

# Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

January/February 2010

# Branch 2184 Western Wayne County, MI National Association of Letter Carriers AFL - CIO

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#### **Office Hours:**

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

# Calendar Branch Meetings:

April 7th, 2010 May 5th, 2010 7:30 p.m. - Union Hall

#### **Retirees Meetings:**

April 14th, 2010 May 12th, 2010 12:30 p.m. - Union Hall

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# **President's Report**

#### **Tool Time?**

Judging by the amount of calls we are receiving here at the Branch office and the content of the calls it is becoming increasingly apparent that our members are becoming quite frustrated with the working conditions/environment they are facing on a daily basis. The issues we face as City Letter Carriers are almost identical from building to building, with some minor exceptions. MIARAP/COR issues, DOIS, GPS concerns, dignity and respect, harassment, pivot plans gone haywire, unchecked deemed desirable lists. All the usual suspects that are guaranteed to ruin your day – if you let them. While we will never be able to stop management outright from their daily routine of madness, we can identify the tactics used by them and utilize a strategy to counteract these management "tools". Yes I said "tools", the tricks of the trade given to supervisors to help them mismanage.

You see, the dirty little secret is that in and of themselves the aforementioned bag of management tricks means very little. Most informed carriers know it takes more then just a bag of tricks to fool them. In past issues of our Branch newsletter we have addressed some of these "tools" that management was attempting to use on them. Take for example, the use of "DOIS." We went over and reprinted the 2007 memorandum (M-01664) signed by the USPS and the NALC which clearly spelled out that it was nothing more then a "management tool for estimating a carrier's daily workload." The memorandum goes on to say that "DOIS projections are not the sole determinant of a carrier's leaving or return time, or daily workload." Furthermore, "such projections cannot be used as the sole basis for corrective action."

Let's do a quick review: we have this management tool that you are allowing to ruin your day? What should a carrier do? First, use the best tool you have at your disposal, which is the National Agreement. This gives you the contractual basis to stop management and their daily

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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 Editor ..... Leonard Zawisa Branch Scribe ...... Joe Golonka Web Site Design ...... Jim Hales Injury Compensation ...... Joe Golonka



*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		
Belleville	Bruce Prevost	
	Gregory Bodziak (alt)	
Dearborn (Main)	Darryl Clay	
	Jacqueline Wiggins	
Dearborn (Annex)		
	Roderick Lelental	
Dearborn (Teleford)		
Dearborn Heights		
Dundee		
Flat Rock		
Grosse Ile		
Inkster		
Lincoln Park		
M	· /	
Monroe		
Northville	Bridgette Sams Beth Maleszewski (alt)	
Plymouth		
1 Tymoutii		
	Patricia Linna (alt)	
Rockwood	· ,	
Taylor		
	Michele Szafran (alt)	
Temperance	Kari Guthrie	
Trenton	Casey Pennington	
	Anthony Conley	
Wayne	Walter McGregory	
Westland	Joan Hicks	
Canton	5	
Ypsilanti		
	Malcolm Muscato (alt)	

# **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

round of game playing. Of course, if you are willing to accept what management is telling you, then you do not complain about DOIS ruining your day. Every carrier should know by now that we have a negotiated casing standard and that has nothing to do with a management projection. If you cannot make your leaving time you must fill out and notify management on a form 3996, auxiliary assistance form. If you are told to curtail mail, use form 1571, for curtailed mail (another carrier tool).

So you say management just destroyed your route and the UNION and MIARAP let them? Well, let's take a closer look. Yes, at the national level the Union did agree to cooperate with management to develop a way to adjust routes during the recent great economic recession. Yes, they did agree to the use of COR, (Carrier Optimal Routing, a computer program). However, the trade off was the ability for the Union to be part of the process. While I am no fan of the current minor route adjustment process, I do understand the necessity for our Union to be part of this process. I also recognize the consequences that we as an organization could have faced had management acted alone. So with that being said, even if we did not have a COR program, and if the union were not involved management still could adjust the routes without any input from the carriers at all. I believe the results and dislocations faced by our members under that scenario would have left us in a far worse shape then we are today.

Route inspections and adjustments are never pleasant things (unless, of course, you are getting a route cut). In the past territory was shifted manually, without much thought given. This is exactly where we stand today in offices that have been "CORed." Letter carriers, just like in past inspections, have been moved from portions of their assignments that they have had for years. Unfortunately we do not own our routes; they are just our eight hour assignment for the day. This does

not make it any easier to accept, as nobody likes change.

