



Report of the President

William Piwowarski



Here it is late September, and we have had two district meetings. They have been done with some success and in person despite the pandemic. Normal precautions were taken, and I would like to thank all those who have attended those meetings. Unfortunately, we were unable to have NSS District Representative Art Courcy available, but that was due to the National Office.

We can only hope that as we go forward into the new year Covid takes a back seat to normal living and life in general. Here in Massachusetts, we are trying to move forward with as close to normal operations as possible. We are going to have our Fall meeting and it is planned to be a full day meeting, and we are planning on having a National Officer on Zoom as well as our District Representative. I think that should prove interesting.

When it comes to new information, I have always advocated that members go to the National website or read their copy of the National magazine, but now you have other options such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and there are even YouTube videos. Oh, how things change as they reach out in the electronic age.

Contract negotiations are still ongoing, we can only hope that a mutual agreement can be reached. I would like to believe that a negotiated settlement would be in the best interest of all the members. We shall have to wait and see what happens, and if that does happen a ratification meeting would follow at some point and then you, the members in good standing, would get to vote on ratifying that contract.

Things have been in somewhat of a constant state of flux. I have been informed via email and in person of the need for some members to leave their positions on the State board. We are doing what is necessary to keep things moving along at the present. I'm hoping that we will have new people step up in the spring to replace those wishing to step aside. Things seem to be always changing, but I suppose that is the nature of a union.

As we head into fall and winter, I would like to mention a little about safety, I realize many of you are already working late and now that it is getting dark earlier you may be working in the dark more often. Please take precautions to do your job in the safest most effective way possible. The deeper we go into winter months there are more driving hazards and walking when you have to be dismounted to effect delivery. Your safety should always be a priority.

Thank you for your time,

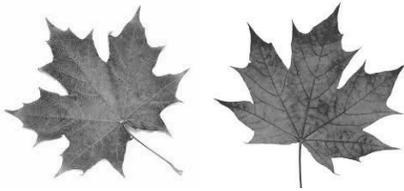
William J. Piwowarski, President MARLCA

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Future Dates to Remember

- Oct 11 — Columbus Day
- Nov 7—Fall State Meeting
- Nov 8 to Dec 13—Open Season
- Nov 11 — Veteran’s Day
- Nov 25 — Thanksgiving Day
- Dec 2—Articles Due for Next Issue
- Dec 25—Christmas



MARLCA EDITOR

Kathy Makowski-Cote
backroads.marlca@gmail.com

**WINTER EDITION
 DEADLINE
 THURS DEC 2**

*To change your mailing
 address:
 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.

October 2021

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

November 2021

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

December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 BRJ Deadline	3	4 PP-26
5	6	7	8	9	10 Pay Day	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 PP-01
19	20	21	22	23	24 Pay Day	25 Christmas
26	27	28	29	30	31	



Report of the Vice-President

Robert "Bob" Richardson



Greetings fellow members!! By the time this issue of the BRJ gets published and mailed out to our members, all the district meetings will be complete. Did you attend one? Don't worry if you did not attend, there will be a State Meeting that you can attend and get caught up on things. This brings me to my first issue, the upcoming state meeting. This year we will be meeting on Sunday November 7, 2021 at The Best Western Hotel located at 181 Boston Post Road West, Marlborough, Ma. 01752. If you need to call the hotel for room reservations or anything the phone # is: 508-460-0700.

I would like to talk about non-members for a moment. There seems to be an increasing number of RCAs, ARCs, and Regulars that are not union members. This is your opportunity to make some quick money. All you have to do is get a non-member to sign an 1187 form and join the union. You and the person who joins will get money back. The person who joined gets money for joining and you for referring a friend (RAFT) Refer A Friend Today. It is that simple. We always have blank 1187 forms at each and every meeting, or you can go to the national web site and download it from there. There is no need to wait. Remember, there is strength in numbers, and the number of union members does a lot for the state when it comes time to send delegates to our national convention.

