



# Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

March/April 2021

## President's Report

**Branch 2184**  
**Western Wayne County, MI**  
**National Association**  
**of Letter Carriers**  
**AFL - CIO**  
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 Web Site [www.nalc2184.org](http://www.nalc2184.org)

### Office Hours:

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

### Calendar

#### Branch Meetings:

May 5th 3rd, 2021  
 (7:30 p.m. - Teleconference)

#### Retirees Meetings:

May 12th , 2021  
 (12:30 p.m. - Union Hall)  
**Due to COVID 19 meeting is cancelled**

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Our new 44-month term contract has been ratified overwhelmingly by the membership. A little more than 60,000 active NALC letter carriers voted to accept the new contract and a few more than 3,000 active NALC letter carriers voted to reject the contract. The term of this contract is from September 20, 2019, to May 20, 2023.

As of April 10, 2021, active carriers were able to go into [liteblue.usps.gov](http://liteblue.usps.gov) and then click on their eOPF link to see their latest PS Form 50 that shows their updated pay rate. Your updated pay rate will be reflected in your April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021 paychecks.

It has been reported from NALC Headquarters that USPS management has started calculations on our retroactive pay and we should expect to receive it no later than mid-July 2021. As we get more information from NALC headquarters and USPS, we will keep you all informed.

## LMOU NEGOTIATIONS

On Sunday April 18, 2021, Executive Vice President Mark Judd, Vice President Jackie McGregory, Recording Secretary Mel Macdonald, Contract Administration Unit chairperson Joe Golonka, Contract Administration Unit member Dave Reise, and I attended a virtual Local Negotiations training conducted by our National Business Agent's office and facilitated by NBA Troy Clark and Regional Administrative Assistants David Mudd and Kyle Inosencio. The dates for LMOU (Local Memorandum of Understanding) Negotiations are from April 29, 2021 through May 28, 2021. Should we have to enter into local negotiations, your Branch is ready and prepared.

## CCA CONVERSIONS TO PTFs

Management has informed NALC at the headquarters level that per our new contract, CCAs that had 24 months of Relative Standing within the same installation as of the contract ratification date of March 8 will be converted to career PTF status on Saturday, May 8, 2021. Under the terms of the new contract, CCAs will continue to be converted to career PTF status after attaining 24 months of relative standing in their installation. That is the latest information we have as of now.

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## Officers

President.....	Walt Gregory
Executive Vice President .....	Mark Judd
Vice President .....	Jacqueline Gregory
Recording Secretary.....	Melvin MacDonald
Financial Secretary Treas .....	Cathy Tondreau
Sergeant at Arms.....	Scott Watts
Health Benefits Rep.....	Jim Powell
Retirees Officer.....	Leonard Zawisa

Trustee.....	Joe Golonka
Trustee.....	Gloria Warthen
Trustee.....	Felicia Davis

Editor.....	Leonard Zawisa
Branch Scribe.....	Joe Golonka
Injury Compensation.....	Erik Venzke
Injury Compensation .....	Joe Golonka
Web Page Design .....	Jim Hales

### Contract Administrative Unit

Joe Golonka.....	Chairperson
Walt Gregory .....	Member
Mark Judd .....	Member
Jackie Gregory .....	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)
Belleville.....	Bryon Hendricks
.....	Greg Bodziak (alt)
Dearborn (Main).....	Darryl Clay
.....	Symone Coleman
.....	Yvonne Jackson (alt)
.....	Karl Tamburro (alt)
Dearborn (Annex).....	Melvin MacDonald
.....	Jacqueline Gregory
.....	Rose Miller (alt)
Dearborn Heights.....	Denise Viola
.....	Jacqueline Gregory (alt)
.....	Melvin MacDonald (alt)
Dundee .....	Gloria Warthen (alt)
Flat Rock.....	Lillian Bogosian
.....	Gloria Warthen (alt)
Grosse Ile.....	Kim Bumbul (alt)
.....	Gloria Warthen (alt)
.....	Darryl Clay (alt)
Inkster .....	Phil Ashford
.....	Scherrie Lacey (alt)
.....	Robert Clark (alt)
Lincoln Park.....	Scott Watts
Monroe.....	Jacqueline Gregory (alt)
.....	Melvin MacDonald (alt)
Northville.....	Valerie Watkins
.....	Darryl Clay (alt)
Plymouth.....	Tamara Bosman
.....	Kristie Nelson
.....	Diego Forshaw (alt)
.....	Otis Barney (alt)
Rockwood.....	Gloria Warthen (alt)
Taylor.....	Keith Benedict
.....	Darryl Clay (alt)
Temperance.....	Gloria Warthen (alt)
Trenton.....	Tracy Mitchell
.....	Melvin MacDonald (alt)
Westland .....	Walter Gregory
.....	Felicia Davis
.....	Nakia Whitfield
.....	Katrina Jones (alt)
.....	Ananias Epps (alt)
Canton.....	Ramon Robinson
.....	Jacqueline Gregory (alt)
.....	Melvin MacDonald (alt)
Ypsilanti.....	Paul Bordine
.....	Mike Tredway
.....	Danita Smith (alt)
.....	Alan Grajczyk (alt)