If you have inherited territory from another carrier who might be a little more fleet of foot then yourself, you need not worry. The contract calls for the route to be adjusted to you and not you adjusted to it. What does this mean? Management cannot expect you to do the portion of the route that you inherited from another carrier at the same pace. There will have to be an evaluation and review period. The good news is you get to set your own pace and the numbers that are generated will be yours. The future adjustments you receive will be based on the time that you do your route in. So, if you have been a runner in the past this will give you a new territorial lease on life. If you so desire to keep running your assignment and skipping your breaks then so be it, welcome to your "runner's paradise." If however, you choose to act in a professional manner the next time they adjust routes, your time might reflect the need for a route cut. One of the pluses of the MIARAP agreement is that the carrier's own numbers are used to evaluate the route/assignment. The bad part is the use of the computer generated mapping program COR, which does not take into account the length of service a carrier might have or the type of delivery or territory that is being shifted. Safeguards negotiated by the National Union were included in the MIARAP agreement, which give carriers consultation rights, input, and provisions to help mitigate the changes to senior carriers. Consultations with carriers and the help that the district route adjustment teams provide are just one more tool available to us carriers.

"Deems Desirable," another tool used by management, is nothing more then electronic restricted sick leave, with the same requirements as restricted sick leave. This tool is often used to harass and intimidate, but a knowledgeable carrier would surely be able to see through this electronic threat. An appropriate grievance should be filed

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# **EVP's Report**

# WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE?

In the ever changing environment in which we work in it never ceases to amaze me as to how work gradually disappears and nobody ever notices what is going on around them. In particular, what ever happened to accountability when it comes to accountable mail?

There seems to be problems in some of our post offices that there is no one available (clerks) to check carriers in when they return from the field with accountable items. I know that the clerk craft is going through some difficult times and they are not responsible for management's action to eliminate or reduce their workload. It is management that fails to properly staff an installation to do the job that is required to do. This is one of those required duties.

Accountable Items are addressed in Handbook M-41 *City Carrier Duties and Responsibilities*, Section 26.

# Accountability Procedures 261.1 Acquiring Accountable Items

261.11 Accountable items are keys, postage due, customs duty, and special services mail.

261.12 Generally, carriers are required to call at the finance cage for accountable items. They may be called in groups by call of route numbers or by passing a paddle (see glossary for paddle system). At some offices, the items are delivered to the carrier at his/her case.

Procedures differ from office to office on how you receive your accountable items in the morning but we all sign the same Form 3867. This is the form that tells how many certified, registers, express mails and COD's that you are receiving from the clerk and you are now being held responsible for. This is also stated in the M-41 Handbook.



# 261.24 Accountable Mail Matter Received for Delivery

261.241 Check name and address on each article to determine if it is for an addressee who has moved or who lives on another route. If addressee has moved, supply the new address. If for another route, return article to clerk.

261.242 Verify registered number appearing on article with entry on Form 3867.

261.243 Sign (surname and initial) Form 3867 opposite entries if correct. Multiple entries may be bracketed and a single signature entered. *Individual responsibility is assumed by the carrier upon receipt.* 

After the carrier either delivers the item or leaves a notice, PS From 3849, they are still responsible for the item or proof of delivery, a signed PS From 3849. So when you return to the office you are to turn in your accountable items to the accountable cage. Here is where the problem starts, the carrier will come back from the field and there is no one to be found at the accountable cage to check you in and relieve you of your responsibility. Management is to see that there is a clerk there to perform this duty. This is stated in Handbook M-39, *Management of Delivery Services*.

# 127 Office Work When Carriers Return From Route

The carrier unit managers must observe and direct carrier activity when carriers return from the route. Observe such things as:

c. See that clerks are available to check in accountable items as efficiently and promptly as possible. So what is the carrier to do when this happens?

Wait till there is a clerk there to clear you and then ask for PS Form 3821 (Clearance Receipt) to clear you from your responsibility from that accountable item. The worst thing that you can do is leave the item in an unsecured place or just leave it by the accountable cage for the clerks to get around to it whenever they can. By doing this you have now entrusted the clerk and or manager to do the right

(Continued from page 4)

**EVP Report** 

thing and relieve you from your responsibility of that item. If this item comes up missing I'm sure that management will excuse you from any responsibility and take full blame for the missing item. If you believe that then you might believe the Detroit Lions are close to winning a Super Bowl.