My next topic to discuss is that of **resolutions**. Resolutions are the appropriate way to get issues changed in the post-al system. Facebook is not the place to air out any issues that you may be having. You may get many likes, which is a good thing, but, nothing gets done about the issue. So how does submitting a resolution work? Good question. You, the union member, have every right to submit a resolution to fix an issue, the way something is done, or a time frame, etc. The State Secretary can help with the writing of your resolution. Next, at the nearest state meeting, the members who attend will vote on what you have submitted. If it passes at the state meeting it will then get forwarded on to our National Board where they will put it before the whole National Convention Delegates to vote on. Depending on whether it is a "Binding" or "Non-Binding" issue can either be acted on right away, or placed in a file for the next contract negotiations if passed. If the vote fails at either the state meeting or the Convention the resolution is done. Back to the drawing board. So let's see if you understand how it works. Here is the example. Now all of you have probably had a 3849 notice left signed by the customer to have an item redelivered the next day. When you get to this address the next day, and you scan the item in question as delivered, the next screen does not have a selection that says "Previously signed 3849". So at the next state meeting I will submit a "resolution" that would state to add the words "previously signed 3849" in that drop down box in the scanner. The members in attendance will vote on this resolution. Once again, if it passes, it gets forwarded on to National. If it fails, I gave it a shot. And that is how it works. Now there may be a little more to it, but this is a quick overview. Think about it for a minute, is there something that you would like change?

My final thoughts are on SAFTEY. I know, you have heard this over and over and are probably getting tired of hearing it. But it is going to happen to someone out there. Soon we will be into the Holiday Season and we will be working long and late hours each and every day. Think about clothing, extra lights, a backup plan, and Safety!! Don't Rush! Don't Run! Look at your LLVs' tires; check that the control knobs work freely, the heater comes on when you flick the switch. If your tires look bald or low on tread, ask your supervisor for a new set of tires. If control knobs or levers do not work freely, now is the time to get things ready. So that is what I have for you! I look forward to seeing each and every one of you at the State meeting in November. BE SAFE, STAY ALERT!!

Robert Richardson, MaRLCA Vice-President



Sec-Treasurer's Two Cents

Lorraine Pacheco



7:53 PM
09/30/21
Cash Basis

MaRLCA Statement of Financial Position As of September 30, 2021

	Sep 30, 21	Sep 30, 20	\$ Change
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
1000000 · TD Bank	12,349.71	11,002.59	1,347.12
1100000 · APCU Savings Account	172,873.30	102,487.75	70,385.55
1200000 · APCU CD's			
1200080 - CD #80	11,467.18	11,228.70	238.48
1200070 · CD #70	29,018.04	28,781.57	236.47
1200075 · CD #75	23,696.53	23,503.43	193.10
1200077 · CD #77	23,550.38	23,317.37	233.01
1200079 · CD #79	30,172.27	29,881.68	290.59
Total 1200000 · APCU CD's	<u>117,904.40</u>	<u>116,712.75</u>	<u>1,191.65</u>
Total Checking/Savings	<u>303,127.41</u>	<u>230,203.09</u>	<u>72,924.32</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>303,127.41</u>	<u>230,203.09</u>	<u>72,924.32</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>303,127.41</u>	<u>230,203.09</u>	<u>72,924.32</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Other Current Liabilities			
2100000 · Payroll Liabilities	-1,746.16	50.34	-1,796.50
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>-1,746.16</u>	<u>50.34</u>	<u>-1,796.50</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>-1,746.16</u>	<u>50.34</u>	<u>-1,796.50</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>-1,746.16</u>	<u>50.34</u>	<u>-1,796.50</u>
Equity			
3900 · Net Assets	279,959.74	204,771.71	75,188.03
Net Income	24,913.83	25,381.04	-467.21
Total Equity	<u>304,873.57</u>	<u>230,152.75</u>	<u>74,720.82</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>303,127.41</u>	<u>230,203.09</u>	<u>72,924.32</u>



Sec-Treasurer's Two Cents

Lorraine Pacheco



Where do I start...Good news or Bad news?