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President's Report

## SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE REMINDER

A reminder to all that I have called for a Special Meeting for the sole purpose of conducting nominations for Branch 2184 officers, station stewards and convention delegates for the 2021-2023 term of office.

The meeting will be held here outdoors on our property on Sunday May 23, 2021 at 2:00 pm. Following nominations, an election for any contested positions will take place by mail ballot in the manner prescribed by Article V of our Bylaws.

After the nominations meeting, we will have an Open House from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm for our newly converted CCAs to career PTF status as well as current CCAs. At this meeting, we will have uniforms available for the carriers to look through. We will have branch officers and stewards here to assist members with their benefits and health insurance picks. We will also have our laptops available to assist members in signing up for LCPF (Letter Carrier Political Fund). We look forward to seeing you on May 23, 2021.

As I am writing this article, Michigan is the number one state in the country for new Covid-19 cases. With the spring here, don't get relaxed with social distancing. Wear your mask and wash your hands. Even if you have been vaccinated, continue to adhere to the CDC guidelines. We all are tired of the restrictions that come with this pandemic, but we have to continue a while longer to beat this nasty virus. If you haven't gotten your vaccine shot, please consider it. Stay safe, all.

-- *Walt McGregory*  
President

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

# EVP's Report

## Emergency Federal Employee Leave Update

We have received notice from the National Business Agent's office that the USPS has notified the NALC that they have still not received any official guidance on the usage of EFEL from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The Office of Personnel Management administers the EFEL Fund that will finance leave granted under the American Rescue Plan Act. Until OPM issues guidance on how the leave is to be administered, the USPS is taking the position that it is limited in its ability to fully implement EFEL.

While the USPS waits for direction from OPM, they are using an interim process for the use of EFEL leave. The memorandum from the USPS goes on to say that supervisors and managers are only authorized to conditionally approve leave requests in increments of up to 80 hours through April 28, 2021 or until OPM issues its guidance. Proportional amounts of leave will be given to part-time flexible employees (PTF) and noncareer employees who do not have a 40 hour per week schedule.

In order to use the EFEL leave you must be unable to work and meet one of the eight qualifying reasons. If you are seeking to use leave for one of the eight qualifying reasons, be sure to fill out and submit a PS Form 3971 indicating the reason you are taking the leave. If you are having a problem with getting the leave, make sure to ask for your steward or call the Branch office for help. See the accompanying chart in this edition of the "SPEAKS" for further EFEL information.

## Branch Open House

Congratulations! to all our newly converted career PTFs and soon to be converted PTFs. Branch 2184 will be hosting an Open House here at the Branch office on Sunday May 23 from 5:00 pm till 7:00 pm for our PTF and CCA Brothers and Sisters. Your Branch Officers and Stewards will be available to help you sign up for health insurance, life insur-

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EVP's Report

ance, TSP, and LCPF as well as answer any contractual questions or concerns you might have. In addition, we will be opening the Branch Uniform Bank for you to go through before you use up your uniform allowance.

Please remember you have only 60 days to enroll in a health care plan from the time of your conversion to career status. If you were enrolled in the USPS Non-Career Employees Benefit Plan and converted to a career position, your enrollment is terminated 28 days after your conversion. If you take no action and do not sign up within the 60 days you will have to wait till Open Season to make another selection. Mark your calendar or make a note, do not miss out on this opportunity to discuss and sign up for your newly earned contractual benefits. See the notice in this edition of the "SPEAKS" for more information on the Open House.