Now you might be thinking, I don't have time to wait for a clerk to clear me, I got to get out of here, and just drop the items at the accountable cage window and leave. There are two problems with this thinking: 1) You are still responsible for that item until you are cleared and if it comes up missing you will be held responsible and will leave yourself open for disciplinary action up to a removal. 2) By not waiting to get cleared you are saving the Postal Service a lot of money and time. This in turn will affect work hours that have now disappeared whether in the clerk craft or carrier craft. This goes back to what I said earlier how work will gradually disappear and you won't even notice it.

Grievances are being filed to address this issue but it is ultimately up to the carrier to wait to get cleared and not leave themselves open for discipline. Management will always look to cut corners and do things that will eliminate work hours and this is one of them. This is about being accountable and we all know how management deals with accountability, they point the finger everywhere else but at themselves. So as professional letter carriers be accountable for yourselves and get cleared for the items that you took responsibility for when you signed your name to them.

Do you want to be held accountable for management's actions or lack of?

-- Jim Wolstencroft Executive Vice President



# **Contract Corner:**

Q: I am on the Work Assignment Overtime Desired List. Management is keeping me to 8 hours and giving work from my route to light duty carriers as well as PTFs and TEs. Aren't I entitled to all overtime work on my route?

A: No, you are not. In fact, no USPS employee is "entitled" to ANY overtime work, period. Overtime work does not even exist unless management first chooses to assign it. WHEN management chooses to assign overtime, then the negotiated work rules defined in Article 8 of the Contract must be applied. However, the decision to even utilize overtime is theirs to begin with. Regarding the specific situation of a Work Assignment Overtime Desired List carrier, he/she not "entitled" to work overtime on their regular assignment if management chooses instead to assign this work to a PTF or TE, even for overtime. Management can also choose to assign this work to a light or limited duty carrier at the straight time rate, if the injured employee's medical restrictions allow them to perform this work. Management is, however, contractually prohibited from using a letter carrier on the regular Overtime Desired List to perform overtime work that a work assignment carrier is available to perform on his/her own assignment at the regular overtime rate

Q: I have a mounted (curbline) route. Management told me that if the mailboxes are blocked, such as by cars or by snow, that I must get out of the vehicle and attempt delivery. right?

A: Many letter carriers commonly misbelieve that they can arbitrarily withhold delivery to any curbline mailbox that is temporarily blocked. In fact, we are required to attempt to deliver the mail, as long as this can safely be done. As always, the sole determination of what is safe rests with the letter

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# **QUOTES:**

Accomplishing the impossible means only that the boss will add it to your regular duties

-- Doug Larson

If we keep them busy doing it right it will leave little time for them to do us wrong.

-- Anonymous

People forget how fast you did your job - but remember how well you did it.

-- Howard Newton

Downsizing means you're about to become a guest of honor at a going-away party.

-- Robert Benchley

People who work sitting down get paid more than people who work standing up.

-- Ogden Nash

I promise you this: There will not be one letter carrier laid off from the postal service.

--Vince Sombrotto

Only a fool would try to deprive working men and working women of their right to join the union of their choice.

-- Dwight D. Eisenhower

Every advance in this half-century-Social Security, civil rights, Medicare, aid to education, one after another-came with the support and leadership of American Labor.

-- Jimmy Carter

# 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)

(Continued from page 3)

**Presidents Report** 

even before it becomes an issue. Oh yes: I said "file a grievance," yet another tool for carriers to use.

GPS, or the use of Global Positioning Satellite, is relatively new to our Branch and is not yet widespread. Like any of the other management tools discussed here, it is our position that GPS information may not be used as the sole basis for discipline.

The whole point of this article has been to reinforce what you all should already know: for every tool that management has, your Union and the National Agreement address and afford carriers protection from management's wholesale abuses. The Union's goal is to get our members to use these available contractual "tools". When used properly they can help minimize tense working conditions, and serve as a pressure relief valve from actual or perceived management abuses. In short, if we fail to stick together and allow management to turn us against one another, we will fall into management's trap and just become another tool!

