



Branch 2184 ... "Speaks"

Official Publication of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO

November/December 2019

President's Report

Consolidated Casing Update

With the last of the branch route inspections finally wrapped up we are now in the process of requesting and analyzing the route inspection data from all the affected offices. The stewards in those offices are preparing to file the necessary grievances and are working closely with Branch route inspection Dave Reise. There is only one small item left remaining to cover before the year ends and unfortunately our branch is a part of it consolidated casing. This initiative has been launched by our employer nationwide and has been scheduled to roll out in phases. Consolidated casing has or will affect numerous offices in our district and our own Lincoln Park office is scheduled to be one of them. Back in October the Postal Service informed NALC Headquarters that they would be suspending implementation of any new offices until next year. Now for a little background and where we currently stand. In September the NALC filed a lawsuit against the Postal Service over the Consolidated Casing Initiative issue, the suit asked the court to issue an injunction stopping the USPS from continuing to test consolidated casing until the NALC's pending national level grievance is resolved by an arbitrator. The NALC legal counsel argued the testing was causing the carriers to suffer irreparable harm. On November 6th, the U.S. District Court in Washington D.C. issued a decision dismissing the NALC's lawsuit to halt the Consolidated Casing Initiative. U.S. District Judge Boasberg said the court lacked the jurisdiction to issue the preliminary injunction requested by the NALC. The court in its ruling concluded that a preliminary injunction was not warranted because the arbitrator would have the authority to find the consolidated casing initiative violates the National Agreement. (The arbitration is presently scheduled to begin November 22). So, where does that leave Lincoln Park? Still waiting unfortunately for either an arbitrator to decide the fate of consolidated casing or being scheduled to roll out in phase three sometime early next year. In that regard I have been in contact with the NBA's office and RAA David Mudd, we have set up a date for the Carriers in Lincoln Park to come to the Branch hall for a meeting to discuss consolidated casing the date selected is January 16, at 6:30 pm. As we get closer to the date, we will put up the

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Branch 2184

Western Wayne County, MI
National Association
of Letter Carriers

AFL - CIO

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Web Site www.nalc2184.org

Office Hours:

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Monday through Friday

Calendar

Branch Meetings:

Christmas Meeting

December 4th, 2019

(7:30 p.m. - Union Hall)

Retirees Meetings:

Christmas Meeting

December 11th, 2019

(12:30 p.m. - Union Hall)

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Vice President	Joe Golonka
Recording Secretary	Jacqueline Gregory
Financial Secretary Treas	Cathy Tondreau
Sergeant at Arms	Scott Watts
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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.....	Bryon Hendricks
.....	Greg Bodziak (alt)
Dearborn (Main)	Darryl Clay
.....	Symone Coleman
.....	Yvonne Jackson (alt)
.....	Mark Spight (alt)
Dearborn (Annex)	Melvin MacDonald
.....	Jacqueline Gregory
.....	Rose Miller (alt)
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Dearborn Heights	Denise Viola
Dundee.....	313-295-1640
Flat Rock.....	Lillian Bogosian
Grosse Ile	Christopher Biegalski
.....	Kim Bumbul (alt)
.....	Gloria Warthen (alt)
Inkster	Phil Ashford
.....	Thad Dillard (alt)
.....	Scherrie Lacey (alt)
.....	Robert Clark (alt)
Lincoln Park.....	Scott Watts
.....	Dave Reise (alt)
Monroe.....	Joshua Nagy (alt)
Northville	Valerie Watkins
.....	Beth Bays (alt)
.....	Jennifer Rake (alt)
Plymouth.....	Tamara Bosman
.....	Diego Forshaw
.....	Kristie Nelson (alt)
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.....	Ananias Epps (alt)
Canton.....	Ramon Robinson
.....	John Hite
.....	Lois Fritz (alt)
.....	Tyler Haverstick (alt)
Ypsilanti.....	Paul Bordine
.....	Mike Tredway
.....	Danita Smith (alt)
.....	Alan Grajczyk (alt)
.....	Rick Rider (alt)

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necessary posting reminding the carriers in Lincoln Park until then stay tuned.

Congratulations Councilman Jackson!