-- Mark Judd

*Executive Vice President*

## VP's Report

### Emergency Federal Employee Leave

Effective March 12, 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act (Act) was signed into law by President Biden. This Act provides employees with up to 600 hours of paid Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL). **This leave is available to employees beginning on March 12, 2021, and continuing through September 30, 2021—or until the funding established in the Emergency Federal Employee Leave Fund (Fund) for reimbursement is exhausted.** The leave is available to eligible letter carriers who are unable to work due to one of eight qualifying reasons listed below.

### Emergency Federal Employee Leave Qualifying Reasons Leave Eligibility

A letter carrier is entitled to take EFEL related to COVID-19 if the employee is unable to work because the employee:

1. is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID19.

2. has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.

3. is caring for an individual who is subject to such an order as in (1) or has been so advised as in (2).

4. is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis.

5. is caring for the employee's son or daughter if the school or place of care of the son or daughter has been closed, requires or makes optional a virtual learning instruction model, requires or makes optional a hybrid of in-person and virtual learning instruction models, or if the child care provider of the son or daughter is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.

6. is experiencing any other substantially similar condition.

7. is caring for a family member with a mental or physical disability or who is 55 years of age or older and incapable of self-care, without regard to whether another individual other than the employee is available to care for such family member, if the place of care for such family member is closed or the direct care provider is unavailable due to COVID-19.

8. is obtaining immunization (vaccination) related to COVID-19 or is recovering from any injury, disability, illness, or condition related to such immunization.

- All career and non-career employees, regardless of tenure, are immediately eligible for EFEL.

- Full-time Employees can receive up to 600 hours of paid EFEL, capped at \$2,800 per pay period.

- Part-time Employees can receive up to the proportional equivalent of 600 hours, capped at a proportional equivalent of \$2,800 per pay period. Other Considerations

- **EFEL does not count as creditable service toward an employee's retirement benefits.**

- **Employees cannot contribute to Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) while on EFEL.**

Please fill out a PS form 3971 completely and supply the required documentation that fall up under 1 of the 8 qualifying reasons for the EFEL leave that may apply to your specific qualifying reason.

If for any reason management denies your

request, please get authorized union time to meet with your steward so an appropriate and timely grievance can be filed.

### **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)**

We are living in uncertain times with a more than one year going pandemic. One day you are living healthy and happy, and the next day you are sad or fighting for your life with Covid-19. Covid 19 has taken a toll on the world leaving many people feeling lonely, helpless and hopeless. We as letter carriers are affected by the many challenges that Covid 19 has left us to deal with. From working long hours, limited staffing and no time for our families, Covid-19 has caused different forms of stress that we don't normally deal with.

When all else fails, our outlet is the employee assistance program (EAP). It is completely confidential, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. EAP is here for you, with a variety of ways to connect with a licensed counselor. You can connect online at EAP4YOU.com, through video, by live chat or text message and by telephone 1-800-327-7341. The first session is on the clock. See your supervisor or steward to request EAP.

-- *Jacqueline McGregory*  
*Vice President*

## **Branch 2184 Web Site** **[www.nalc2184.org](http://www.nalc2184.org)**

Contract Agreement  
 CSRS & FERS Annuity Payments  
 Branch Calendar  
 "FMLA" forms  
 OWCP Information  
 Carrier Pay Chart  
 Online Forms 3971, 3996, 3189  
 CCA Information  
 2184 Memo of Understanding  
 National Agreement  
 Grievance Forms  
 Grievance Guidelines  
 Grievance Issue Statements  
 Defenses to Discipline  
 JCAM, MRS, M-39, M-41  
 Newest Covid 19 Relief Plan  
 (Includes Paid Leave)  
 Retirement Information

## ***BRANCH 2184 MEETING NOTICE***

### **ALL BRANCH 2184 MEMBERS:**

Until further notice, all of Branch 2184's Regular Membership Meetings will be conducted by Teleconference.

These meetings will take place on the first Wednesday of each month except for July and August and will begin at 7:30 p.m.

All active and retired Branch 2184 members are encouraged to participate. To do so, please call 1-234-203-2766. When prompted, enter the access code, which is 310-744-427. Once you are connected to the meeting, please MUTE your phone.

Meetings will include Officer reports, Contractual information, and other business of the Branch.



