently being used in the MIARAP process. The class schedule and agenda was very aggressive for such a short period of time but all went well with the classes packed with eager advocates anxious to learn. On Monday morning NBA Pat Carroll addressed the attendees and gave a state of the Region report. One of the most interesting things we heard was that the USPS has approved the deployment of 564 GPS devices for the Region. Of that number, 60 will be deployed in delivery vehicles in the Detroit District offices. While we await more information on their deployment, please be careful and make sure you work in a professional manner at all times when on the clock.

-- Mark Judd  
President

#### 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](http://www.nalc.org/depart/hbp)

# EVP's Report

## Why It's Good to Call in Sick

The battle between the supervisor and the worker over sick calls has been around for years and probably will be around for many years to come. As we enter the flu and cold season I would like to give some advice about how to use Sick Leave. The provisions for Sick Leave are found in Article 10.5 of the National Agreement and in Section 513 of the ELM (Employee and Labor Relations Manual). The ELM defines Sick Leave as follows:

- 513 Sick Leave**
- 513.1 Purpose**
- 513.11 Sick Leave for Employee Incapacitation**

Sick leave insures employees against loss of pay if they are incapacitated for the performance of duties because of illness, injury, pregnancy and confinement and medical (including dental or optical) examination or treatment.

As stated above it insures employees against loss of pay when incapacitated for the performance of duties. And that is what sick leave should be used for. Like an insurance policy, use it when needed. The key words are "incapacitated for the performance of duties." For example, if you wake up feeling icky with a sore throat and the sniffles (which weren't there yesterday), keep your sneezy self at home. Health experts say that the first few hours/days of a virus tend to be the most contagious, so spare your co-workers your germs. If you're taking medications, whether prescribed or over the counter, that make you feel like a space cadet or impair you in any way, you may want to stay at home.



There are carriers that take advantage of these provisions, make no mistake about that. Of course management will always take the punitive

approach to try to correct a wrong. They will choose the ones they don't like or use an attendance issue to discipline you for a performance issue. I'm sure that there are only a small percentage of carriers that do abuse sick leave, but enough to make it difficult for the ones who use sick leave for its intended purpose.

This is for the carriers who use sick leave as intended, yet are being pulled in for

"if you wake up feeling icky with a sore throat and the sniffles, keep your sneezy self at home"

discussions and/or discipline related to attendance. Way too often in my investigations I find that carriers will call in for each day that they take off due to illness. For example, the carrier will take Monday off by calling ERM's and only put in for that Monday. Then that same carrier will take Tuesday off and again call ERM's. For each day that they call in it is marked as unscheduled leave. This is what could lead to possible problems in representing a discipline case. The unscheduled part is what you want to avoid when possible. If that same carrier called in Monday and requested Monday and Tuesday, then Tuesday is now scheduled leave and not unscheduled. Now if you are unsure if you may be sick on that next day (Tuesday), my suggestion to you would be to play it safe rather than be sorry by taking another unscheduled day. If by chance you feel well enough to go back to work on that Tuesday then by all means do so. At least you will be covered as scheduled leave if you can't make it in. I have yet to see management tell a carrier they can't work because they are on sick leave. The bottom line is use your sick leave as it is intended for and don't leave yourself open to unnecessary discipline with unscheduled leave. I hope that you will have a safe and healthy fall season.

Here are recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on what you can do to stay healthy.

- **Stay informed.** The CDC website ([cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov))

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EVP Report

will be updated regularly as information becomes available. Influenza is thought to **spread mainly person-to-person** through coughing or sneezing of infected people.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hands cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- **Stay home if you get sick.** CDC recommends that you stay home from work or school and limit contact with others to keep from infecting them.
- **Follow public health advice** regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Find healthy ways to **deal with stress and anxiety.**

Call 1-800-CDC-INFO for more information.