On November 5th, Dearborn main office letter carrier Joe Jackson was elected to the city council in Melvindale. Brother Jackson was the top vote getter in the field of ten who ran for the office. Joe is a father of four and a proud veteran of the United States Marine Corps. Councilman elect Jackson has been a letter carrier at the Dearborn main for 18 years. On behalf of the Branch we would like to congratulate Brother Joe "The Mailman" Jackson for his outstanding achievement for being elected to the Melvindale City Council!

Dates to Remember

On Thursday November 6th the membership of Allen Park Branch 4779 voted to merge with Branch 2184. Our branch will be voting at the January 8th Branch membership meeting. (For more information see the merger proposal enclosed in this edition of the "Speaks").

This year's federal health benefit open season runs from November 11 thru December 9, 2019. You still have time to compare health plans. And while you're at it don't forget to compare the plan you own as a NALC union member the NALC Health Benefit Plan, against the others and see how they stack up. You will might be surprised after all your family deserve to have a plan that Delivers for You! For plan comparisons visit www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/plan-information/.

Penalty Overtime Exclusion for this year begins Pay Period 25-19, Week 2 (November 30, 2019) and ends Pay Period 01-20, Week 1 (December 27, 2019).

Happy Holidays!

As another busy year comes to a close on behalf of the Officers and Stewards here at the Branch, I wish you and your families the happiest of holidays and a safe, healthy and prosperous New Year!

-- *Mark Judd*
President

EVP's Report

Penalty Overtime Exclusion Period

As referenced in Article 8, sections 4 and 5, of the USPS-NALC national agreement, the Penalty Overtime Exclusion period this year begins pay period 25-19, week 2 (November 30, 2019) and ends week 1 (December 27, 2019).

Stewards need to watch and make sure that the possible daily overtime violations are enforced properly as it relates to the article 8 ten-hour mandate versus the 12-hour article 8 mandate.

CCA Uniform Bank

The temperatures have started to drop as the winter months are upon us now in Michigan. Please remember to donate your slightly used uniforms and winter gear to the union hall so that we keep the uniform bank stocked for fellow CCA brothers and sisters who need the uniforms and winter gear. You can bring your donation into your office and give to your shop steward. He/she will make sure the donation makes it to the union hall. You will receive recognition in the next newsletter for your donation.

2019 Open Season Dates

The 2019 FEHB (Federal Employee Health Benefit) dates are November 11 through Monday, December 9, 2019. If you want to make any changes to your benefits, you must do it within this timeframe. The effective date of for any changes or new enrollment you make will be January 1, 2020.

If you're not signed up already for the NALC Health Benefit Plan, you should take a moment and do a price comparison with other Health Plans for you and your family. You can go to OPM.GOV/healthcare-insurance/compare.

The NALC Health Benefit Plan is a plan that is owned by letter carriers and administered by letter carriers. Every year there are changes that are made to the plan that offer more benefits to our members and their family members, all for the reasonable premiums that our health benefit plan charges. Take the time and do the research to make sure that the NALC Health Benefit Plan fits exactly what you and your

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family needs.

You can download information about the NALC Health Benefit Plan at nalchbp.org. To join the NALC Health Benefit Plan, you must be eligible for FEHB benefits and be a member of NALC. For current Active Letter Carriers, you have four ways to enroll in the plan:

<https://liteblue.usps.gov> (You must have your EIN# (Employee Identification Number), and USPS Pin #

The Blue Page (Intranet) at work

Employee Self-Service Kiosks at some USPS facilities

PostalEASE by telephone – Call 877 - 477-3273 Option 1

Retirees and Annuitants can sign up by calling Employee Express at 800-332-9798, by going to OPM's Open Season website at retirefehb.opm.gov

In summary, I encourage you to take the time to compare health plans and consider the NALC Health Benefit Plan if it works for you and your family. Sign up for a year and if you and your family are not satisfied, you can always choose another plan next Open Season.

Consolidated Casing Update

Over 230 post offices nationwide are scheduled to be test sites for this process, the postal service reported to NALC earlier this year. Phase 1 began in May 2019, Phase 2 began in June 2019, and Phase 3 began in August of 2019.

Under this test, letter carriers are either "casing multiple routes" (Casars) or "delivering on the street for 7 hours and 45 minutes" (Streeters).