## Branch 2184

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Taylor, MI 48180  
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### **ATTENTION: All Branch 2184 CCAs and newly converted career PTFs:**

**There will be an Open House at the Branch 2184 Union Office for ALL Branch 2184 CCAs and former CCAs that have been or will be converted to career PTFs.**

**The Open House will take place on Sunday, May 23, 2021 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m.**

- Letter carrier apparel from the Branch 2184 Uniform Bank will be available for perusal and selection.
- Branch officers will be available to assist newly converted career PTFs with the signup process for health insurance, life insurance, TSP, LCPF, etc.
- Branch officers will be available to answer questions about any aspect of your USPS employment.

**Be sure to take advantage of this great opportunity!**

# Letter Carrier Pay Schedule

## City Carrier Wage Schedule: Implemented April 10, 2021

The following salary and rate schedule is for all NALC-represented employees.

### Career city letter carrier increases

Date	Type of Increase	Amount
Nov. 23, 2019	General wage increase	1.1%
Jan. 2020	COLA	\$166
July 2020	COLA	\$188
Nov. 21, 2020	General wage increase	1.1%
Jan. 2021	COLA	\$416
July 2021	COLA	TBD
Nov. 20, 2021	General wage increase	1.3%
Jan. 2022	COLA	TBD
July 2022	COLA	TBD
Nov. 19, 2022	General wage increase	1.3%
Jan. 2022	COLA	TBD

### City carrier assistant increases

Date	Type of Increase	Amount
Nov. 23, 2019	General wage increase	2.1%
Nov. 21, 2020	General wage increase	2.1%
Nov. 20, 2021	General wage increase	2.3%
Nov. 19, 2022	General wage increase	2.3%

Back pay adjustments for the two general wage increases and three COLAs will be calculated and paid by USPS as soon as practicable.

**NOTE: Upon conversion to Full-Time, Part-Time Flexible employees in Table Two will be slotted into the Full-Time Step commensurate with their number of weeks as a PTF, and retain their time credit toward the next step.**

NOTE: Effective Nov. 19, 2022, Table One and Table Two will be modified to include an additional Step P that is \$444 more than Step O of the basic salary schedule in Tables One and Two.

NOTE: Carrier Technicians receive additional compensation equivalent to 2.1% of the employee's applicable hourly rate for all paid hours.

NOTE: The full COLAs will be added to the salaries of all steps in Table 1 and Step O of Table 2, with proportionate application of the COLA to Steps A-N of Table 2.

**Table 1: City Carrier Schedule**

**RSC Q (NALC)**

This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date prior to Jan. 12, 2013.

	Basic Annual Salaries															MOST PREV. STEP
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	54,776	59,105	59,205	62,302	62,752	63,204	63,649	64,095	64,547	64,984	65,438	65,890	66,334	66,792	67,237	452
Carrier Technician**	55,926	60,346	60,448	63,610	64,070	64,531	64,986	65,441	65,902	66,349	66,812	67,274	67,727	68,195	68,649	461
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																
City Carrier (Grade 2)	27.39	29.55	29.60	31.15	31.38	31.60	31.82	32.05	32.27	32.49	32.72	32.95	33.17	33.40	33.62	
Carrier Technician**	27.96	30.17	30.22	31.81	32.04	32.27	32.49	32.72	32.95	33.17	33.41	33.64	33.86	34.10	34.32	
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																
City Carrier (Grade 2)	26.33	28.42	28.46	29.95	30.17	30.39	30.60	30.81	31.03	31.24	31.46	31.68	31.89	32.11	32.33	
Carrier Technician**	26.89	29.01	29.06	30.58	30.80	31.02	31.24	31.46	31.68	31.90	32.12	32.34	32.56	32.79	33.00	
Step Increase Waiting Periods (In Weeks)																
Steps (From-To)	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O		YRS.
	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24		12.4

\*\* Carrier Technicians receive an additional 2.1%

**Table 2: City Carrier Schedule**

**RSC Q7 (NALC)**

This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date on or after Jan. 12, 2013.