Good news is our bank account is growing and expenses are down. As you can see from the Statement of Finance we are financially in great shape. The primary reason for this is our national convention being cancelled again. Our state would have spent approximately \$90,000 to attend the 2020 in Spokane, WA and the 2021 convention in Orlando, FL. Our expenses have been down primarily due to no in person meetings. The state board conducted Zoom meetings up until July when they met in person for the annual budget meeting and audit of the books.

We had plenty of space to social distance and conduct our union business.

Another good thing is meetings are back in person. Our state meeting will be held November 7th at the Best Western Royal Trade Plaza in Marlboro. It is scheduled to be an all-day meeting and lunch will be provided. Notices will be mailed in the middle of October.

Now for the bad news...our membership numbers are not good!! At the end of last fiscal year (June 30, 2021) we had 1249 members. As of today (Sept 30th) we have 1250. I have processed fifty-five (55) 1187's since July 1st. Our state membership should be thriving. Instead, it's a constant uphill battle to retain members.

The RAFT program is changing again. As of October 1, 2021, new recruits will receive three (3) months of free membership instead of \$25.00. All 1187's need to be sent to me ASAP so I can process them and send them to the national office. On the 91st day the USPS will be notified to start deducting dues. Payments to the recruiters will now be sent quarterly. Payments will only be paid for those new members still on the rolls after ninety (90) days.

Lastly, this year's open season is November 8th -December 13th. At this time, you can make changes to your health, vision, or dental insurance plans. It is also open season for Flexible Spending Accounts.

Stay Safe,

Lorraine Pacheco, MaRLCA Secretary / Treasurer



From The District Rep's Desk

Art Courcy, MA-RI and CT DR



Covid-19

The Covid-19 issues continue to be at the forefront of our daily workdays and personal lives. With the continued surge in cases of the Delta variant, we must all do our part to help keep ourselves and our coworkers safe. Since the beginning of the pandemic, I receive daily Covid-19 positive case reports from the districts that show the positive cases in an office each day. This report only indicates the office and the craft that the employee is in with no names listed. As of this writing, the MA-RI District has had 154 rural carrier positive Covid-19 cases and the CT District has had 120 rural carrier cases for a total of 274 rural carrier positive cases within the states of CT, MA, and RI. I, along with your ADRs continue to have direct communication with the District Manager so that any potential issues can be abated swiftly. Unfortunately, Covid-19 continues to force us into changes that we may not like. We conduct many of our grievance meetings now via ZOOM or teleconference. We still must attend some meetings in person and all protective measures are followed in such meetings. With the fall comes state, district and/or county union meetings. At this time, due to the recent surge in COVID-19 cases, the NRLCA National Board has determined that effective until further consideration, National Steward System (NSS) employees will not be authorized to attend in person local and state meetings. While I as the District Representative, and my Assistant District Representatives are bound by the NRLCA national constitution, we are responsible to the National Association and must adhere to the policies set forth. While it is always great for us to get together to share concerns/issues that need to be addressed at in person meetings, myself or the ADRs are always available for you to reach out to. Hopefully things will improve soon, and we can get back to some type of normalcy.

USPS Restructuring

Earlier this year, with the nationwide USPS District changes, the Greater Boston District and CT Valley Districts are now the Massachusetts-RI and Connecticut Districts respectively. Also, with the changes, there is an ongoing major restructuring of management positions throughout the postal service. I am happy to say that here in the districts that I represent (MA-RI and CT), in the Labor Relations and Human Resources Departments, most of the managers in those departments retained their positions. Although we do not always agree on issues, we have a very strong labor/management relationship and work through issues together. More changes are forthcoming, and we will continue to keep constant and open communication at the district level.