-- Jim Wolstencroft  
Executive Vice President

## 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.

*(Clip and keep with you while working)*

## Customer Connect

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

Jim Crossey (Plymouth) - \$300,000.00  
**(Number 1 Sale in Great Lakes Area /  
Number 2 Sale Nationally for Week  
September 18, 2009)**

- Robbie Peoples (Plymouth) - \$7,500.00
- Gary Sassak (Dearborn Annex) - \$10,000.00
- Jeremy Cox (Ypsilanti) - \$1,500.00
- Deborah Hoover (Canton) - \$18,000.00
- Patricia Manning (Lincoln Park) - \$800.00
- David Smith (Dearborn Annex) - \$1,300.00
- Annie Stec (Dearborn Annex) - \$5,000.00
- Jesse Crowder (Dearborn Annex) - \$4,000.00
- Ed Sikora (Wayne) - \$1,000.00
- Lawrence Skillman (Lincoln Park) \$20,000.00
- David Smith (Dearborn Annex) - \$2,000.00
- Kari Guthrie (Temperance) - \$4,000.00
- Joan Hicks (Westland) - \$6,000.00
- James Colts (Westland) - \$5,000.00
- Anthony Nardone (Taylor) - \$1,000.00
- Denise Abass (Dearborn Annex) - \$2,500.00
- Michele Barnes (Westland) - \$1,000.00
- Sandy Burrell (Plymouth) - \$750.00
- Ricky Hatfield (Northville) - \$15,000.00
- Kim Miller (Dearborn Annex) - \$2,500.00
- Regina Smart (Canton) - \$1,200.00



## Branch 2184 Web Site

Visit our web site for:

Forms 3971, 3189, 3996

OWCP Forms

Online NALC "FMLA" forms

Steward Resources

"2009 MRS"

"2009 JCAM"

**[www.nalc2184.org](http://www.nalc2184.org)**

## Calendar of Events

Steward Meeting ..... November 10th at 7:30  
Veteran's Day ..... November 11th  
Step A Meeting ..... November 16th at 6:30  
Steward Meeting ..... November 16th at 7:30  
Thanksgiving ..... November 26th  
Executive Board ..... November 30th at 7:30  
Branch Meeting ..... December 2nd at 7:30  
Retirees Meeting ..... December 9th at 12:30  
Steward Meeting ..... December 14th at 7:30  
Christmas ..... December 25th  
Executive Meeting .... December 28th at 7:30  
New Year Holiday ..... January 1st  
Branch Meeting ..... January 6th at 7:30  
Retirees Meeting ..... January 13th at 12:30  
MLK Holiday ..... January 18th

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**Attend Your Branch Meetings  
1st Wednesday of the Month**



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**Robert Kreager**

Branch 2184 Retired

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## Branch 2184 50 Year Members



Pat Carroll (National Business Agent), Charlie Sanders (Taylor), William Salisbury (Dearborn Heights), Edward Methot (Taylor), Raymond Kornak (Dearborn), Earl Jones (Dearborn), Robert Vogler (Dearborn), Mark Judd (Branch President)

## Branch 2184 60 Year Members



Pat Carroll (Region 6 Business Agent), John Jaynes (Dearborn), Austin Sibley (Lincoln Park), Mark Judd, (Branch 2184 President)



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## Contract Corner:

**Q: Management in my office is constantly having letter carriers sign for things such as training or attending service and safety talks. Can they require us to sign for such things?**

**A:** No, they cannot, and such signature requirements are typical of the childish, distrustful mindset of our employer. However, do not disobey an instruction to do so - with one specific exception which is discussed below. Generally, employee signature requirements are limited to forms 3971 (request for leave) and 3189 (request for temporary schedule change) as well as accountable mail items as defined in the M-41 handbook, section 261, which are registered, certified, express mail, postage due, customs duty and C.O.D. items, as well as arrow keys. The following is a partial listing what letter carriers are **NOT** required to sign for: Training of any type, attendance at safety or service talks, receipt of printed or verbal information, **locally developed or modified forms**, vehicle keys, gas cards, DPS error logs, and disciplinary actions. Although the general protocol is for letter carriers to follow instructions (even when improper) to sign for such items and then see their steward to initiate the appropriate grievance, there is one specific exception to that requirement. Letter carriers can refuse, without fear of disciplinary reprisal, an instruction to sign 2488 - Authorization for Release of Medical Information - and we should ALWAYS refuse to do so. As discussed in previous issues of the "Speaks," the NALC at the National level as well as the Branch level strongly discourages letter carriers from signing form 2488 under *any* circumstances.

