



Report of the President

“Make Your Voice Heard”



Fellow members of the Massachusetts Rural Letter Carriers’ Association, we bring 2018 to a close and it has been a long trying year.

I would like to thank all those carriers’ who took the time to attend their State and District meetings this year. I realize that we have busy lives and things that may be deemed more important than your job, but as I have said in the past knowledge is power.

I attended all five district meetings and presided over the fall booster meeting. I have been going in to Boston to new hire orientation these past few weeks to recruit new members and some days it’s encouraging and some not so much. We do the best we can. Some like to think about it. If you get one of those in your office, please try and get them to join. There is strength in numbers.

The midterm elections are over, and we have a few changes here in Massachusetts. If those new representatives are in your district, I ask that you contact them as soon as possible. Your job is to inform them about the Postal Service and its importance. The rest of you should still be contacting your representatives to help keep them on track about things like Postal Reform, six-day delivery, no privatization of the Post Office.

When they hear from their constituents they listen. Make the call, send them an email, go to a local office, make your voice heard.

Changes happened this past August at our National Convention,. The board was given a little shake up and we have yet to see what the results will be. One can only hope that those put into place to lead this Union will go forward with your best interests at heart. They are still negotiating a contract and working to get the results of the engineered study put into place. I guess time will tell.

In closing I would like everyone to remember to be safe out there. Pay heed to what you are doing as it only takes a moment of distraction to have things go wrong.

Wishing you all Happy Holidays and a Merry Christmas.

William J. Piwowarski

MARLCA President

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Future Dates to Remember

- Jan 1 — New Years Day
- Feb 5 — District 4 Meeting
- Feb 12— District 3 Meeting
- Feb 21— District 1 Meeting
6:30 pm
Belchertown Town Hall
- Feb 28— District 5 Meeting
6:30 pm
Sea Dog Brew Pub
- Mar 5 — District 2 Meeting
- Mar 20 — Back Roads
Journal Deadline
- May 5 — Spring State Mtg

MARLCA EDITOR

Kathy Makowski-Cote
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**SPRING EDITION
DEADLINE
WED MAR 20**

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

The Backroads Journal is a publication of the MARLCA. Opinions and views expressed in this newsletter are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect or represent those of the Editor or the State Officers of the MARLCA.

January 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 New Years Day	2	3	4	5 PP-02
6	7	8	9	10	11 Pay Day	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 PP-03
20	21 MLK Day	22	23	24	25 Pay Day	26
27	28	29	30	31		

February 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 PP-04
3	4	5 D4 Mtg	6	7	8 Pay Day	9
10	11	12 D3 Mtg	13	14 V Day	15	16 PP-05
17	18 Pres Day	19	20	21 D1 Mtg	22 Pay Day	23
24	25	26	27	28 D5 Mtg		

March 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 PP-06
3	4	5 D2 Mtg	6	7	8 Pay Day	9
10 Daylight	11	12	13	14	15	16 PP-07
17	18	19	20 BRJ Deadline	21	22 Pay Day	23
24/31	25	26	27	28	29	30



VP Report

*“The Provident Guild -
Another Benefit of this Union”*



Your membership in the NRLCA offers you many benefits; including the opportunity to become a member of the Rural Carriers' Provident Guild. The Guild was established in Ohio in 1931 by and for Rural Carriers. Their purpose has consistently been to develop a spirit of brotherly love among its members and to provide financial relief to the beneficiaries of deceased members of the Guild. Any Regular Rural Carrier, PTF, RCA, or ARC member, and their spouse under the age of 56 can become a member of the Rural Carriers' Provident Guild. You must be under age 56 to become a member but your membership continues as long as dues are current. New members have a one-time entry fee of \$2 payable with their application. Membership is divided into classes according to the age at the time of joining. The classes and dues are as follows:

- Under age 56; \$10 annual dues
- Under age 50; \$15 annual dues
- Under age 45; \$20 annual dues
- Under age 40; \$30 annual dues
- Under age 35; choose \$40 or \$50 annual dues

Maximum benefit ranges from \$1000 (under 56 class) to \$5000 (under 35 class at \$50 annual dues). Beneficiaries will never receive less than what was paid into the Guild. An Immediate Relief Payment of 30% of the Maximum Benefit is paid upon a death certificate received by the Secretary/Treasurer. An additional payment shall be paid to the beneficiaries mailed in August. Claims must be filed within 60 days after death. The Rural Carriers' Provident Guild is not insurance. It is a non-profit, fraternal death benefit organization, created and operated by rural carriers for our membership and auxiliary members to provide survivors ready cash devoid of estate courts and lawyers. There is no need for a physical examination and you can't be canceled at age 65 as long as dues are paid. For an application please contact the State Secretary/Treasurer.