Rural Route Evaluation Compensation System (RRECS)

A pilot mapping process for the Rural Route Evaluation Compensation System (RRECS) began in mid-May through June of this year. Phase 1 of the pilot program consisted of 990 routes located in 300 delivery units across 43 districts. In the MA-RI District, three routes in each office of East Bridgewater, MA, Hope, RI, and Wakefield, RI were mapped and in the CT District, three routes in Brookfield, CT three routes in Tolland, CT, as well as four routes in Deep River, CT. Phase 2 of the pilot program is currently in progress which began August 25. The nationwide mapping consists of nearly 5,000 routes across the same 300 delivery units. Facilitators are now working with carriers in those same original 300 offices and the goal is to map the remaining routes within those units.

What data is being collected for route evaluations?

Route boxes and mileage

- GPS Breadcrumbs inform proposed delivery point locations and route travel paths for the carrier to review and confirm



From The District Rep's Desk

Art Courcy, MA-RI and CT DR



- Delivery Point Manager (DPM) is used to plot a route's Mailstops, Mailbox, Park Points and Door delivery locations
- Line of Travel Manager (LTM) is used to review and confirm a route's delivery stops, travel paths and plot traffic control points

'Please keep in mind that this is a pilot program testing the functionality of the system and there will be NO evaluation changes made to any of these routes from the pilot mapping.'

Mail Volume and Office Data

The following information is collected each day to capture a route's mail volume and other office activity

- End of Run (EOR) and Informed Visibility (IV) automatically collect daily mail volumes
- PTR scans provide daily parcel volumes

Offices conduct a mini mail survey to collect office walk data to account for other office work

Daily Activity & GPS Breadcrumbs

-Mobile Deliver Device (MDD) scanners collect carrier activity data like clock-in and time loading vehicle. They also provide the GPS breadcrumbs used in RRECS Mapping and data on daily boxes served.

Please keep in mind that this is a pilot program testing the functionality of the system and there will be NO evaluation changes made to any of these routes from the pilot mapping.

September Mail Count

A September mail count was conducted during the last twelve working days of September for routes that qualified in accordance with Article 9.2.C.11 of the national agreement.

Sixteen routes in the MA-RI District were counted and Five routes in the CT District were counted under this provision. At the time of this writing, we do not have any results from the September special mail count.

Holiday Assistant Rural Carriers

On September 28, 2021 the U.S. Postal Service and NRLCA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to re-hire rural carrier annuitants (Retired rural carriers) into holiday assistant rural carrier (HARC) positions. These individuals will be used to deliver packages up to 7 days per week.

In accordance with the regulations outlined in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the annuities of these HARCs will not be impacted by their work in the rural carrier craft.

Letters will be sent to all rural carriers who have retired within the last 5 years, beginning October 6th. Positions will be posted in eCareer, October 4th – 22nd, for annuitant applications. The HRSSC will coordinate with each area to ensure the proper information needed for the postings is requested. These annuitants will be required to pass a regular background check and any required driving certification in order to perform the package delivery duties associated with the position.



From The District Rep's Desk

Art Courcy, MA-RI and CT DR



In closing, I would like to thank each one of you for the continued great job that you do serving our customers daily. Yes, these may be trying times, but our rural carriers continue to do a tremendous job serving their customers. With peak season very near, please do not let management force you into a situation that causes you to rush in your daily job duties or force you into a situation where it causes you to work unsafely. Safety should be paramount each and every day. We all know that a rural carrier's job can be dangerous at times. We recently had carriers out working very late at night due to staffing shortages. Even though this is a late time to be out delivering, it is agreed with USPS headquarters that our rural carriers **should not be out on the street later than 8:00 PM. If this occurs in your office, please contact me immediately.**

Please Stay Safe everyone!

Who Ya Gonna Call?