	Basic Annual Salaries															MOST PREV. STEP	
	AA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N		O
City Carrier (Grade 2)	41,353	43,200	45,049	46,898	48,748	50,595	52,446	54,296	56,144	57,993	59,843	61,690	63,541	65,389	67,237	1,850	
Carrier Technician**	42,221	44,107	45,995	47,883	49,772	51,657	53,547	55,436	57,323	59,211	61,100	62,985	64,875	66,762	68,649	1,889	
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	19.88	20.68	21.60	22.52	23.45	24.37	25.30	26.22	27.15	28.07	29.00	29.92	30.85	31.77	32.69	33.62	
Carrier Technician**	20.30	21.11	22.05	23.00	23.94	24.89	25.83	26.77	27.72	28.66	29.61	30.55	31.49	32.44	33.38	34.32	
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	19.88	20.77	21.66	22.55	23.44	24.32	25.21	26.10	26.99	27.88	28.77	29.66	30.55	31.44	32.33		
Carrier Technician**	20.30	21.21	22.11	23.02	23.93	24.84	25.74	26.65	27.56	28.47	29.38	30.28	31.19	32.10	33.00		
Percent Step O																	
	61.50%	64.25%	67.00%	69.75%	72.50%	75.25%	78.00%	80.75%	83.50%	86.25%	89.00%	91.75%	94.50%	97.25%	100.00%		
Step Increase Waiting Periods (In Weeks)																	
Steps (From-To)	AA-A	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	YRS.	
	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	12.4	

\*\* Carrier Technicians receive an additional 2.1%

**Table 3: City Carrier Assistant Schedule**

**Hourly Rates**

**RSC Q4 (NALC)**

This schedule applies to CCA Hires with no previous TE service.

	CC	BB	AA
City Carrier (Grade 2)	18.01	18.51	19.01
Carrier Technician (add 2.1%)	18.39	18.90	19.41
Steps (From-To) in weeks	CC-BB	BB-AA	
	12	40	

This schedule applies to CCA Hires with previous TE service after Sept. 29, 2007, who were on the rolls as of Jan. 10, 2013.

	CC	BB	AA
City Carrier (Grade 2)	19.50	20.00	20.50
Carrier Technician (add 2.1%)	19.91	20.42	20.93
Steps (From-To) in weeks	CC-BB	BB-AA	
	12	40	

NOTE: Effective June 19, 2021, the Step CC pay rate in Table Three will be eliminated. Step BB and its pay rate will become the new entry step for new CCA hires. The new waiting period from Step BB to Step AA will be 52 weeks.

## LETTER CARRIER THUNDERSTORM SAFETY

Letter Carriers experience a significant risk for illness and injury due to several warm season weather hazards. This article will discuss letter carrier safety during thunderstorms, a common warm season occurrence. Although thunderstorms can occur anytime, day or night, they are most common during the afternoon and early evening hours when letter carriers are still delivering mail.

Much of Southern Michigan experiences an average of about 40 days per year with thunderstorms, with about 90% of these occurring from March through October. Here in Michigan, thunderstorms usually approach from a west or southwest direction. However, they can and do come from any direction, or they can develop directly overhead. Letter carriers should always be aware of developing or approaching weather hazards. Situational awareness is always the single most important aspect of letter carrier safety.

Warm air and moisture are the fuel that creates and powers thunderstorms. As air rises it cools and the moisture within the air condenses into visible liquid water droplets or ice crystals that we see as clouds. The condensation of water vapor into liquid cloud droplets releases heat and keeps the process going. If the atmosphere is at least somewhat unstable (it has become more buoyant, and air is lifted more easily) the resulting cloud will often tower several miles into the sky. This is the classic cumulonimbus or thunderhead cloud, often observed on spring and summer afternoons. The rising air and transfer of heat that is the impetus for thunderstorms is a large-scale version of the same process that creates popcorn, known as convection. In fact, summertime thunderstorms are often referred to as "popcorn" thunderstorms because of how they are formed, as the thunderstorm cloud seems to pop in the atmosphere.

Thunderstorms typically form as a single cell that consists of an updraft of rising air and a corresponding downdraft of sinking air. The thunderstorm downdraft is accompanied by rain and sometimes by strong winds and hail. Thunderstorms also

can form in clusters or in lines that extend for hundreds of miles. There is one particularly dangerous type of thunderstorm that is known as a supercell. These storms contain an area of rotation that is known as a mesocyclone. Supercells can be long lasting and always have a high risk of producing severe weather, including tornadoes.

The strong updrafts in thunderstorms can result in the formation of large hail, sometimes as large as golf balls or tennis balls. Hail of this size is not only very destructive, but it can cause serious injury to a letter carrier or anyone caught outdoors away from shelter. Large hail is also a clue that a storm is severe and has the potential to produce a tornado. The National Weather Service defines a storm as severe if it has winds of 58 mph or more, hail one inch in diameter or larger, or produces a funnel cloud or tornado.