-- Mark Judd President

# Attend Your Branch Meetings

First Wednesday of the Month 7:30 p.m. at the Branch Hall Retirees Second Wednesday of the Month at 12:30

6969 Monroe Taylor, Michigan

# **Branch 2184 Web Site**

Visit our web site for:

2009 Picnic Pictures **OWCP Forms** 

Online NALC "FMLA" forms

**Steward Resources** 

"2009 MRS"

"2009 JCAM"

# www.nalc2184.org

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

# **Customer Connect**

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

Charlene Boyd (Wayne) - \$2,000.00 Rosie Hoskins (Plymouth) - \$2,000.00 Dana Kiser (Monroe) \$20,000.00 Christina Younglove (Monroe) - \$12,000.00 Chartrina Gensler (Ypsilanti) - \$6,000.00 Jim Crossey (Plymouth) \$832,000.00 Jim Crossey (Plymouth) \$200,000.00

Through Customer Connect, letter carriers are taking advantage of their special relationships to encourage business customers to use USPS instead of private delivery services. Since the startup in mid-2003, letter carriers have generated more than \$805 million in new revenue.



Serving the Postal Industry for Over 40 Years

# **Support the Company that Supports Letter Carriers**

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

# **Contact Your Brookfield Representative!** Robert Kreager

**Branch 2184 Retired** 

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

# **Contract Corner:**

(Continued from page 5)

carrier. From the Postal Operations Manual (POM), section 632.14 – Approach to Mailbox: "Where the approach to the mail receptacle located at the curb is temporarily blocked by a parked vehicle during normal delivery hours for the area, or snow or ice hampers the approach to the mailbox, the carrier normally dismounts to make delivery. If the carrier continually experiences a problem in serving curbline boxes and where the customer is able to control parking in front of his or her mailbox but does not take prompt corrective action after being properly notified, the postmaster may, with the approval of the district manager, withdraw delivery service."

The preceding language clearly conveys upon management the authority to withdraw delivery service where the problem is continual in nature. However, in the instance of a mailbox that is temporarily blocked, letter carriers are indeed required to *attempt delivery*. Of note, if delivery is attempted and cannot be made because of the safety issues, the carrier should always complete forms 1571 (report of curtailed mail) and 1767 (report of safety hazard) upon returning from the street that day.

# Q: I called in sick the day before a holiday. Management told me that I would not be paid for the holiday because I did not come in the day before. Were they right?

**A:** No, they were not right, and management frequently misinforms employees about this issue. Article 11, section 2 of the Contract addresses this matter. To be eligible for holiday pay, a fulltime employee must merely be in a *pay status* (not necessarily working) on *either* the employee's last scheduled hour before *or* the first scheduled hour after the holiday. The fact that an employee in this instance "did not come in" on the day before the

holiday is irrelevant, as long as he/she was in a pay status, which includes the use of sick or annual leave. However, if an employee is in a leave without pay (LWOP) status on both their last scheduled hour before *and* their first scheduled hour after a holiday, then – and only then – will they forfeit eligibility for holiday pay.

# Q: I am a T-6 carrier who signed the regular Overtime Desired List. When I am called in on my nonscheduled day, am I entitled to work on a vacant route on my swing?

A T-6 has no such entitlement when working their NS day. If there is an opening on a T-6's regular string of routes (a sick call or other absence), management certainly may choose to assign the T-6 to that route. However, this is not required, nor can the T-6 demand to be placed on the open route. The T-6 in this situation is "extra" and can be assigned to do any available letter carrier work. There is no requirement of or entitlement to any specific assignment in this situation. The Branch 2184 Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMU) provisions (Item #21, section 4) regarding the assignment of a T-6 when a regular carrier is called into work on an NS day are not applicable when it is the T-6 who is called in on an NS day. Of course, any fulltime regular carrier called in on their NS day, including a T-6, is subject to the reporting pay guarantee of 8 hours at the overtime rate, regardless where the work is performed.



#### g

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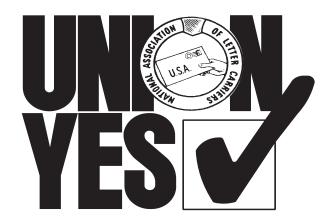
9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday

9 a.m. - 7 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m. - Noon, Saturday

> 24559 Van Born Road Taylor, MI 48180 (313) 292-7422

# **Calendar of Events**

Branch Meeting April 7th at 7:30
Branch Meeting May 5th at 7:30
Branch Meeting June 2nd at 7:30
Retirees Meeting April 14th at 12:30
Retirees Meeting May 12th at 12:30
Retirees Meeting June 9th at 12:30
0. 136 36 1.04 7.00
Steward Meeting March 9th at 7:00
Steward Meeting March 9th at 7:00 Steward Meeting March 22nd at 7:00
Steward Meeting March 22nd at 7:00
Steward Meeting March 22nd at 7:00 Steward Meeting April 13th at 7:00



### **SPORT YOUR BRANCH 2184 PRIDE**

American made garments with the Branch 2184 logo are now available on-line! Visit **theembroideryshoppe.com**. Navigate to the on-line catalog and click on the Branch 2184 logo. There you can view and make your product selections. (Our logo is listed as NALC Branch 2184). Or you can place an order through the Branch.