NALC filed a lawsuit against the Postal Service on August 29, 2019 in the federal district court in Washington D.C. The suit asked the court to issue an injunction stopping the Postal Service from continuing its Consolidated Casing Initiative until NALC's pending national level grievance is resolved.

On November 06, 2019, U.S. District Judge James E. Boasberg issued his decision which stated

that the court lacked jurisdiction to issue the preliminary injunction that NALC requested, which would have halted the Initiative pending the outcome of the national-level arbitration. The arbitration is presently scheduled to begin November 22, before national arbitrator Shyam Das.

"The court reasoned that a preliminary injunction halting an employer action pending arbitration is only warranted when the employer's action would render the arbitration meaningless. The court concluded that a preliminary injunction was not warranted here because Arbitrator Das will have the authority (if he rules for NALC) to find that the Consolidated Casing Initiative violates the National Agreement and to order USPS to end it."

So, this wasn't a total loss for us as carriers. The judge just said that National Arbitrator Das will render a decision for the parties and not a judge.

In the meantime, NALC has committed to the membership by having an "Observer" (a trained NALC Union Official) to take notes every day that Consolidated Casing is continuing in offices around the country. These observers, such as me, take notes on the daily violations that are occurring and then forward our reports to NALC Headquarters, regional offices, and local unions weekly. The local branches file the appropriate grievances based on the reports that are sent in by the NALC Observers.

We will keep you in the loop when there are any additional updates regarding this issue. Happy Holidays from my family to yours,

In Unionism,
-- Walt McGregory
Executive Vice President

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

VP's Report

A Fair Day's Work for a Fair Day's Pay?

A basic workplace principle that is applicable in all forms of employment is the time-honored adage "A Fair Day's Work for a Fair Day's Pay." In fact, these exact words appear at the beginning of Article 34 of the NALC/USPS Collective Bargaining Agreement to signify that they are recognized by all parties to the Agreement – the NALC as well as USPS management. This is all well and good, but what specifically constitutes a fair day's work for a fair day's pay?

The literal answer to that question is quite straightforward. There exists a basic and twofold expectation that first, an employee should provide a reasonable and honest effort while performing their assigned duties, and second, in return the Postal Service should fairly and honestly compensate the employee for their work. It sounds so easy, right? Shouldn't workplace peace, love, and happiness easily be found, merely by applying that simple formula?

Unfortunately, that is not at all the case, because that "simple formula" is anything but simple in the real world of the workplace, and especially so in the Postal Service. This is because USPS management is actually not at all interested in the principle of a fair day's work from craft employees, and especially letter carriers. Instead, the Postal Service wants more, and thus it fosters a culture and a core philosophy of antagonism and disrespect, of deceit and intimidation, and of cheating and outright stealing from its employees in ways that are both subtle as well as direct.

A One-Sided Relationship

For the vast majority of letter carriers, the principle of a fair day's work in return for a paycheck is not even a matter for thought, much less analysis. Rather, it is simply a way of life. Letter carriers in the United States are by far the most productive and efficient delivery service employees to be found anywhere in the world. Committed and efficient work, consistent and respectful customer service, and dedication to the job itself is second nature to nearly all of America's letter carriers. Because of this, the American people love their letter carriers, who the

very reason that the Postal Service itself is consistently the most highly rated public agency in the United States.

In return, the honesty and integrity that is consistently exhibited by USPS letter carriers in their daily work is all too often responded to with flagrant dishonesty and a disregard of integrity by postal management. Letter carriers will instinctively find the best and most efficient manner to perform any aspect of the job. Such is human nature; who wants to make their own work even more difficult? Yet, rather than letting productive letter carriers do what they do best, postal management creates and nourishes a childish and dehumanizing workplace environment that is ridiculously micromanaged and relies on numbers-driven deceit and intimidation instead of respect and cooperation.

The obvious question follows. Just why is postal management so obsessed with micromanaging a straightforward job that actually requires little if any direct supervision? The answer is just as obvious, and it is the key to understanding what this is really all about. Letter carriers have real and very necessary jobs. Most of those in Postal management do not.