### Lightning

By definition, all thunderstorms have lightning, otherwise they can't be called thunderstorms, since thunder is a direct result of lightning. There are two types of lightning: Cloud to cloud lightning, which is visually spectacular and can be a threat to aviation but is otherwise not harmful; and cloud to ground lightning, which is threat to any person, animal, or object on the surface of the earth. Lightning is actually a giant spark of electricity, but a potentially lethal spark. On average, lightning kills about 50 Americans each year, about 40% of them workers with outdoor occupations.

Cloud to ground lightning, the type that is dangerous for letter carriers, is caused by a buildup of opposing electrical charges on the ground and also within the clouds. When the resistance of the air is overcome, a circuit is completed and lightning results. There is an old saying that if you hear the thunder the lightning missed you. That may be true, but that does not mean that the next one will miss you. Letter carriers on park and loop walking routes or who are delivering to exposed outdoor cluster boxes should be particularly mindful of lightning hazards. Electrically active storms can produce as many 100 or more lightning discharges per minute.

Before cloud to ground lightning occurs, an



invisible channel of charged particles will flow upward from the earth and also downward from the thunderstorm cloud. When these channels meet, the charged particles move freely along the now completed circuit, creating the spark that we see as visible lightning. When you scuff your shoe on a carpeted surface and then touch a metal object, the spark that sometimes occurs is a miniature lightning bolt.

Lightning can and will occur in any part of a thunderstorm. Lightning can travel many miles from its point of origin and strike the earth even where the weather does not appear to be threatening and the sun is still shining. This is commonly known as a bolt from the blue. Many golf courses and public swimming areas use a "30-minute rule" where activities are not allowed to resume until 30 minutes after the last lightning flash is seen or thunder is heard.

The old rule of thumb about counting thousands to determine the distance of lightning from your location is reasonably accurate. Sound travels at a much slower rate than light does (about a mile every five seconds as opposed to 186,000 miles per second). Thus, by counting one thousand, two thousand etc. you can determine the approximate distance of lightning from you, as every five thousand counted will equate roughly to one mile.

## Knowing What (and What Not) To Do

During recent years, several United States letter carriers have been killed or seriously injured by lightning while delivering mail. But there are ways of minimizing the risk. During intense lightning it is best to seek shelter in a building or in an enclosed vehicle. Lightning frequently jumps from one object to another, and usually (but not always) seeks out the highest object in the immediate area. That is why it is dangerous to seek shelter under a tree. Fortunately, frequent, intense lightning typically does not last long at a given location.

Metal objects as well as water are good conductors of electricity. The metal body of most vehicles will channel lightning into the ground without harming the occupants. Contrary to myth, it is not the rubber tires that provide protection in a vehicle. It is sometimes possible to detect lightning up to 200 miles away, which will be heard as static on the A.M. radio band, especially if you are tuned to the low end

of the band (below 650 kHz). This can be a useful clue for knowing if thunderstorms are developing or moving into your region. Lightning is usually not detectable on the F.M. band, except as a clicking sound if it is close by.

If you feel your skin tingle or your hair start to stand on end, lightning may be about to strike. Crouch down with only your toes in contact with the ground, make yourself as small a target as possible and cover your head. Do not lie flat on the ground, because if lightning does strike your body will take the full electrical charge. A person that has been struck by lightning does not carry any residual electrical charge. Lightning deaths frequently occur because of cardiac arrest, and the prompt application of CPR can often revive a lightning strike victim.

Nearly all smartphones (both android and iPhones) have built in government alert capability. Be sure that government alerts are enabled on your phone. These alerts will typically include severe weather warnings for your area, especially tornado warnings. Additionally, there are numerous phone apps that will provide immediate notification of approaching or developing severe weather.

As with all aspects of safety, knowledge and planning is necessary to minimize the risks associated with outdoor environmental hazards. The most effective way of accomplishing this is by knowing in advance how to respond and to control a hazardous situation. Advance knowledge and clear thinking are your greatest assets when hazardous weather conditions or other environmental threats exist.

-- Joe Golonka

*NWS Skywarn Storm Spotter*

*Branch 2184 Trustee*

## 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**

## NALC Branch 2184 – Some Facts and Figures

Nearly 50% of Branch 2184's active letter carrier members began their work for the Postal Service within the past ten years. Many if not most are generally unaware of what their "union local" does or its storied history as we approach the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our NALC Charter, which will occur in November 2024. Our history will be further discussed as we get closer to that anniversary date. Meanwhile, in the interests of brevity here are some facts and figures about YOUR NALC Branch.