District Representative, MA-RI and CT (*Full Time DR*)

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

Full-Time Assistant District Representative

Joan Tenerella, Joan.Tenerella@nrlca.org
401-536-8697

Assistant District Representatives:

Don Ryle (Massachusetts)
Donald.Ryle@nrlca.org
508-997-1696

Dan Cote (Massachusetts)
Daniel.Cote@nrlca.org
978-237-2625

Michael Merola (Connecticut)
Michael.Merola@nrlca.org
860-921-7643

Peter Allatin (Connecticut)
Peter.Allatin@nrlca.org
860-267-0033

Area Stewards:

Ed Knight
Edward.Knight@nrlca.org
413-323-7392

Theron Boudakian
Theron.Boudakian@nrlca.org
774-266-7056

Thomas Gorman
Thomas.Gorman@nrlca.org
774-319-0788

Matthew Barrett
Matthew.Barrett@nrlca.org
508-525-9854

From The Assistant District Rep's Desk

Joan Tenerella, MA-RI and CT ADR

It has been quite a year and we are finally seeing the light at the end of the tunnel with more and more people being vaccinated. However, this is no time to let our guard down. The Massachusetts/Rhode Island and Connecticut Valley districts have made no changes to the Mask wearing and social distancing policy for all employees of the USPS. Check the NRLCA.org website for updates and changes to this policy.

'... the scanner holds a wealth of information for our managers. It tells them if we have backed up too far or if we are in one place for too long.'

I would also like to update everyone on the most recent issues we have faced.

Management has been diligent checking RIMMS for backing and stationary events. I have attended many PDI's for both issues. As we all know by now the scanner holds a wealth of information for our managers. It tells them if we have backed up too far or if we are in one place for too long. Some managers have gone as far as issuing PDI's for carriers who are in one place for too long. We all know there are several times a day when we must stop to organize the next part of our route for delivery. If management comes to you with one of these issues and wishes to conduct a PDI, contact your union representative for representation.

Another hot issue as of late is management mandating breaks for rural carriers. It is at the rural carrier's discretion to take or not take a break. Management would be in violation of the National Agreement if they gave you a direct order to take a break. Management has even gone so far as to suggest that talking to customers on your route should be written down as a break. We strongly disagree with this, speaking to a customer about postal business is not a break it is business, however any conversations with customers should be addressed with management and notated in the comments section of your 4240.

Rural carriers get 30 minutes per week for personal time (washup, bathroom etc.)

Anything outside of these 5 minutes per day should be written on the 4240 as a break. Some of us do not realize some of the things that constitute a break, the following are some examples:

- *Talking to co-workers on a personal level.
- *Taking or making a personal phone call.
- *Going to the vending machine for a snack or drink.
- *Stopping for lunch or a convenience store on your route.

I look forward to seeing you all in person soon.

As always, I can be reached at:

Joan.Tenerella@nrlca.org or 401 536-8697

Annual Report

Joan Tenerella, MA-RI and CT ADR

This is my first annual report as a Full time Assistant District Representative for the NRLCA. I am assigned to and represent rural carriers in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut.

The following is an extensive list of my activities from June 20, 2020, through June 18, 2021.

93 grievances were processed at step 1.

43 were individual contract, 29 were discipline and 21 contractual class action grievances were filed.

3 cases are open at step one.

1 case is open at step 2

87 cases were settled at step 1.

9 cases were appealed to step 2.

2 were discipline cases and 7 were contractual cases.

8 cases were settled at step 2.

1 case remains open at step 2.

63 Pre-Disciplinary Interviews were attended either in person or over the phone.

The following meetings were attended either in person, over the phone or via ZOOM: Numerous labor management meetings; Weekly telecoms with the Greater Boston District Manager, HR and other unions related to Covid 19; Weekly telecoms with the Connecticut Valley District Manager, HR and other unions related to Covid 19; Monthly telecoms with Executive Committeeman Dennis Conley.

I have observed three offices during REECS Mapping for the Pilot program. I have attended 2 552 investigations related to workplace environment. Other meetings with management and rural carriers included, workplace environment, grievance investigation and grievance interviews, rural route adjustment, training academy and training procedures for new hires. Everything related to Covid 19, PPE, staggering start times. social distancing, pay procedures, FFCRA and FEEL. I have worked with many of our local stewards in helping them to process grievances and do proper interviews.