Ignoring the Elephant in the Room

Unfortunately, in the near term there is little if any chance of a substantive change in this unhealthy workplace dynamic. The NALC has long sought to actively and forthrightly partner with postal management to achieve a badly needed and wholesale re-vamping of the disrespectful workplace culture. However, decades have come and gone, and all the happy talk about a respectful and cooperative work environment on the part of postal management has been fully exposed as pathetic and insincere BS, as it always was to begin with.

In a labor-intensive organization such as the Postal Service there is very little legitimate need for supervisory personnel to begin with, except to perform some administrative and scheduling tasks. Nearly every USPS craft level job can be and should be entirely or mostly be self-directed. There simply is no valid reason for endless layers of useless management personnel as well as the ridiculous lev-

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els of micromanagement that exists with city letter carriers. And that is the "elephant in the room" that everyone knows is there but that is largely ignored. The Postal Service is bloated with tens of thousands of management "jobs" that simply aren't needed and can't otherwise be justified.

We ARE the Postal Service

Thus, while letter carriers continue to serve the American public day in and day out, providing a fair day's work (and more) for their wages, USPS management consistently violates our labor contract, commits fraud by falsifying clock rings and other workplace data while stealing hard earned wages from letter carriers, promotes and rewards abusive management behavior, retaliates against letter carriers that sustain on the job injuries, and fosters a workplace environment of disrespect and intimidation. The sad irony is that the Postal Service could not even exist without the work and dedication of its letter carriers, whereas it could easily exist and even thrive without most of its management personnel.

The Postal Service has many problems, some of them caused by external political enemies, and some of them caused by its own refusal to aggressively compete and adjust in a competitive 21st Century delivery environment. But ultimately, even if and when these issues are successfully addressed, the USPS could still be doomed unless it seriously addresses and completely revamps its utterly failed management model.

A company that relies on a top heavy and authoritarian, arrogant, and disrespectful mode of leadership can never truly succeed. In contrast, a company that allows its greatest asset, its workers, to do what they do best without constant interference from hordes of useless and self-important management employees will not only succeed, but it will outshine its competitors, every time.

-- Joe Golonka
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.

**Remember the magic words --
"I WANT TO SEE MY STEWARD"**

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 **Rajit Sandhu** (Canton), **Kim Pinkston** (Wayne), **Barbara Scaggs** (Lincoln Park Retired), **Joann Bomia** (Dearborn Annex Retired), **Dave Rowland** (Ypsilanti), **Edith Tertzakian** (Retired Westland) and **Michael Harvey** (Dearborn Annex) for their donations.

CCAs please call prior to coming in so that we can make sure someone is available to assist you.

Lets make our new members feel welcome.

For more information call
313-295-1640

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NALC - Region 6 National Business Agent November 2019 Report

Brothers and Sisters,

Our office often receives calls from members complaining of harassment by a supervisor or manager. I don't mean to diminish someone's legitimate complaint regarding an abusive supervisor but... constantly throwing the word "harassment" around can water down the true meaning. Harassment is a very serious charge and should only be used when we can prove either by clear and convincing evidence or, in some cases, with overwhelming circumstantial evidence, that a postal manager has crossed that proverbial line.

Let's be clear, management has the right to supervise employees. The *way* they supervise can be the issue with some postal employees. Threats of discipline, coercion, yelling, invading personal space to intimidate and acts of bullying cannot be tolerated and should be grieved as a *violation of the Joint Statement of Violence and Behavior in the Workplace* memo.

Should you contact your District's *Threat Assessment Team* on the acts of a supervisor or manager? I would say no. Why? These district teams are made up of managers. Do you think a manager would implicate another manager? Only in extremely rare cases would they do so. Our tool is the grievance process. We have highly trained stewards throughout our region that can assist or file properly documented grievances regarding the violation of the Joint Statement memo.

Just because management is enforcing the uniform policy or decided to conduct daily street observations does not necessarily violate the Joint Statement memo. Again, they, management, have the right to supervise employees.

If you have any issues with the way your supervisor and manager are conducting themselves, please contact your shop steward first to let them know what is happening. Be prepared to write a detailed statement on management's actions. If their treatment escalates to having effects on your wellbeing, contact EAP (at 1-800-EAP4You) or your per-

sonal family physician. If you need to contact a professional for your health, you should state such in your personal statement you write for your steward.