**Q: Management did a one-day mail count on my route last week. They never told me that they were going to count my mail until I came to work that morning. They also refused to let me verify their mail count. Was this wrong?**

*(Continued on page 12)*

# 2009 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
- ✓ John Dainus
- ✓ Mark Judd
- Thomas Klecha
- ✓ Roderick Lelental
- ✓ Melvin MacDonald
- ✓ Carol Macieczni
- Darrin Mifsud\*\*\*
- Rosemary Miller
- ✓ Karen Regentik
- Jerry Taylor
- Scott Wandyg

## Dearborn Teleford

- John Czuchrak\*\*\*
- James Likeric\*\*\*
- ✓ Alan Swintek

## Dearborn Heights

- ✓ Roger Corpolongo
- ✓ Jim Hales
- ✓ Denise Viola
- ✓ James Wolstencroft

## Flat Rock

- ✓ Amy Degrand

## Grosse Isle

- ✓ Kimberly Bumbul

- ✓ John Nellis

## Inkster

- Thad Dillard\*\*\*
- ✓ Bryon Hendricks
- ✓ Roy McMahan

## Lincoln Park

- Dave Reise
- ✓ Paula Hall
- ✓ Scott Watts

## Monroe

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

## Northville

- James Holland
- Elizabeth Karsten
- ✓ Beth Maliszewski

## Plymouth

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

## Rockwood

- ✓ Gloria Warthen

## Taylor

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

## Temperance

- ✓ Kari Guthrie

## Trenton

- ✓ Anthony Conley

- ✓ Dennis Lucas

- ✓ Casey Pennington

## Wayne

- ✓ Walter Gregory
- ✓ Edward Sikora

## Westland

- ✓ Wenoia Clark
- ✓ Ted Gagnon
- ✓ Joan Hicks
- Aaronette Howell\*\*\*
- ✓ Katrina Jones
- ✓ Raymond Tobin

## Canton

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

## Ypsilanti

- ✓ Alan Grajczyk
- ✓ Timothy Bowsher
- ✓ Richard Rider

- ✓ Michael Tredway

## Retired

- ✓ Mary Abbott
- ✓ Thelma Balogh
- Bela Rito \*\*\*
- Carl Belvees\*\*\*
- Cary Black
- George Bolash
- John Bostek\*\*\*
- ✓ Joe Golonka
- ✓ James Kelly
- William Lowe
- ✓ Joanna MacKinnon
- William Mason\*\*\*
- William Mather
- John Meleski
- James Powell
- Leo Rosol
- Clarence Schukofsky\*\*\*
- ✓ Gino Stellabuto
- ✓ Henry Strange
- ✓ Cathy Tondreau
- ✓ Cindy Trzeciak
- ✓ Margaret Zywicki
- ✓ Leonard Zawisa

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- ✓ Check mark indicates you are signed up for automatic COLCPE contributions.

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## Contract Corner:

(Continued from page 9)

**A:** Management's failure to provide you with at least one day's advance notice of that mail count and their refusal to allow you to verify the count are both violations of the Contract and as such are grievable issues. The M-39 handbook, section 141.2 states that "When management desires to determine the efficiency of a carrier in the office, a count of mail may be made. The carrier *must* be given one day's advance notification of this special count." Additionally, in accordance with M-39 handbook, section 222.131, the carrier may, upon request, verify the *entire mail count*. The right of a letter carrier to verify the *entire* count applies both to regular mail count and inspections as well as to one day mail counts, per Step 4 decisions NC-W-7059 (M-00632) and H4N-5T-C 42333 (M-00814). Additionally, the carrier must be provided with a copy of the results of the mail count (form 1838-C) and the results must be discussed with him or her.

**Q: My supervisor told me that he can make me work up to a half hour of overtime anytime he wants. I am not on any overtime desired list. How can this be?**

**A:** It can't be – because the supervisor is simply wrong. Many supervisors incorrectly believe that this is allowed because of the so-called "rule of reason." The "rule of reason" was first codified in a December 20, 1988 National Memorandum of Understanding between the NALC and the USPS and states that management would not be required to utilize an ODL carrier to provide assistance if doing so would require excessive travel time to provide the assistance. This situation typically occurs when a Non-ODL carrier calls from the field to report that he or she will be unable to complete their assignment in eight hours as previously instructed. Management would not be required to send auxiliary assistance out to the employee if, for example, doing so would require twenty minutes of travel to do thirty minutes of work. In this specific situation management could instruct the employee to complete their assignment or to bring the unfinished portion back. However, under NO circumstances does this mean that management can schedule a Non-ODL employee *in advance* (i.e. in response to a 3996 submitted in the morning) to work *any* amount of overtime when available assistance can be scheduled at that time to perform the work instead. The "rule of reason" is simply that, and not an excuse to otherwise arbitrarily disregard the clearly defined provisions of Article 8 pertaining to