As we enter the holiday season please work safely at your own pace. If you feel that the stress is too much remember EAP is available.

Happy Holidays

Lorraine Pacheco

Marla Vice President



Sec-Treasurer's Two Cents

State Sec-Treasurer: Dawn Makrinikolas



Fellow members of the Massachusetts Rural Letter Carriers' Association I am privileged to present to you my semi-annual report. Included in your program is a copy of the 2017-2018 fiscal year end reports. We ended the 2018 fiscal year a little over \$5,300 in the black. This is due to a decrease in National Convention costs, \$25,000 last year compared to \$23,000 this year. Your board and I continue to actively look for ways to decrease expenses.

As you can see by the financials included our fiscal year to date income is \$66,978.33 and our expenses are \$51,693.34 leaving us with a net income of \$15,284.99.

MaRLCA
Statement of Activities
July 1 through November 16, 2018

	Jul 1 - Nov 16, 18
Income	
4050000 · Incentive Program	1,675.00
4100000 · Interest / Dividends	497.33
4200000 · Membership Dues	64,527.00
4400000 · Reimbursements	279.00
Total Income	66,978.33
Expense	
5000000 · Accounting Fees	2,621.61
5010000 · Bank Charges	16.00
5100000 · Awards Recognition Bereavement	225.00
5200000 · Education & Training	1,771.29
5350000 · Elections	62.00
5700000 · National Convention	25,319.99
5800000 · Office Expense	220.85
5900000 · Payroll Taxes	1,387.70
6000000 · Per Capita Dues	7,189.00
6100000 · Postage	1,235.96
6200000 · Printing	175.31
6600000 · Salaries & Wages	5,012.80
6620000 · Salaries-Annual	0.00
6700000 · State Meetings	1,655.00
6701000 · Backroads Journal	2,180.84
7000000 · Travel	1,698.49
7200000 · Web Site	180.00
7300000 · Storage Rental	741.50
Total Expense	51,693.34
Net Income	15,284.99

Our membership stands at 1,295. Our non-membership total is 764 of which 82 are regulars, 1 are PTF's, 272 are ARC's, 3 RCA Vacant Rt., 22 RCA Aux Rt. And 384 RCA's.

Please if you have non-members in your office recruit them. We are only as strong as our membership. Remember the more members we have the larger voice we have especially important in this current political climate.

The RAFT (Recruit a Friend Today) program has been very successful. Should you be able to sign up a non-member you stand to get a cash reward! \$15.00 for signing up a relief carrier and \$50.00 for signing up a regular. The new member gets 3 months free and you get a cash reward for signing them up. The only catch is that a new member must remain on the postal service roles for 3 months after they are signed.

The 1st and 2nd Quarter RAFT Payment received from National total \$1,675 for our recruitment efforts. Please help make this new round of RAFT a success. There are still plenty of people to recruit!



Sec-Treasurer's Two Cents

State Sec-Treasurer: Dawn Makrinikolas



MaRLCA Statement of Finance As of November 16, 2018

	<u>Nov 16, 18</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1000000 · TD Bank	26,311.97
1100000 · APCU Savings Account	37,635.47
1200000 · APCU CD's	<u>111,681.21</u>
Total Checking/Savings	<u>175,628.65</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>175,628.65</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>175,628.65</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
2100000 · Payroll Liabilities	<u>581.75</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>581.75</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>581.75</u>
Total Liabilities	581.75
Equity	
3900 · Net Assets	159,761.91
Net Income	<u>15,284.99</u>
Total Equity	<u>175,046.90</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>175,628.65</u></u>

I recently attended 4 of the fall District meetings as well as our spring state and all Board meetings. Lorraine and I will be attending Sec/Treasurer training in March. I attended the National Convention as a Delegate in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I also attend new hire orientations in Boston and Providence for recruiting purposes and have been very successful.

Many thanks to Assistant Secretary Treasurer Lorraine Pacheco for all her help. It is an honor to be your Secretary Treasurer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn L. Makrinikolas



From The District Rep's Desk: Art Courcy



"It's the most wonderful time of the year..."