- Branch 2184 was officially chartered by the NALC National union to represent letter carriers in Dearborn, Michigan on November 25, 1924. The original charter, signed by then NALC National President Edward Gainor, is displayed at our Branch office, along with the charters of all former NALC Branches that have since merged with Branch 2184.
- Branch 2184's members courageously participated in the legendary postal strike in March 1970 that directly led to full collective bargaining rights for wages and benefits instead of having to beg Congress for a pay raise as was previously necessary. The strike signs carried and signed by our members are framed and proudly displayed in our meeting room.
- During the past 50 to 60 years, Branch 2184 entered into numerous voluntary mergers with smaller neighboring NALC Branches, most recently with Allen Park in 2020.
- Branch 2184 currently has just over 1300 active and retired members and is the official bargaining unit representative for all active Postal Service City Letter Carriers in 20 post office stations in Southeast Michigan.
- Branch 2184 is the second largest NALC Branch in Michigan.
- Branch 2184's members deliver mail in 29 cities and townships with a population of more than 850,000 people.
- Branch 2184's offices are wholly owned by the Branch and its members and sit on almost two

acres of property in Taylor, Michigan.

- In addition to our primary functions of day-to-day Contract enforcement and protecting the workplace rights of our members, Branch 2184 offers numerous other services and benefits to our membership, including assistance with retirement and injury compensation matters.

-- *Joe Golonka*  
*Branch 2184 Trustee*

## 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.

Thank you to **Angela Mink** (Dearborn Annex), **Lazandra Grimes** (Dearborn Main), **Joan Jordan** (Westland), **Kristie Nelson** (Plymouth), **Gary Macieczni** (Branch 1), **Joe Garcia** (Dearborn Annex), **Keith Benedict** (Taylor) for their donations.

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.

For CCAs looking to shop at the uniform bank, because of COVID-19 and to protect your health as well as the branch officer working, you have to give your sizes to your union steward. They will forward the sizes to the branch office, An officer will pick out a few items and get them to your steward so that they can give them to you.

Lets make our new members feel welcome.

For more information call

313-295-1640

## Contract Corner:

### Work Hour Limits and Pay Rates

Excessive letter carrier work hours are an ongoing problem in many Branch 2184-represented offices as well as throughout much of the United States. Contractual work rules and postal regulations, specifically Article 8, sections 5.F and 5.G of the NALC/USPS Collective Bargaining Agreement as well as the USPS Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) section 432.32, prescribe the daily and weekly work hour limits that apply to postal employees. Article 8, section 4 of the Contract defines premium (overtime) pay rates and their applicability for fulltime as well as parttime flexible career carriers, as well as for CCAs.

There unfortunately exists a great deal of misunderstanding and misinformation about work hour limits as well as pay rules, both within management and also within the letter carrier craft itself. These rules are made somewhat more complex by different thresholds of applicability, as they are governed several factors such as employee category.

### Daily Work Hour Limitations

The Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM) section 432.32 provides that: **Except as designated in labor agreements for bargaining unit employees or in emergency situations as determined by the postmaster general (or designee), employees may not be required to work more than 12 hours in 1 service day. In addition, the total hours of daily service, including scheduled workhours, overtime, and mealtime, may not be extended over a period longer than 12 consecutive hours. Postmasters and exempt employees are excluded from these provisions.**

The above language applies to all USPS employees, **career and non-career as well as full and part time.** However, there are TWO specific exceptions, both of which involve letter carriers that have signed the Overtime Desired List. In order to achieve the intent of Article 8 of the Contract, those on the Overtime Desired List (either the Regular or Work Assignment lists) can perform 12 hours of actual work plus a 30-minute lunch period in one ser-

vice day. Additionally, the 12-hour restriction does not apply to employees on the Overtime Desired list **in the month of December**, per Article 8, section 5.G.2 of the Contract. For those on the Work Assignment Overtime Desired list, any work in excess of 12 hours in December must be on their own assignment, not on other assignments.

### Weekly Work Hour Limitations

Weekly work hour limitations are somewhat more complex, with different limitations for fulltime employees and non-fulltime employees. In accordance with Article 8, section 5.G of the Contract, fulltime employees are limited to 60 hours in a service week. Moreover, the 60 hours includes all paid hours, including paid leave and holidays. The only exception with fulltime employees again involves those on the Overtime Desired List, who can work in excess of 60 hours in a service week in the month of December.