Stewards-if you are having constant issues with an individual manager or supervisor, I ask that you make your local branch officials aware of the situation(s). Your branch officials will take the appropriate measures to intervene and/or provide assistance.

2019 KIM Training. Our annual regional training has come and gone. This year we had 455 union members to participate from Kentucky, Indiana and Michigan-one of our largest turnouts ever. It takes a tremendous effort to coordinate such a large instructional seminar. Our office cannot do this alone. Although both David and Kyle did a tremendous amount of the work, in no way were they alone. A special thanks to the following contributors: Robbie Gardiner, Paul Gillie, Michele Szafran, Tom Froreich, Walt McGregory, Jason Grubb, Ron Osborne, Pat Carroll, Mike Sheridan, Anita Lewallen, Misty Wenger, Matt Tanner, Don Karl, Mike Brim, Steve Amrhein, Nicole Wheatley, Joe Golonka and Anna Mudd.

Our members need to realize those who attended the training over the Columbus holiday weekend did so to be better prepared to represent their members within their branch. Giving up a holiday should not go unrecognized. I ask all who may read this article to please thank anyone who attended the training to better strengthen your local branch.

Not only did our members come together to broaden their skill sets but they also came together to show unwavering support for our national sponsored charity, the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Through raffles and a Muscle Walk, members helped raise \$10,170 for MDA over the weekend.

But MDA was not the only fund-raising effort that took place. Members also dug deep into their pockets at Monday's general session and helped raise over \$1400 for the NALC's Disaster Relief Foundation.

Not only were the participants at this year's regional training dedicated selfless contract enforce-

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ers, but they were also generous caring servants of our society. Thanks to all!

Veteran's Day. Once known as Armistice Day due to the signing of the treaty in 1918 to end World War I, this national holiday recognizes all who served honorably in the military both during war and peace.

I wish to take this opportunity to say "thanks" to all of you that have served and continue to serve in our country's military. You have won, and continue to guard, our freedom. You all are true heroes. **THANK YOU!**

In Solidarity,

-- Troy Clark

National Business Agent

Region 6 Kentucky - Indiana - Michigan (KIM)



Branch 2184 Web Site **www.nalc2184.org**

Retirement Information
CSRS & FERS Annuity Payments
Branch Calendar
"FMLA" forms
OWCP Information
Carrier Pay Chart
Online Forms 3971, 3996, 3189
CCA Information
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Retired Letter Carrier

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313-478-5910 (voice)

Working In The Dark – When Customer Service Meets Safety And Common Sense

Every year letter carriers in most parts of our nation must deal with the prospect of performing delivery duties in darkness or near-darkness for several months following the end of daylight savings time. Every year this results in some unique and serious safety concerns. Management wants the mail delivered, even while they create customer service problems by scheduling later letter carrier starting times, often due to cutbacks in mail processing facilities. In some instances, these problems are further magnified by the understaffing of letter carrier station complements.

Even more problems are created through unrealistic management expectations of letter carrier office and street performance, often based on inaccurate and incomplete computer data. In some offices, problems are still further compounded by management's unwillingness to assign overtime work in the contractually prescribed manner. The result of all of this: the earth still rotates, the sun still sets, and letter carriers are still out in the street after dark. Existing delivery hazards are magnified by poor visibility in darkness, and in some areas, there also is a serious threat to letter carrier safety due to potential criminal activity.

When it appears likely that assigned delivery duties will not be completed before darkness sets in, there should never be a blanket assumption that all delivery of mail is unsafe and therefore must immediately cease. There is NO contractual provision that precludes management from assigning letter carriers to deliver mail in other than daylight hours. Conversely, management should not ever assume that delivery of mail is always safe in every situation under these conditions. Safety is first and foremost a matter of judgment and the application of common sense. It is of no value to debate in advance whether a specific delivery circumstance or set of circumstances is or will be unsafe, even when we have every expectation that this will indeed be the case. Your supervisor may have a different expectation and neither is going to change the other's mind. So why quibble about it? The truth will manifest itself soon

enough.