I think you'll agree that when Andy Williams recorded that song, he was not thinking of the pressures put on today's rural letter carriers. The holidays can bring some form of added stress to our lives in the workplace as well as at home. Everyone should be aware of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This program is free and offers counseling and advice both in person and/or on their website with information how to better deal with stress in our lives.

**"The telephone number for the EAP
is 1-800-EAP-4You and their website
is EAP4YOU.com"**

I would like to share these tips from the EAP regarding;

Increasing Your Holiday Joy by Lowering Your Holiday Stress

The holiday season is upon us and for many of us that means added stress. The EAP wants to help reduce those stressors so you can relax and enjoy the season's celebrations! When it comes to time, money, and social commitments, most people are trying to do too much.

Here are some strategies to make your holidays more enjoyable:

Decide your priorities: Simplify holiday commitments and make realistic expectations.

Plan family and friend time: Make plans to be with those you care about. The planned time can be about being together and sharing instead of how many or how big gifts will be.

Have a plan about spending: Create a holiday budget and set limits. Don't spend more than you are comfortable with; instead give low cost or homemade gifts.

Rest and exercise: We require rest and exercise to stay healthy throughout the season. Continue your regular exercise; some exercise is better than no exercise.

Experiencing "holiday blues"? Some people may feel increasingly blue or depressed during the holiday season. Signs can include sadness, trouble sleeping, loss of interest and enjoyment, trouble focusing or hopelessness. If these feelings become intense or persist, seek professional assistance. Acknowledging your feelings and seeking help will be a first step to addressing the blues and feeling better.

The telephone number for the EAP is 1-800-EAP-4You and their website is EAP4YOU.com

Don't let stress get the best of you. The holidays are a huge challenge for rural carriers, you are there for your customers throughout the year and do a tremendous job during the busy holiday season year after year. If management pressures you into working faster or unsafely, please do not hesitate to contact your assigned steward for assistance.



From The District Rep's Desk: Art Courcy



Rural Route Re-measurement requested by the rural carrier

We receive many calls from carriers regarding mileage discrepancies on their assigned rural route. With so many changes in management today, often these discrepancies are unnoticed and carriers may be losing out on an evaluation change that they are entitled to. If you feel as though you may have a mileage discrepancy, you have the right to request route a re-measurement. The guidelines for re-measuring routes is detailed in the handbook M-38, Section 612 (Management of Rural Delivery Services)

It states;

Existing rural routes will be remeasured when:

- a. **Line of travel is affected**
- b. **Adjustments are made to the rural routes of an office**
- c. **The mileage recorded during the inspections of a route varies with that recorded on Form 4003 (Official Rural Route Description)**
- d. **It is requested by the rural carrier**
- e. **It is deemed necessary by management**

Language is also contained in Article 30 Section 1.E of the National Agreement:

“Rural routes shall be remeasured upon request of the rural carrier or when the Employer determines it necessary. The rural carrier assigned to the route has the right to be present in a non-duty status at the remeasurement”

If you believe that you have a discrepancy and wish to request a remeasurement you should present to management a letter requesting a remeasurement. The letter should contain your name, date, route number, reason for request and it should be signed by the carrier. You should ask management to sign the request as acknowledgement of receipt. Make two copies of the request. Present the original to the manager and a keep for your records. Management must honor the carrier's request and the remeasurement must be completed within a reasonable period of time. Any change in mileage will take effect with the beginning of first pay period following the remeasurement. Management should notify the carrier of the remeasurement as far in advance as possible.

Management must remeasure the rural route using a measuring device tested for accuracy. The remeasurement should start and end at the designated loading and unloading area. Using the most direct line practical without pulling in or out to service mail-boxes.

Rural Carrier's Responsibilities

- Discuss any existing hazardous conditions
- Notify management of extensions or deletions
- Notify management of any hardship deliveries
- Notify management of any detours currently on the route

Management's Responsibilities

- Use the current PS Form 4003
- Traveling the official line of travel
- Ensuring that all turnarounds are safe
- Form 4003 updated during measurement.
- Recording the mileage for each segment on form 4003



From The District Rep's Desk: Art Courcy



After Measurement

- Management must total and verify all lines on PS Form 4003
- Discuss with carrier if carrier not present for remeasurement
- Complete Form 4003 reflecting changes
- Submit Form 4003 for processing
- All mileage differences require a base hour change
- All time "in-the-bank" not incorporated in base hour
- Banked time will be "rebuilt" the following pay period
- Any mileage difference will be effective the first pay period following the remeasurement.

Remember, this is your route, this is your paycheck, be sure that your route is measured accurately.

