

## National Officer

Shirley Baffa



Chair, Assistant State Steward, State Steward and was also appointed District Representative for the Arkansas District until her election to the National Board.

Shirley also served the NRLCA as chair of the Constitution Committee (twice), a member of the of the Appeals Commission, the Appeals Committee and Sergeant of Arms.

Shirley has a strong belief that “together” we CAN make a difference. She has spent this past year working hard in the Southern Area to make that difference. She is committed to making a better working environment for the rural craft.

Shirley has the total support of her husband Gus, who understands firsthand the job, her daughter, Ashley and son-in-law Darrel, her granddaughters, Shelbie and Chesney and her sister, Arkansas State Secretary, Sharon Goforth. They are all amazing and she couldn’t ask for a better support group.

Shirley was elected to the National Board in Reno, Nevada at the 111th National Convention to a four-year term as Executive Committeeman. Shirley is assigned to the Southern Area which consists of eight states and twelve postal districts.

Shirley was hired by the USPS in November of 1988 as an RCA and became a regular carrier in June of 1998. Shirley has served many positions within the Arkansas District such as District Officer, State Vice-President, State President, PAC

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**Future Dates to Remember**

- 05/06/2018— State Meeting
- 05/13/2018— Mother’s Day
- 05/19/2018— Armed Forces Day
- 05/28/2018— Memorial Day
- 06/14/2018— Flag Day
- 06/17/2018— Father’s Day
- 06/21/2018— Summer Starts
- 07/04/2018— Independence Day

# May 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4 Pay Day	5
6 State Meeting	7	8	9	10	11	12 PP-11
13 Mother’s Day	14	15	16	17	18 Pay Day	19 Armed Forces Day
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 PP-12
27	28 Memorial Day	29	30	31		

# June 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Pay Day	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 PP-13
10	11	12	13	14 Flag Day	15 Pay Day	16
17 Father’s Day	18	19	20	21 Summer	22	23 PP-14
24	25	26	27	28	29 Pay Day	30

# July 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7 PP-15
8	9	10	11	12	13 Pay Day	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 PP-16
22	23	24	25	26	27 Pay Day	28
29	30	31				

**MARLCA**

**Backroads Journal**

Tiaona Winot  
 33 Randall St.  
 Palmer MA 01069  
 Phone: 413-544-1407  
 Email: marlca.brj@gmail.com  
 MARLCA On the web:  
 www.marlca.org

**Address Change:**  
 You can log on to  
<http://liteblue.usps.gov>

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# The Presidential Report

By: William Piwowarski

## *Winter Blues and Spring Eternal*



Executive Officers and fellow members of the Massachusetts Rural Letter Carriers' Association greetings from the sticks that is Central Massachusetts. I hope you enjoyed the title of this article, as I know that you have all endured a rough winter both due to Christmas package volume and the unpredictable weather. Here we are on the verge of Spring and Old Man Winter is being relentless.

I'm not sure how many of you had to endure this past mail count, but what I saw of the two count schools that I attended it was a lot of you. I can't speculate on the results of this count at this time, I can only hope that you fared well and paid attention to the details.

Our National contract is due to expire May 20, 2018 and I believe that our National Office is and has been doing its level best to negotiate a new contract with our best interests at heart. With the engineered study completed and feedback being given I see money, benefits and working conditions as topics for these negotiations. We as employees hope to see that we maintain where we are and improve our lot going forward, and never to regress.

Spring is approaching as I write this and with that advent we have some things to look forward to, one being Eastern States Convention. It is being held in Corning N.Y.

this year and as per usual we will be sending a small delegation. We always let you know and ask if anyone is interested in attending. It's a wonderful way to learn what goes on.

Next up after Eastern States is our State Convention; it is on Sunday May 6<sup>th</sup>. It is at the Great Wolf Lodge in Fitchburg. There will be a National Officer there to answer your questions. There will be

election results for the officers and delegates you elected to serve you and represent you at National Convention. It's a one-day meeting so please try to attend and help make it a great meeting.