Call us at 313-295-1640

# 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 Swinteck

# **Dearborn Heights**

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

#### Flat Rock

✓ Amy Degrand

# **Grosse Isle**

✓ Kimberly Bumbul

✓ John Nellis

# Inkster

Thad Dillard\*\*

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- ✓ Roy McMahan

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- **✓** Paula Hall
- ✓ Scott Watts

### **Monroe**

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- ✓ Kenneth Masserant
  - ✔ Erik Venzke

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✓ 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

# <u>Wayne</u>

- ✓ Walter McGregory
  - ✓ 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
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- William Mason\*\*
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- ✓ Gino Stellabuto
- ✓ Henry Strange
- ✓ Cathy Tondreau
- ✓ Cindy Trzeciak
- ✓ Margaret Zywicki
- ✓ Leonard Zawisa

Protect your job "Join COLCPE today!" Call 313-295-1640

- ✓ Check mark indicates you are signed up for automatic COLCPE contributions.
- \*\* Double Asterisk Please contact the Union office. Our records indicates that your yearly check contribution has expired. Renew your commitment to the Committee On Letter Carriers Political Education (COLCPE).





# **STAMP OUT HUNGER 2010**

The 18<sup>th</sup> Annual NALC National Food Drive is on Saturday, May 8, 2010. It is anticipated that in this year's Food Drive we will bring the total for food donations delivered to local food banks and pantries across the country to over 1 BILLION POUNDS since the drive began in 1993! We would like to thank all of our members in advance for their efforts in this milestone year to once again help the NALC Stamp Out Hunger.

#### LOCAL FOOD DRIVE COORDINATORS

A planning meeting for local Food Drive Coordinators is being scheduled for mid-March, there we will plan strategies for promoting the drive, and distribute information.

Look for a letter with dates and times in early

-- Cathy Tondreau and Cindy Trzeciak Branch Food Drive Coordinators

# 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

March 14th

Daylight Savings



# **Allie Brothers Uniform Store**

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# **Streetwise**

In the previous issue of the "Speaks" I included an update concerning the ongoing USPS debacle known as the National Reassessment Process (NRP). Even prior to the advent of the NRP, a job-related injury or medical condition was a most undesired occurrence for any letter carrier, and it is now even more so. Although there can be no absolute guarantee of avoiding injury while performing letter carrier duties, there is *much* that you can do to minimize your risk.

The first and most important thing to always keep in mind is that YOU alone must choose to always work in a manner that allows you to respond to and effectively control most work hazards. Your supervisor might occasionally read a safety talk or babble on about some inane "safety contest". However, he or she actually couldn't care less about your safety or personal well being. Numbers-obsessed postal management worships only at the altar of DOIS, and thus results the inevitable question of speed versus safety. With increased speed we often sacrifice both efficiency and safety, no matter how much your supervisor might claim otherwise. They can't have it both ways and so management merely chooses to ignore the consequences. Unlike your supervisor, you actually have a real job.

In this age of automated mail processing and repeated MIARAP adjustments, the street portion of all routes continues to increase. Because of the hazards encountered while delivering mail, more than 90% of all letter carrier injuries take place while we are on street time. No matter what type of route you are doing, there are only two ways to deliver mail. The first is to work under control at all times, and the second is to not allow your supervisor to push you into working out of control. It is up to you to work in a safe manner no matter what your individual pace may be. On park and loop routes, this means always being aware of your surroundings, meaning dogs, cars, ice and snow, steps, and every other hazard found outdoors. Work and walk with your head up, and always at a pace where you can stop, turn, or take other evasive action without losing your balance. On curb line routes, this means never, never, touching a piece of mail while the vehicle is in motion.

So always keep it simple, because it is. There simply are no established letter carrier street standards. Always work under control! Don't be another statistic. The injury you prevent and the job you save *will* be your own.

-- Joe Golonka Branch 2184 Injury Comp Specialist