Who Ya Gonna Call? Stewards at a glance

Area Stewards:

Ed Knight ed-mary@msn.com
413-323-7392

Theron Boudakian
774-266-7056

Thomas Gorman
774-319-0788

District Rep CT Valley/Greater Boston: *(Full Time DR)*

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

Assistant District Representatives:

Peter Allatin Peter.Allatin@nrlca.org
860-267-0033

Don Ryle Donald.Ryle@nrlca.org
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401-536-8697

Full Time ADR

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

From Your District Presidents

Gary Peterson District 1 President

Hello, District 1 Carriers and Avid Readers of the Back Roads Journal.

I am excited and honored to have been nominated and elected President to represent District 1 of the MaRLCA. I want to thank the members of district 1. It's an honor to serve. I am a 10 year veteran of the US Navy Hospital Corps, where I served both the Navy and Marine Corps at home and abroad. I am a dad of four and husband of 23 years. I am currently an RCA from the Belchertown PO where I sub for Ed Knight (RC) who is a very respected & valuable former long time President of District 1 and current Area Steward. Joining me is newly elected Vice President Bruce Lackey (RC) also of the Belchertown PO who will also be representing us when I am delivering Amazon on Sundays.

The MaRLCA is strengthened by our UNION, so we can build new ladders up and continue to fight for what is right, for carriers and our families. That's what I intend in representing District 1. For a better and more secure future for the Rural Craft and you. The MaRLCA is more unified, more focused, more fiscally sound because of the work done together in the past and work to be done in the future. Great, hard working, men and women, and tough union leaders and activists gave us what we have and (together) our union gives us strength. I'm thinking about the unseen connection between all of us in the Rural Craft, from the ARC & RCA, to the salty tough as nails Regular Carrier. Thank you, for putting your trust in me and I am humbled & proud to represent you and tell you we're going to go forward toward a better day for all the hard, badass, carriers in the Massachusetts Rural Craft. See you at the Spring Meeting in February 2019.

Sincerely,

Gary Peterson

Robert G. Richardson District 3 President

Greetings fellow carriers!! Let me start off by saying THANK YOU to the five people who became District Vice Presidents. Just by doing this, you have helped out YOUR union. The MARLCA is now in compliance with the State of Massachusetts Department of Labor. This is a big burden off our shoulders. Thank You!!

Now, there are many topics that I could write about, but I would like to focus on the next four months. As you are aware, winter is coming. Are you ready?? Do you carry an extra light with you in your LLV or POV? If you are going to be out on the road after 4:30pm, I would suggest having an additional light as a backup in the event that the dome light goes out or the cargo light fails. I personally like to have a light that I can strap on my head. I like to use this type because where you look, that is where the light is focused. Using the dome light in the LLV can cause a glare on the windshield and reduce visibility. Also, if you need to go to a house with a package, certified, or any reason, you now have a light to light the way so you can see what is ahead of you. Avoiding the dreaded "slip, trip and falls".

These types of light are available at many local hardware stores. The better ones that will have different settings are available at outdoor sporting shops, i.e. Dicks Sporting Goods, Bass Pro Shops, Cabela's, Kittery Trading Post, etc. I know many of you have been through this before and I am probably preaching to the choir, but keep in mind the new RCA's. Please give them the tools and information that they need. Safety First!! I wish everyone the best for the upcoming months and look forward to seeing ALL of you at the next districts meetings.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Richardson

From Your District Presidents

Camille Graves District 4 President

Do you wonder where your rural craft is going, and how we get paid?

The Department of Labor mandates that we have these meetings. Having these meetings keeps us informed on the changes that are coming. We have 2 District Meetings and State meetings per year. One in the spring and one in the fall. A variety of topics are discussed on how the Postal Service is changing.

For those that have over 10 years of service have seen the changes in the way we deliver. Packages are heavier in weight and a lot more volume. We are on the road longer hours.

Do you know how we get paid? If your route has growth and you enter it in the edit book, your pay does not change.

Going to the meetings you get valuable information about your pay.

One last thing, do you know the rules about backing up? It's critical that you keep eyes open around your vehicle at all times. The other day I was at a mailbox and all I saw was a little child walking behind the LLV. If I had backed up because of a missed parcel, it would have been a sad day. There are offices that have rules about not backing in or driving into driveways. What do we do?

Our next spring meeting will be in February, hope to see you there.



From the Editor

Dear RCAs - Please don't quit!