We are constantly trying to better our lot in life and with that so goes the Postal Service. We have a government that may be seeking changes to the way we do our jobs, the benefits we receive our business model in general. I have asked you at your District meetings to take the time to contact your congressmen and senators and let them know our positions on postal reform and other bills. Please go to the National website and look over this information and make those calls. They do listen to their constituents.

I thank you all for your dedication and devotion to your job and this union.

William J Piwowarski  
MARLCA President

***“Our National contract is due to expire May 20, 2018 and, the engineered study completed.”***

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### **WHO YA GONNA CALL? Steward Listing**

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#### **District Representative (full time):**

Art Courcy Arthur.Courcy@nrlca.org 508-761-6870

#### **Assistant District Rep. (full time):**

Bill Smith Bill.Smith@nrlca.org 860-664-1020

#### **Assistant District Rep. (part time):**

Peter Allatin Peter.Allatin@nrlca.org

860-267-0033

Don Ryle Donald.Ryle@nrlca.org

508-997-1696

Dan Cote Daniel.Cote@nrlca.org

978-237-2625

Joan Tenerella

Joan.Tenerella@nrlca.org

401-536-8697

#### **Area Stewards:**

Ed Knight ed-mary@msn.com

413-323-7392

Theron Boudakian [graniteguyfromri@yahoo.com](mailto:graniteguyfromri@yahoo.com)

774- 266-7056



# Sec-Treasurer's Two Cents

By: Dawn Makrinikolas



03/11/18

## MaRLCA Statement of Activities July 1, 2017 through March 11, 2018

	Jul 1, '17 - Mar ...	Jul 1, '16 - Mar ...
<b>Income</b>		
4050000 · Incentive Program	1,635.00	0.00
4100000 · Interest / Dividends	835.36	724.16
4200000 · Membership Dues	97,264.21	99,090.02
4400000 · Reimbursements	224.26	1,563.80
4500000 · Sales	0.00	456.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>99,958.83</b>	<b>101,833.98</b>
<b>Expense</b>		
5000000 · Accounting Fees	2,355.00	3,387.81
5010000 · Bank Charges	32.00	32.00
5100000 · Awards Recognition Bereavement	105.00	227.19
5200000 · Education & Training	375.00	187.50
5350000 · Elections	216.00	251.00
5400000 · Equipment Purchases	0.00	84.96
5700000 · National Convention	22,886.87	25,003.86
5800000 · Office Expense	1,629.33	2,038.47
5900000 · Payroll Taxes	1,728.88	1,739.65
6000000 · Per Capita Dues	7,266.00	7,228.71
6100000 · Postage	128.91	1,007.66
6200000 · Printing	268.20	1,161.24
6300000 · Eastern States Conference	150.00	150.00
6420000 · National Seminars	0.00	1,757.20
6600000 · Salaries & Wages	13,244.88	14,448.10
6620000 · Salaries-Annual	21.15	0.00
6700000 · State Meetings	3,733.71	2,311.45
6701000 · Backroads Journal	4,144.70	2,017.24
6900000 · Telephone & Internet	499.60	1,322.30
7000000 · Travel	4,111.91	2,541.71
7200000 · Web Site	835.75	187.50
7300000 · Storage Rental	1,150.00	1,359.00
8000000 · State Income Tax	75.00	395.81
9000000 · Penalties	33.61	167.67
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>64,991.50</b>	<b>69,008.03</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>34,967.33</b>	<b>32,825.95</b>

**MaRLCA**  
**Statement of Finance**  
As of March 11, 2018

	Mar 11, 18	Mar 11, 17
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
<b>Checking/Savings</b>		
1000000 · TD Bank	18,034.06	28,762.79
1100000 · APCU Savings Account	61,241.58	43,246.72
1200000 · APCU CD's	110,588.42	109,281.40
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	189,864.06	181,290.91
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	189,864.06	181,290.91
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	189,864.06	181,290.91
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>		
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>		
2100000 · Payroll Liabilities	469.23	2,378.05
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	469.23	2,378.05
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	469.23	2,378.05
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	469.23	2,378.05
<b>Equity</b>		
3900 · Net Assets	154,427.50	146,086.91
Net Income	34,967.33	32,825.95
<b>Total Equity</b>	189,394.83	178,912.86
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	189,864.06	181,290.91

## Why Join NRLCA?

### MARLCA

The National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) has an effective legislative program in the Congress to promote and protect the interests of rural carriers.