If you believe that your assigned delivery duties will take you into darkness and that safety will then be a concern, simply inform your supervisor verbally of this well in advance (in the morning if possible). Be sure to complete form 3996 as usual when you are unable to perform all assigned duties within eight hours. If a supervisor responds with an unrealistic assessment of your workload, don't argue or debate the issue. Merely respond that you will do the best that you can and reiterate that you have a safety concern about making deliveries in darkness.

Important: DO NOT ever inform management that you are *refusing* to work in the dark. Later, when it becomes apparent that your own assessment of your workload was correct, always call in a timely manner (well before the sun sets) to ask for instructions. Once again express your concern about delivering mail in darkness. Follow the instructions you are given, even if they are to continue until all mail is delivered.

When darkness sets in, and you determine after attempting to deliver mail that continuing would be unsafe, again call and inform your supervisor of your concern. Again, follow instructions, even if they are to continue. However, if after attempting delivery one last time your judgment is that it is still unsafe to continue, then (and **ONLY** then) should you bring the remaining undelivered mail back. **Be sure that as soon as you have returned to the office, you immediately inform the supervisor of any undelivered mail. Always complete PS form 1571 (report of undelivered mail), listing the reason(s) for non-delivery. Give the completed form to a supervisor and obtain a duplicate copy before clocking out for the day.**

Following the above guidelines will help ensure that you are not charged with failure to follow instructions or unauthorized curtailment of mail and possibly receive disciplinary action. USPS customers have the right to expect their mail to be delivered each day. Carriers have the right and the duty to perform their duties in a safe manner. It all comes down to common sense and realistic planning. Even when management fails to utilize either, a letter carrier's integrity and good judgment should be sufficient.

-- Joe Golonka - Vice president

Branch Merger Notification

ATTENTION: BRANCH 2184 MEMBERS

In accordance with Article 2, section 3 of the NALC Constitution, the following motion will be presented at the regular Branch 2184 membership meeting, to be held at the Branch 2184 office on Wednesday, January 8, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

A motion for the merger of Branch 2184 NALC, AFL-CIO and Branch 4779 NALC, AFL-CIO, subject to the following listed terms and conditions:

1) Upon a majority affirmative vote for merger by the membership of Branch 2184 NALC, AFL-CIO and the membership of Branch 4779 NALC, AFL-CIO, and the subsequent effecting of this merger, it will be final and binding upon all members of both Branches.

2) The merged Branch shall be henceforth be known as Branch 2184 NALC, AFL-CIO.

3) The existing Bylaws and dues structure of Branch 2184 NALC, AFL-CIO will remain in effect for all members of the merged Branch. The elected officers of the merged Branch will be the officers of Branch 2184, NALC, AFL-CIO at the time of the merger. All assets of Branch 4779 NALC, AFL-CIO will be absorbed by Branch 2184 NALC, AFL-CIO at the effective date of merger. All existing liabilities of Branch 4779 NALC, AFL-CIO will be satisfied to the extent possible prior to the effective date of merger.

4) A majority affirmative vote of all regular members in good standing of Branch 2184 NALC AFL-CIO and all regular members in good standing of Branch 4779 NALC AFL-CIO present and voting at regular meetings or special meetings called for this purpose shall be necessary to authorize an application for this merger.

Bullies Do Exist

Letter carriers are given service talks on the importance of reporting all accidents and injuries, but when it comes time to actually do it, do you hesitate? Dealing with management can be intimidating, especially if you have to report an accident or injury. From the moment that you report an injury/accident, you are immediately labeled and treated differently.

Once you have an accident or sustain an on the job injury, it gets recorded and stays in your file for the life of your postal career. If you have two or more accidents/injuries you are labeled as a supposed "accident repeater". We do a very hazardous job and some of the things that cause us injury are entirely beyond our control. For example, if you suffered a dog bite during your 1st year and a bee sting in your 10th year as a carrier, management will call you a 'repeater'.

This is a clear form of bullying, but many supervisors don't stop there. They harass the carriers about their medical restrictions or falsely claim that they have no work for them. In this district management has recently gone to the extreme and even made public the safety records of some carriers. Why would management do this? To intimidate them? To embarrass them? Whatever their so-called reason is, the Employees Labor Manual 665.24 states:

The Postal Service is committed to the principle that all employees have a basic right to a safe and humane working environment. In order to ensure this right, it is the unequivocal policy of the Postal Service that there must be no tolerance of violence or threats of violence by anyone at any level of the Postal Service. Similarly, there must be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats, or bullying by anyone at any level. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including removal from the Postal Service.

