

MEMO

To the Branch 2184 Leadership Council, May 29, 2020



Mark Judd
Walt McGregory
Joe Golonka
Jackie McGregory
Cathy Tondreau
Jim Powell
Scott Watts
Michele Szafran
Gloria Warthen
Felicia Davis
Leonard Zawisa
Kris Shaw
Mark Owen
Bryon Hendricks
Melvin MacDonald
Darryl Clay
Symone Coleman
Yvonne Jackson
Denise Viola
Lillian Bogosian
Chris Biegalski
Phil Ashford
Scherrie Lacey
Dave Reise
Erik Venzke
Joshua Nagy
Elizabeth Bays
Valerie Watkins
Jennifer Rake
Tamara Bosman
Diego Forshaw
Kristie Nelson
Keith Benedict
Scott Horn
Tracy Mitchell
Nakia Whitfield
Katrina Jones
Ananias Epps
John Hite
Ramon Robinson
Tyler Haverstick
Paul Bordine
Mike Tredway
Danita Smith

With the Memorial Day weekend and the unofficial start of summer occurring within an otherwise unprecedented environment for our Branch, the NALC, and the Postal Service, this will begin with a review of current matters and potential future events and their status as of now. First, on the Branch level, we continue to conduct our internal meetings (Steward meetings and Executive Board meetings) via teleconference. This will continue indefinitely, until and if Branch President Mark Judd and our leadership team determines that there is a viable and safe manner of conducting on site meetings again.

With the cancellation of the June monthly membership meeting and the July/August break in membership meetings, the next scheduled monthly meeting is Wednesday, September 2. We have a few months to monitor the situation as it pertains to possibly "reopening" the Branch office for such matters, and Mark will make informed decisions about this and other events when it becomes necessary to do so.

Regarding other Branch 2184 autumn events such as our MDA fundraisers, it is unlikely that the "Fill the Satchel" event will be conducted in its customary manner. Perhaps some other form of alternative fundraiser can be substituted. Because of this, our annual cannister drive which takes place during later August and early September – and which WILL take place in each of our stations, has become especially important, even critical in a year where our customary MDA fundraising efforts have been severely hampered by the pandemic.

Regarding other annual autumn season events, as of this date no decision has been made regarding the annual Michigan AFL-CIO Labor Day March in Detroit which will take place in Detroit on Monday, September 7 unless cancelled. The State AFL-CIO will make that decision. The annual NALC Region 6 (K.I.M. Region) Educational Training event conducted by National Business Agent Troy Clark's office is still scheduled for the Columbus Holiday weekend, Saturday, October 10, through Monday October 12 at the Eagle Crest Conference Center in Ypsilanti. It is possible that some revisions in format or agenda could occur. Troy along with his Regional Administrative Assistants David Mudd and Kyle Inosencio will be providing updated information about the K.I.M. Training during the course of the summer.

Regarding the now cancelled NALC National Convention that had been scheduled in Honolulu, Hawaii August 16-21, Branch 2184 delegates that had planned to attend the convention and whose names are filling slots on some station vacation boards have two choices. First, they can still take the week off but they must use annual leave, not LWOP, because this is no longer a union convention week and thus Article 24, section 2 provisions would not apply.

Alternatively, they can cancel the week, which MUST then be posted for bid in the same manner as all cancelled weeks from the vacation boards. Stewards, please monitor this closely where it is applicable. Delegates choosing to cancel the week are encouraged to do so in a timely manner. The union still "owns" these weeks as part of our negotiated leave program. Of note, in some instances the names of convention delegates were listed as "over and above" the number allowed off for that week. In such instances there would not be a posting of the week required.

The next NALC National Convention is scheduled for August 8-12, 2022 in Chicago, Illinois. Subsequent NALC National Conventions have been scheduled for August 5-9, 2024 in Boston, Massachusetts, and August 3-7, 2026 in Los Angeles, California. The next Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers (MISALC) convention is scheduled for spring, 2021.

The Branch has been advised by National Business Agent Troy Clark's office that any OWCP claim for a COVID-19 related exposure, where a letter carrier has initiated a claim based on a belief that a positive COVID-19 diagnosis was directly related to their employment – i.e. caused by an exposure that occurred as a result of their letter carrier duties, will be handled by NALC Regional Administrative Assistant David Mudd and Regional Workers Compensation Assistant Anita Lewallen. Please advise the Branch office ASAP if you are aware that a NALC member in your station has initiated a COVID-19 related OWCP claim, and we will advise the Business Agent's office who will then contact the member directly.

One of the many things delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the National Contract Interest Arbitration process to resolve the NALC/USPS impasse for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement. The term of the current Contract expired on September 20, 2019, although its provisions remain in effect until a new Contract becomes effective – either through agreement with the Postal Service (not likely) or the issuance of National Arbitrator Dennis Nolan's award, which is the all but certain outcome. Toward that end, the NALC and the USPS have tentatively rescheduled new Interest Arbitration hearing dates with Arbitrator Nolan in September, October, and November this year. If the process is not further delayed, there could potentially be an Interest Arbitration award issued sometime early in 2021.

Management will sometimes attempt to obstruct or delay filling a union information request by improperly claiming that it should be directed or sent to another location such as a USPS District office. This situation most commonly occurs with (but is not limited to) union investigations of management's conduct involving employee injury claims and related matters. However, Article 31, section 3 of the Contract directly states that "requests for information relating to purely local matters should be submitted by the local Union representative to the installation head or designee." It does not matter if management claims that the requested information is allegedly not available locally. ALL union information requests related to our investigation of any possible grievance involving management and one or more letter carriers should always be submitted directly to local management. Stewards should immediately advise the union office and initiate the appropriate Article 17/31 grievances if management attempts to claim otherwise or if they refuse to accept or fill a union information request for any reason.

The recent Memorial Day holiday was the first scheduled USPS holiday since the Presidents Day holiday on February 17. The period between these two holidays is always the longest gap between any two holidays of the year. Following the three "summer holidays" (Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day), there is a cluster of seven holidays in a period of just over four months, beginning with the Columbus Day holiday in October and ending with the Presidents Day holiday in February. This would be a good time to review holiday scheduling requirements and procedures in our Branch 2184 Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU) as well as the JCAM Article 11 discussion.