NRLCA holds exclusive recognition to represent the rural carrier craft with the U.S. Postal Service (USPS).

NRLCA negotiates all Labor Agreements for the rural carrier craft with the USPS, including salaries.

Only NRLCA can represent members of the rural carrier craft in the grievance procedure, including providing protection in disciplinary actions.

NRLCA has an excellent Health Insurance program: The Rural Carrier Benefit Plan for regular and retired members, and for qualified leave replace-

ments.

NRLCA offers an attractive Life Insurance program for its members.

NRLCA also offers the Rural Carrier Auto Insurance Plan and the Homeowners' Insurance Plan.

NRLCA provides a monthly publication, The National Rural Letter Carrier, to keep its members informed on postal and legislative matters of vital interest.

NRLCA provides information and fellowship for its members at County, District, State and National meetings where all members may participate in a democratic process of developing Association policy.



## From the District Rep.'s Desk

By: Art Courcy



### *“Mail Count Disrupted: What Happens Next?”*

The 2018 national mail count was quite an experience to say the least. We had nearly 1500 routes counted between the CT Valley and Greater Boston Districts. Not only did we have to deal with inclement weather once during the 12-day mail count, but we were hit with two major storms. The first week of the mail count, many offices experienced tremendous winds and flooding which caused widespread power outages. This occurred at the end of week 1. The timing of this storm caused some issues, delays with mail processing and delivery, but most would sustain to normal by the end of the mail count and the mail should have caught up with the delays by its end a week later.

But wait, there's more...

5 days after the major storm, we were hit with a Nor'easter that would cause even further disruptions. Some who had just regained electrical power were hit again. Mail flow was disrupted due to major highways being impassible. This occurred with only two days left of the 12-day mail count period. Though these severe weather disruptions and delays impact mail counts, all is not lost. We have a nationally agreed upon contingency plan when severe weather impacts a mail count. Below is a portion of the language contained in the contingency plan:

#### 2018 National Rural Route Mail Count Contingency Plans

“Contingencies should only be implemented in those instances when there is disruption of service and an office receives little or no mail for delivery due to severe weather or other conditions. District personnel should discuss each situation as it occurs with the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association district representative and make a determination as to the validity of the disruption and the resolution for completion of the mail count. Should weather conditions cause the suspension of service for longer than three days, management and union representatives at the national level will make a determination as to the appropriate resolution. The parties at the local level may not agree to extend the mail count beyond the March 9, 2018 end date.”

***“Should weather conditions cause the suspension of service...”***

Throughout the mail count and after, there has been much discussion between myself and Operations Programs Support with both districts to determine where and if adjustments are needed to the mail count due to the weather disruptions. We will not only be looking at the mail volume totals (letters and flats) but we will be determining all aspects of mail count credits. Parcels, loading times, col 17 times etc.

We have heard from many of you either via telephone calls, emails, mail count dispute forms or other means etc.

We know where the offices are that were impacted, and I have very high hopes to come to resolutions for those routes that sustained these impacts and adjust where appropriate. Again, dialogue has been very positive with both districts and I expect to come to agreements with them so that no route has an impact that is storm related.

We do have a couple of other issues that came up prior to and during the mail count, and those will be addressed on a case specific basis through the normal dispute process.

I would like to mention how very pleased I am with the attendance at our mail count schools that we conducted. We had tremendous turnouts. In looking at the signup sheets for these meetings, 500 carriers attended. They came to learn and hopefully the trainings were of benefit to them. There are so many rules surrounding a mail count. We have many newly appointed regular carriers and many seasoned carriers that have not been counted in quite some time. I truly feel that the best way to educate yourself is by attending the mail count schools. There, specific questions are answered, and we are made aware more thoroughly of some of the issues that offices are facing. I must thank Assistant District Representatives, Bill Smith and Joan Tenerella. They were both a tremendous help in making the mail count schools a success.