Management preaches that all accidents are to be reported immediately, but then they harass and bully carriers once they do. There is a not so subtle hidden agenda here. If management is doing this to

you, get with your steward as soon as possible and file a grievance. Additionally, always be sure to notify your steward or the Branch 2184 union office ASAP whenever you incur a job-related injury, so that we can monitor management's response and their behavior.

None of us go to work thinking we will get hurt, and the people entrusted with our safety should not be bullying us if we do. Your union can and will respond to such abusive management behavior, but we need to know about it first. Do NOT be intimidated for doing the right thing!

With the holidays fast approaching, I would like to wish all of you and your families a Merry Christmas and a wonderful holiday season.

-- Michele Szafran
District Safety Committee Member

Dear
National Association of Letter Carriers Br. 2184,

I am thankful to be a recipient of the higher education scholarship. Your generous gift will go towards furthering my education at Wayne State University. I am currently in my second year at the College of Engineering. I appreciate the union and all its members for all that you do.

Sincerely,
Justin Snead (son of Ypsilanti carrier Gregory Snead)

To the members of NALC Branch 2184:

My name is Dylan McKinney and I am currently enrolled as a student at Monroe County Community College in the NUET program. I have two more classes to complete and I will be able to enter the internship at the Fermi power plant. I will continue my schooling as I am working there with plans to graduate in the Spring of 2021. I would like to thank you all for helping me pay for school with this scholarship I have received from you. It is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Dylan McKinney (Son of Monroe carrier Shasta Murphy)

To Branch 2184 members,

I just want to write this letter of appreciation to NALC Branch 2148, Thank you for helping to further my education at Jackson College. With that money I was able to pay off a semester that my financial aid wasn't able to cover for me. I will continue to strive to graduate from Jackson College, And will remember this moment when I do.

Thank You.

Keshawn Bryant (son of Westland carrier Felicia Davis and Kareem Bryant)

Attend Your Branch Meetings

Branch Meeting

January 8th, 2020

7:30 pm @ Union Hall

Retirees Meeting

January 15th, 2020

12:30 pm @ Union Hall

Contract Corner:

Knowledge is Power – Use it!

Q: Do Letter Carriers get wash up time after returning from the Street?

A: All letter carriers working in Branch 2184-represented offices have up to 5 minutes for wash up time after returning from the street. The wash up time should be taken in addition to the time needed to perform your p.m. office duties after clocking back in from the street and before ending your tour for the day. Specifically, Branch 2184 has negotiated the following language into our Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU), Item #1, Wash-Up Periods: ***“All letter carriers will be granted up to 5 minutes daily for washing up after performing dirty work or incident to personal needs.”*** It is inherent to letter carrier work that all delivery duties constitute “dirty work,” given the requirements of the job working outdoors and handling thousands of pieces of mail on a daily basis.

On a related note, management frequently tries to push an unsupported myth that letter carriers only have “five minutes” to complete all duties when

returning from the street. However, there is no such work rule in our Contract or in any USPS Handbook of Manual, any and there never has been. Letter carrier office duties when returning from the street are listed in the M-41 Handbook, chapter 4, and these duties should take as long as necessary to complete, in addition to the wash up time discussed above.

Q: I needed additional time to finish my route. Management told me to continue but that it was “not authorized.” What does that mean?

A: In short, it means nothing. This is a classic example of management doublespeak, where letter carriers are deliberately given contradictory or confusing instructions. Letter carriers are required to report their inability to complete all assigned duties within the time authorized, per the provisions of the M-41 Handbook, section 131. This situation often manifests itself when a letter carrier determines that he or she will need additional time to complete their assignment and calls or sends a message for instructions.