Got parcels up to your nostrils? Heater in your LLV on the fritz? Supervisor driving you bonkers? Not a lover of the multi-tier pay system? Stepped in an icy puddle in your sneakers? Customer yelling at you for something the regular did? Or worse, something an Amazon driver did?! Too many hours? Not enough hours?

Well, before you quit, know that I HEAR you!

I was an RCA not long ago, and you know what saved me? No bull—union mtgs! We are here fighting for you too - Not just the regular carriers!

I think the most frequent complaint I hear from RCAs is either too many hours or not enough hours. Did you fill out your postal pulse survey? 'Do you have a best friend at work?' On this one, I have to tell you to be your own best friend. Your district meetings are your best resource. Did you know that even if you're not a union member, you can drop into the district meeting and join the union on the spot? As an RCA, I went to district meetings to find out which offices were desperate for RCA help, so I could call up those Supervisors and beg for more hours. I was in a home office that only needed me every other Saturday, and had a supervisor who was giving all the other hours to a single favorite RCA. Knowledge is power in this situation! Find out who needs help, call those offices, hand out your phone number like crazy, do good work for them, and BOOM!, soon your phone is ringing every single morning. Been there. Somewhere right now a Supervisor is denying leave to a regular carrier due to an RCA shortage, and that regular is saying 'did you try calling Joe or Sally in xyz office? I hear they need more work and they do a good job.' And you know how that happens? District meetings, my friends!

Maybe you're in the opposite situation.... You've got family members to take care of, and there you are in the Lawrence PO, or someplace similar, being worked 80 hours a week. Did you know you can network at the district meetings to find a smaller office that only needs you every other Saturday, and then file a 30-day transfer letter?

Maybe you've been an RCA for 10+ years waiting on a regular route? Why not consider transferring to an office that has no RCAs, and has regular carriers gearing up for retirement? Come out and find out where those offices are at! Your Postmaster sure isn't going to tell you!

Maybe that darned tiered pay system or something else about our contract has you seeing red! You know how you change that? You fill out a resolution at the spring district meeting, and it gets discussed and voted on at the Spring State Meeting. In 2018, I wrote one requesting the removal of Table 2, and I'm waiting with pen in hand to write it again in 2019, depending on what's what in the new contract we haven't seen yet. These resolutions are how we communicate to the National Board what we want negotiated in our next contract. I wrote THE ONLY 2 resolutions for our state meeting last year. Theron proposed a constitution change. Surely there are things that you would like to see changed, and we need to hear from you in the form of resolutions. Any of your officers at your district meetings can help you word it well.

Maybe you need a change of scenery? Get out of the PO and do something different for a week? Then, come with us to the National Convention in Grapevine, TX! Heck, you don't even have to go to a meeting to do it (although for all the above reasons, I would encourage you to go). When you get your National Magazine in the spring, there will be a delegate nomination box to cut out, fill out, and mail to your State Secretary to be added to the ballot in the spring. Send it in and nominate yourself! I would LOVE to see more of our new carriers and RCAs represented at the convention. You don't get paid like you would on a route, but you get mileage reimbursement, and a small per diem. The finances usually come out about even, especially if your PO work is on the new (yuck!) pay scale, and you ask around for a roommate to split costs with. Unfortunately, only about 200 carriers in this state voted on the 2018 Spring Ballot. A few delegates went to convention with 95 votes. That spells opportunity for YOU! Each nominee has space in the Spring Back Roads Journal to say why the other carriers should vote for them. You only need to win over a small following and BOOM!, you're going to Texas! Not that it's fun and games—take it from me, last year we had A LOT of long days. BUT, it is a change of scenery and you get to learn a TON about how this union operates and how to get things changed.

I think this first snow storm has got me fired up! I just finished up shucking slush from the snow plow at the end of the driveway. You can bet when my carrier pulled up, I didn't say 'stay warm/dry now!'

Until we meet at district, State, or BOOM! TEXAS!, stay safe, make sure you EAT well and take some short breaks!
Kathy Makowski-Cote

Backroads Journal

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New District 1 President —pg. 9

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President: *Bill Piwowarski* (508) 344-2475
wjp01585@yahoo.com

Vice President: *Lorraine Pacheco* (774) 244-0837
Lorraine.pacheco@nrlca.org

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

District Presidents:

#1: *Gary Peterson*

#2: *Jim Laferriere*

#3: *Robert Richardson*

#4: *Camille Graves*

#5: *Kenan Myers*

Appointed Members:

Assistant Sec-Treasurer: *Lorraine Pacheco*
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