If you submitted a mail count disagreement. It should have been provided to your postmaster and a copy sent to me. I will be meeting with the districts to resolve as many of the disagreements as possible. You should receive a written response from management regarding your disagreement.

Once the written response is received and if we determine that there is a violation of the mail count rules, the grievance process in some cases would be the next course of action.

Art Courcy  
District Representative  
CT Valley/Greater Boston Districts



*A shot of our Union's National Headquarters in Alexandria, VA.*



## Updates From 2017

By: Robert Richardson  
District 3 Committeeman



Hello fellow Massachusetts Rural Letter Carriers.

I have returned from the 113<sup>th</sup> National Convention and I can tell you - there is change in the air. Let me start off by saying that the "New" Evaluation System is done and is being tested in a few areas. Soon it will be handed over to the USPS and our National Board for their recommendation (s). There is a time frame to get responses back, so nothing is going to change overnight. I am sure our Board will keep us abreast of the new system as it approaches.

We are entering the final year with President Jeanette Dwyer as our leader of the NRLCA. At the convention she stated that at the end of the 114<sup>th</sup> convention she will be retiring. Jeanette has been a tremendous leader for this union. She is the most tenured President, is well respected by the USPS and will be greatly missed. With, this means "change" is coming next August. Who will step up? Who will run for the open seat(s)? And, who will the delegates elect? This brings me to my next point, stepping up.

The state of Massachusetts has 5 districts. Each district has three (3) positions to be elected each year. Also, the members of the state elect three (3) state positions. Please, step up and run for a position! Many times, we re-elect the same person repeatedly because it's easier and we don't want to rock the boat. Is it time for a change? We welcome new blood, innovative ideas, and new perspectives. Sometimes we just get stuck in the box and need to know what your perception is of our union.

Next, what can the leaders of this union do to get more members to attend these meetings? All of you have the answer, we just need to know your thoughts. Is it the date, time, day, length of the meeting? The union pays money for these meetings and by not attending we are throwing money away. Also, think of it like a "town meeting" in your own town. If you don't attend the meeting, all the issues get voted on by those who did attend. This is no different. Your VOTE counts! So, please attend your district and state meetings and let us know how we can help you.

Change is coming my friends – be a part of that change!!

Robert G. Richardson

*Toddler's car made by a fellow Union member with PAC at the National Convention. It sold for over \$2,000!*

*Do you have any neat ideas to help fund-raise for PAC? Let Tiaona Winot know!*



*State Meeting silent Auction Item. A book of the History of our Union, NRLCA.*

*All Raffles and Auctions money raised goes toward PAC, which in turn goes toward your job security.*



## Vice President's Report

By: Lorraine Pacheco



The past few months have been quite busy. Members had the opportunity to attend mail count schools and their district meetings. It was nice to see many fresh faces. I've never attended a meeting where I didn't learn something new. The meeting lasts about 2 1/2 hours, and they include dinner. If you've never been to a meeting you don't know what you're missing.

The mail count is over and hopefully now we'll be compensated for all those parcels. This past Christmas was one for the record books. Regular carriers and RCA's worked from sunrise to sunset. There were many days when I'd get home, have dinner and it would be time to go to bed. Through it all, we did our best to perform our jobs safely and provide great customer service.

If you haven't heard, we have a new website! The board decided to hire a marketing firm to create a new webpage. Dawn and I met with the new webmaster in November and provided him the information needed to create our webpage. The result was a website that is both user friendly and informative. If anyone has any suggestions of what they'd like to see on the webpage, please pass them along to Dawn or myself. The domain name is the same [MARLCA.org](http://MARLCA.org). Check it out and let us know what your think! I'd like to thank Gerry Bligh for all his hard work

and dedication through the years to maintain our past website. His time was greatly appreciated and should not go unnoticed.