The 60-hour weekly limitation does not apply to PTFs or to non-career employees such as CCAs, who can be worked in excess of 60 hours in a service week any time of the year. However, the 12-hour daily limitation, which includes a 30-minute period for PTFs and CCAs, applies to these employees the entire year.

National Arbitrator Mittenthal's ruling in 1986 held that the 12 and 60-hour limits are absolutes – a fulltime employee may neither volunteer nor be required to work beyond these limits. Additionally, per a 1988 Memorandum of Understanding between the NALC and the USPS, the National parties agreed that excluding December, once a fulltime employee reaches 20 hours of overtime within a service week, the employee is no longer available for any additional overtime work. The National parties further agrees that a fulltime employee's tour of duty will be terminated whenever he or she reaches the 60<sup>th</sup> hour or work. When that occurs, the employee should be sent home but is still paid for the balance of his or her regular schedule that day.

A note of caution concerning the above work hour limitations. **In most instances, letter carriers are strongly advised NOT to disregard an instruction which violates these limitations.** Instead, un-

*(Continued on page 12)*

(Continued from page 11)

Contract Corner

less there is an imminent and provable threat to the carrier's health or safety, an instruction to work beyond these limits should be complied with, followed by a request to see your steward and the initiation of a grievance. The National parties have also established a remedy for violations of the 12 and 60-hour work limits. As long as a timely grievance is filed, fulltime employees will be compensated an additional premium of 50 percent of the base hourly straight time rate for hours worked beyond the 12 or 60-hour limitation.

### Pay Rates

Overtime work is defined in Article 8, section 4 of the Contract, which provides that overtime is paid at one and one-half (1½) times that base hourly rate. Overtime shall be paid to employees for work performed after eight (8) hours in any one service day or forty (40) hours in one service week. Penalty overtime pay is to be paid at two (2) times the base hourly straight time rate. Penalty overtime is not paid during the annual four week "exclusion period"

in December each year, as identified in the Postal Bulletin.

Per Article 8, section 4.D of the Contract, fulltime employees receive penalty pay (excluding December) in each of the following situations:

- Overtime worked on more than four of the employee's five scheduled days in a service week
- Work over 10 hours on a regularly scheduled day
- Work over 8 hours on a nonscheduled day
- Work over six days in a service week

Per Article 8, section 4.E of the Contract, part-time flexible employees (PTFs) as well as city carrier assistants (CCAs) will receive penalty overtime for all work in excess of ten (10) hours in a service day or fifty-six (56) hours in a service week.

Another note on premium pay: per Article 8, section 4.F, whenever two or more overtime or premium rates appear applicable to the same hour or hours worked by an employee, there shall be no pyramiding or adding together of such overtime or premium rates and only the higher of the employee's applicable rates shall apply. Of further note, night differential pay is added to overtime rates because it is not considered as "premium" pay.



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- Brookfield provides assistance for Conventions, Seminars, and Charity fund raising events!

**Contact Your Brookfield Representative!**

**Carl Ramsey**

**313-659-8827 (voice & text)**

Finally, because of repeated instances of wage theft committed by postal management by altering and falsifying employee clock rings and work hour records, ALL letter carriers should closely monitor their actual daily and weekly work hours for accuracy. You can check your daily clock rings on USPS Lite Blue or by using the NALC's workhour app, available to members. Discrepancies should be immediately reported your steward so that a timely investigation can be initiated.

-- Joe Golonka, Chairperson  
Branch 2184  
Contract Administration Unit



Flag  
Day  
June  
14th



May 31st



June 20th

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Kris Shaw

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- ✓ Lynn Taylor (R)
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✓ Check mark indicates you are signed up for automatic contributions.

R = Retired members.

Protect your job **"Give to the Letter Carrier Political Fund today!"**  
Call 313-295-1640

### LCPF Disclaimer

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"**

**Mothers Day**  
**May 9th 2021**



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**Attention: All Branch 2184 Members**

## **Special Meeting Notice**

In accordance with Article III, section 2 of Branch 2184's By-laws, Branch President Walter McGregory has called a special membership meeting for the specific and sole purpose of **conducting nominations** for Branch 2184 officers, station stewards, and convention delegates for the 2021-2023 term of office.

The meeting will take place outdoors on the Branch 2184 property on **Sunday, May 23, 2021 beginning at 2:00 p.m.**

Following nominations, an election for any contested positions will take place by mail ballot in the manner prescribed by Article V of Branch 2184's Bylaws.