In some instances, a duplicitous supervisor will attempt to intimidate the carrier by giving deliberately conflicting instructions or by responding that the carrier is to continue but the time is supposedly not “authorized.” However, once a letter carrier has been instructed to continue to working or to finish their assignment, the time necessary to do is implicitly authorized. This was affirmed in a National Level Step 4 grievance decision (M-00326 from the NALC Materials Reference System) which states, in part “...Although there was no expressed authorization to complete the delivery of mail on an overtime basis, ***the permission would be inherent in the authorization to continue delivery*** after the grievants were unable to complete the routes.”

If management attempts to claim that the time needed to perform work that they specifically instructed you to complete is allegedly “unauthorized,” or attempts to utilize Form 1017-B (USPS Unauthorized Overtime Record) in this situation, immediately request to meet with your steward for purposes of investigating and initiating a grievance. Most of all, don’t allow management’s game playing to affect your daily work. Take ownership of your job by coming to work every day and performing your duties in a safe and efficient manner, taking all the nec-

essary time to do so, including a full 30-minute lunch and two 10-minute breaks, as well as taking additional breaks for personal needs such as comfort stops when necessary.

Q: What is Night Differential Pay and how does it work?

A: Night Shift Differential pay is defined in Article 8, section 7 of the NALC/USPS Collective Bargaining Agreement as follows: "For time worked between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., a career employee shall be paid additional compensation at the applicable flat rate dollar amount at each pay grade and step in accordance with Appendix A attached hereto." Appendix A is found in our Contract books immediately following the final numbered Article (Article 43) of the Contract. Additionally, despite the "career employee" language above, Night Shift Differential pay also applies to work performed by City Carrier Assistants (CCAs).

There are two Night Differential rate tables in Appendix A; the first (Table three) applies to fulltime regular and part time flexible career employees. For fulltime regular carriers in pay Table 1 (career appointment date prior to January 12, 2013) or pay Table 2 (career appointment date on or after January 12, 2013) of the City Carrier pay schedules, the additional flat hourly rate in the current (2016-2019) Contract ranges from \$1.00 to \$1.63 per hour, depending on the pay Table and step. For part time flexible carriers, the additional flat hourly rate in the current (2016-2019) Contract ranges from \$1.23 to \$1.69, depending on step. For CCAs, the additional flat hourly rate in the current (2016-2019) Contract is \$1.23.

Finally, the payment of the flat hourly rate Night Shift Differential applies regardless of pay status during an employee's scheduled work hours. Thus, an employee working while in an overtime or penalty overtime status during the hours of 6:00 p.m. through 6:00 a.m. will have the flat rate hourly Night Shift Differential pay added to their pay. Although the language of Article 8, section 4.F in our Contract provides that premium pay rates cannot be "pyramided" and that only the higher rate applies, Night Shift Differential pay is not considered as a premium.

MDA Canister Drive Reports

Taylor	\$737.65
Ypsilanti	\$271.00
Dearborn Annex	\$255.00
Dearborn Heights	\$156.07
Canton	\$132.00
Lincoln Park	\$124.01
Westland	\$115.46
Plymouth	\$107.00
Northville	\$85.00
Dearborn Main	\$74.02
Monroe	\$71.00
Inkster	\$70.00
Belleville	\$58.00
Trenton	\$31.97
Grosse Ile	\$13.02
GRAND TOTAL:	\$2,301.20

2020 Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA) for Retirees

Postal Service retirees under the FERS (Federal Employees Retirement System) or the CSRS (Civil Service Retirement System) will receive a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase of 1.6% on their monthly annuity payments for calendar year 2020.

The COLA adjustment becomes effective on December 1, 2019 and will be reflected in monthly annuity payments beginning January 1, 2020.

Social Security recipients will also receive a 1.6% COLA increase on Social Security payments made in 2020.

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- ✓ Orlando Allen
- ✓ Gregory Bodziak
- ✓ Bryon Hendricks
- ✓ Lynn Taylor (R)
- ✓ Cindy Trzeciak (R)

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

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

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The Branch 2184 Officers and Stewards would like to extend to you and your families best wishes for a happy and joyous holiday season and a healthy, happy and prosperous new year.

May you enjoy all the blessings of peace and liberty, and the benefits of the special strength that flows from solidarity.



Mark Judd, *President*

Walt McGregory, *Executive VP*

Joe Golonka, *Vice President*

Jacqueline McGregory, *Recording Secretary*

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