***"The cost to hold our state election each year averages \$3000."***

Its election time and the ballots will be mailed shortly. Please take a few minutes and vote. This year there will be two ballots to fill out. One for state officers and the other for our delegates. The cost to hold our state election each year averages \$3000. Each year the number of ballots that are returned decrease. This year I'd love to see it increase. Voting is one way of having your voice heard.

Our state meeting will be held on Sunday, May 6, 2018 at the Great Wolfe Lodge in Fitchburg, Ma. This is a full day meeting and a national officer will be attending. The cost of lunch will be \$10. I chose this venue because of the cost. The cost was \$500 less than the other venues. However, they would not give us a discounted room rate. Their reason being supply and demand. If you are planning to attend and stay overnight there are other hotels in the area at a much cheaper rate. Please plan on attending.

Lorraine Pacheco  
MaRLCA Vice President

## Attention Elections Committee

*All members or their designee running for State Officers, or for National Delegates may sit in and observe with the elections committee on this day.*

### **Elections Committee Meeting:**

Friday May 3rd, 2018  
Hampton Inn  
735 Union Street  
Franklin, MA 02038

Please arrive for 8:00 am





# PAC Report and Legislative Updates

By: Tiaona Winot

*“One For PAC & PAC For All”*



Hello Everyone!

I hope you all survived the winter storms, mail count, Christmas chaos and everything else over the seasons. I know mail is high and parcel volume is high and the weather has not been to cooperative, but I trust we all are doing the very best we can to do our jobs safely and accurately and going home in the same manner as we came into work which is the number one priority. We have our Spring State Meeting coming up on May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and I encourage you all to come. We always have such great and informative meetings. I always learn new things at each meeting I attend. Even if you think it will be the same information you already know, whether you heard it at your district meeting, read it in the Back-Roads Journal, read it in our National Magazine or our State or National website, I assure you there will be something new. People ask different questions that require answers you may not have known! We also have lots of fun at the meetings, raising money for PAC by having raffle tickets and raffles, or silent auctions, or little contests.

This year at the May State Meeting we will be giving away gift cards for the raffles. Gift cards are for Amazon and we have 3 prizes. One for \$200, one for \$100, and \$50 cash. It does pay to attend your meetings, and donate to PAC. If you cannot make the State Meeting for any reason, and you do win the prize that is okay I will mail it to you! At each district meetings you get tickets when you donate to PAC and those go towards the Spring and Fall State Meetings. I have you write your name and phone number on them, so I can contact you if you win.

On our legislative updates, as we all know congress has been proposing a refined budget. The Senate passed their 2018 budget resolution on October 19<sup>th</sup> last year. “The House taking up and passing the Senate’s version of the 2018 budget resolution is a short victory for postal and federal employees,” says our National Board Member Paul Swartz with Governmental Affairs in our National Magazine *the National Rural Letter Carrier*. The 2018 budget resolution directs the House Oversight and Government Reform to come up with \$32 billion in deficit reduction proposals over the course of ten years. While the Senate’s version does not include any cuts to postal and federal employee benefits, does not mean they won’t try. That is why calling or writing to your local congressperson is so important. They do indeed take the time to listen to the people,

we are the people and our voices matter!

We are always battling congress with budget cuts, reduction of mail delivery, service standards and more. Congress is releasing a 2019 budget proposal when they are still working the kinks out of our 2018 one. We’re sure we will be facing postal and federal employee benefit reduction proposals in this new budget as well. That is why PAC is so important, because we stand up and fight those cuts! Like the last proposal called for USPS to reduce delivery days from 6 to 5 and changing door to door delivery to curbside and cluster boxes.

Massachusetts is doing well this fiscal year with PAC’s fundraising. We only have about three months left of this fiscal year. So far, we have raised \$2,681.99! These numbers do not include the spring district meetings yet either because it takes a little bit for National to process everything that comes in. I am hopeful we can surpass last

years total. To do so we need to step up together! Donate for a worthy cause, get involved with your union, and most importantly vote and mail your ballots back in! I thank you all for your time, demanding work, and generosity to this union and to PAC as well.