Some of the issues this past year include: Increased workplace environment issues; Increased package delivery due to Covid 19; Working with management to achieve social distancing in our offices; Working with management to stagger start times where social distancing cannot be achieved; Working with management and the respective districts to acquire PPE; Working with management to correctly pay carriers under FFCRA and FEEL; Most recently PDI's for stationary events, backing, SPM, mandated break for rural carriers and all issues scanner related.

The Past year has been very challenging for everyone!

Our carriers have faced many new challenges related to the safe delivery of the mail while adhering to social distancing. Proper PPE and cleaning were now a part of their daily duties. Some, however, did not see it this way and came to their union Representatives for guidance. Tensions ran high in many cases and as a union representative I have seen workplace environment issues go through the roof. I had two cases this year within 24 hours in two different offices where a Supervisor and a Postmaster, respectively put their hands on a Rural craft employee. Both are still not working in their offices but have not been removed from the postal service. It is so frustrating that when the postal service states this kind of actions will not be tolerated and yet continue to do just that, Tolerate it.

In conclusion I would like to thank the NRLCA for giving me this opportunity to do what I love in helping my fellow carriers. I would also like to thank District Representative Arthur Courcy and Executive Committeeman Dennis Conley for their continued support, guidance, and leadership. I look forward to working through the many challenges ahead.

Your Union—Your Voice

Dorothy Floyd Rural Carrier and Local Steward

Happy Autumn!

Fall is the best time to be a rural carrier!

We get the joy of working outside and taking in all of the beauties of leaves changing and falling. Cool breezes, and crisp mornings. It is finally comfortable outside!
For myself it's just the perfect kind of weather!

Things are starting to gear up for Christmas. Plan ahead by preparing easy meals for when you get home on those later nights. Christmas shop early so you are ready before the crowds. And do remember to take care of yourself. You are important and very much needed part to making Christmas happen for all of your families who depend on you every single day to be there!

Be encouraged!

You are still making a difference every day.

The Dot

The Backroads Journal is Seeking a New Editor

Kathy Makowski-Cote, Editor

The State Editor position is appointed by the State President at the Spring State Meeting. At this time, I would like to thank Bill Piwowarski for the opportunity to serve you all the past few years. We are now seeking to pass the torch to another individual with social and grammatical enthusiasm! Job responsibilities include putting together 3 issues annually; attending your district and state meetings; photographing and writing up union events; maintaining backup of published issues; and attending required day of annual officer training. Preferably, the Editor should also go to National Convention, to attend annual Editor seminar and document events. Compensation includes an annual \$500 salary, plus a small number of days paid by the union, as required to complete publication. There will be a day of Editor training and a union laptop provided that travels with the position.

Interested individuals should send a letter of interest to Bill Piwowarski at william.piwowarski@nrlca.org.

USPS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

A Program You Can Trust



800-327-4968

(800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 877-492-7341

www.EAP4YOU.com

Backroads Journal

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NEW EMAIL ADDRESS:

backroads.marlca@gmail.com

FALL STATE MEETING

Sunday Nov 7, 2021
The Best Western Hotel
181 Boston Post Road West
Marlborough

Bfast @ 8AM
Mtg Starts @ 9AM

State Executive Officers:

President: Bill Piwowarski (508) 344-2475

william.piwowarski@nrlca.org

Vice President: Robert Richardson (978) 314-4449

rrrich84@comcast.net

Sec-Treasurer: Lorraine Pacheco (774) 244-0837

Lorraine.pacheco@nrlca.org

District Presidents:

#1: Camille Graves

#2: Dianne Daley

#3: Haley Bureau

Appointed Positions:

Assistant

Sec-Treasurer: Position Vacant

PAC Chair:

Chrissy Chamberland

Editor:

Kathy Makowski –Cote

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS:

backroads.marlca@gmail.com