When I say get involved with your union I mean get involved! Go to your district and state meetings, run for state office or even at a local level. Run for district president and secretary treasurer, run for delegate, go to an Eastern State’s or National Convention, or even both if you want. The more you are involved the more you learn. The more you learn about your job the more power you have. Knowledge is power, and when you are knowledgeable about your career, there’s no way management can heckle you and get away with it. At our May meeting we will be looking for someone to step up and volunteer for PAC. Someone to help travel to district meetings and collect donations and talk about our legislative updates and what congress is up to. To be a co-chair for PAC. It’s a wonderful way to get involved with your union, to learn new things about your job, and to help your fellow carriers and yourselves have job security! I hope to see you all at our State meeting come May. Happy trails everyone!

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## Candidate's Corner: 2018 State Elections

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Fellow MARLCA members, it is that time once again to vote for delegates to the National Convention. I am asking that you consider me as one of your 15 votes. I have been a delegate for the last 3 conventions and this year is going to be more important with the election for a new President and National Board members. I would like to be a part of these proceedings. I am always looking to support, protect and retain our RCA's. I consider all my votes to be in the best interest of our union. Please consider me!

Robert Richardson

My fellow carriers, I know that we have had a hard winter and count season. Believe me I understand, 6 day work weeks during Christmas and the great vanishing act during count. I would appreciate your vote for me as State Secretary Treasurer and also as Delegate to the National Convention this year. Please remember to vote on both ballots and return them both!

For your Time and Attention,

Dawn Makrinikolas

Hello everyone,

I'm running again for both MaRlca Vice President and National Delegate. As in the past, I've listened to your concerns and have been your voice. Everyday we are faced with new challenges. We need to work together and stand our ground. I'm asking again for your support and I promise to continue fighting for your rights.

Lorraine Pacheco

My name is William J Piwowski and I am running for the office of State President. I have been your State President these past 4 years and would like to serve you for one more. I was District 4 President, an academy facilitator, area steward, and safety facilitator for many years. I have been to Washington D.C. for Legislative seminars and been a delegate to National Convention as well. I have the experience to lead you for one more time. Please take the time to vote, and cast your ballot for William J Piwowski.

MARLCA Union Members, I again am running for delegate to this year's national convention. Most of you know me and hopefully I have gained your confidence for you to vote and allow me to represent you and all of the carriers in our state. We have many changes coming this year. Some will be very challenging. I bring experience and whole-hearted support for all of our carriers, regulars and RCAs alike. We are embarking on an entirely new evaluated pay system and need leadership to steer us through its implementation. I would be honored to have your support.

Art Courcy

My name is William J Piwowski and I am running for delegate to the National Convention. This year we have separate ballots for State officers and Delegates. No longer are State officers automatically delegates. I have represented you at National Convention since 2005, so I know what is going on and what needs to be done. When you vote cast a ballot for William (Bill) Piwowski.

Please vote it is your right and you earned it. VOTE VOTE VOTE!!!

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# Getting along with others

Have some of your workplace relationships become a drag? With some effort and persistence, you can create more understanding, acceptance and trust between you and your co-workers.

Contact your program online or by phone for confidential, personalized assistance in navigating difficult relationships at work.

USPS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
**A Program You Can Trust**

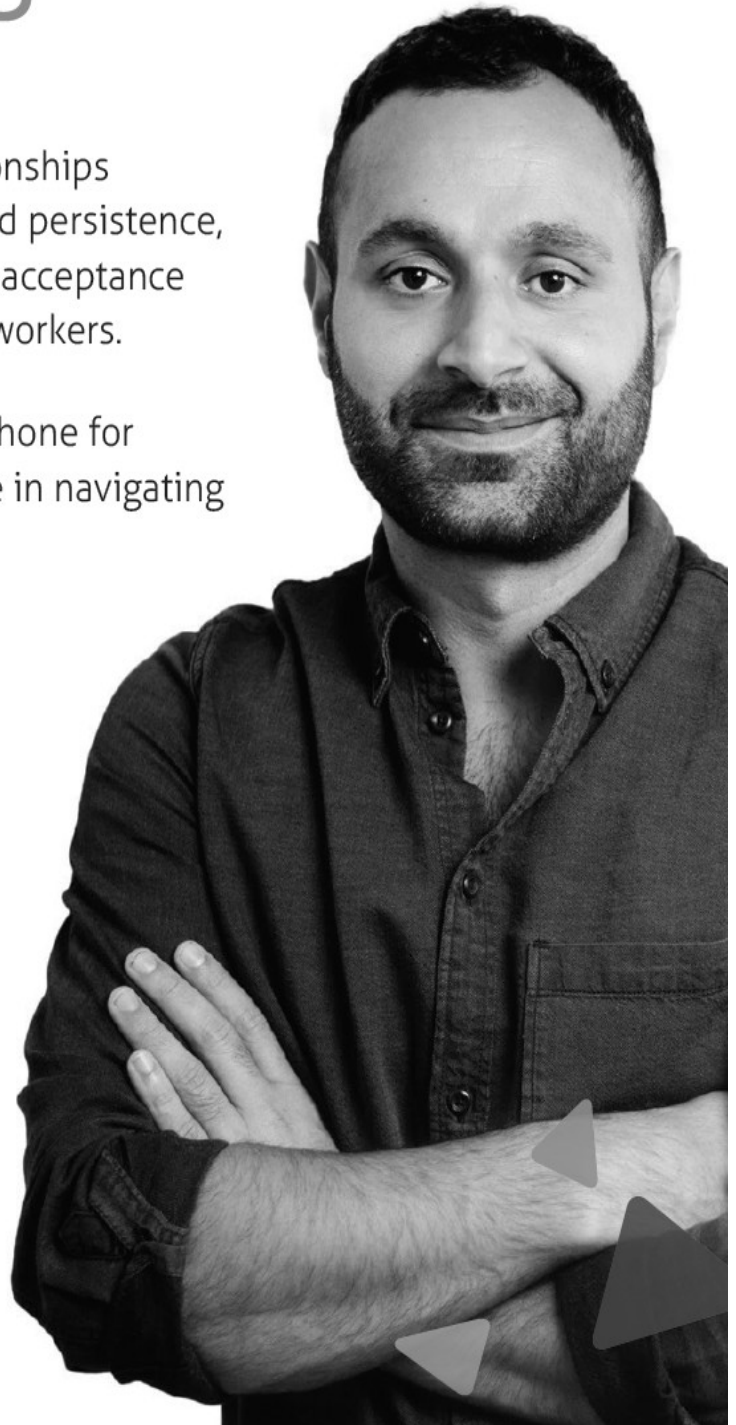


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**State Executive Officers:**

**President:** *Bill Piwowarski* (413) 436-5097  
wjp01585@yahoo.com

**Vice President:** *Lorraine Pacheco* (774) 244-0837  
Quche64@aol.com

**Sec-Treasurer:** *Dawn Makrinikolas* (508) 838-3800  
Dawn.Makrinikolas@nrlca.org

**District Presidents:**

#1: *Tiaona Winot, Ed Knight*

#2: *Jim Laferriere, Theron Boudakian*

#3: *Gil Perez, Robert Richardson*

#4: *Camille Graves, Amy Buccelli*

#5: *Kenan Myers, Xavier Abarca*

**Appointed Members:**

**Assistant Sec-Treasurer:** *Lorraine Pacheco*  
Quiche64@aol.com (508) 821-5729

**PAC Chair:** *Tiaona Winot* (413) 544-1407  
sciencegeek22@outlook.com

**Editor:** *Tiaona Winot*  
Marlca.brj@gmail.com (413) 544-1407



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**Backroads Journal**

Tiaona Winot, Editor  
33 Randall St.  
Palmer MA 01069

**Phone:**

413-544-1407

**Email:**

Marlca.brj@gmail.com

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