VOLUME 14, ISSUE 2 Spring 2023



Report of the President

William Piwowarski, MaRLCA President





New Endeavors

I believe that by the time you read this you will have finally been through your first real go round with RRECS, how it all has come out well I think only time will tell. Fortunately for me I am not truly affected as you know I have been retired awhile now. When I stop and look back on some of the changes that have happened since then, well I missed out on a much higher high three, but then I missed out on some of the headaches as well. I just hope going forward it works as I recall doing the scans and entries as a test office for RRECS and finally getting a system that evaluates routes fairly.

As you may know I am finally moving on from the board here in Massachusetts, it was past due but we needed members to step up and fill those positions and we will now have that. Thank you for allowing me to serve as your state presi-

... (continued p. 3)

MA Rural Letter Carriers' Association Election Notice

A secret ballot election for the Delegates of the MARLCA to the 2023 NRLCA National Convention to be held in Grand Rapids, Michigan on August 15-18,2023 is being conducted by mail. Any eligible member who has not received a ballot or any member who spoils a ballot may request a new ballot by contacting Election Chairperson Camille Graves at 508-397-4541. If you request and return another ballot, only the replacement ballot will be counted.



BACKROADS JOURNAI

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Future Dates to Remember

• May 7 Spring State Meeting Best Western Royal Plaza Marlboro, MA

- May 14—Mother's Day
- May 20—Armed Forces Day
- May 29—Memorial Day
- June 14—Flag Day
- June 18—Father's Day
- July 4—Independence Day
- August 15-18 National Convention 2023
- Sept. 5—Labor Day

MARLCA EDITOR

Wyatt Aloisio backroads.marlca@gmail.com

BRJ FALL EDITION DEADLINE

Tuesday, August 29

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.

May 2023

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

June 2023

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

July 2023

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

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BACKROADS JOURNAL

Report of the President

William Piwowarski



... (continued p. 1)

dent these many years. I have learned a great deal, met many great people and tried to represent you well when I traveled to Washington to lobby on the Hill.

I would also like to thank all of you who have supported me in my efforts to support The Pan Mass Challenge (PMC) as I have stepped away from raising money for that as well.

Since this past year we had our Fall State Meeting and I believe that it went pretty well, sure we always could have more members attend, but that is always your choice, We do appreciate those who make it there to pick up some new information or ask questions about their jobs and work environment.

This spring/winter district meetings went very well. This was probably due to the fact that many wanted to know more about what was happening with the upcoming mini mail survey, new wording to get used to. It sure was great seeing you all, I am hoping to see you all at the Spring State meeting. Don't forget it is your Union and your participation makes it work.

What is up next for us and from what I have seen for some of you is attending the Eastern States conference in Portland Maine. It's fairly close by and should be interesting in that it happens right after the results of the first RRECS. It just happens that it is also the place where I attended my first Eastern States Conference, it sure has been quite the ride.

I hope to see many of you at the Spring State Meeting in May. I will still be attending meetings and helping where I can meet and talk with friends. You never are ever quite done but maybe just fade a little into the background.

Thank You,

William J Piwowarski, MaRLCA President



800-327-4968

(800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 877-492-7341 www.EAP4YOU.com

Report of the Vice-President

Robert "Bob" Richardson



Hello again my friends,

It seems like a long time since we met in person, but it has only been a few months. I would like to take a moment to thank everyone who attended their district meetings. It has been a long time since I have witnessed the turnout like I did. On that note, I would also like to thank everyone who attended one or both of the mini- mail survey zoom meetings. I do hope they were helpful to you for the 2-week counting of mail. I sat in on both of the meetings and there were numerous good questions asked.

So, by the time you have this issue of the BRJ in your hands, the mini mail survey will have been completed, and the new route evaluations will be in place. Our next task will be looking to elect new state officers, and the delegates to the national convention. The first thing to do, is to look over this issue of the BRJ and read who has been nominated for delegate. Each of the elected individuals will represent 100 of your fellow members, so I would like to talk about elections.

When you receive your ballot, there will be a few different pages. Before making ANY marks, please READ the instructions. When electing your state officers, make sure you vote for the person you feel is the best choice for leading the MaRLCA forward in the next year. Now, when it comes to electing your members for delegate, make sure you know how many you can vote for. This will be printed in the instructions. You can vote for less, but not more than the total number allowed. Please, do not write messages, or statements on the ballot, this will be cause to toss out, or void that ballot.

Now comes the hard part of voting, returning your ballot. After making your selections, please take the ballots and place them in the "secret ballot" envelope. There should not be any identifying marks on this envelope. This envelope will now be placed into the main envelope with the printed address to go to the elections P.O. Box. This envelope must have your name on it in the return address section so the elections committee can verify who sent it in and be checked off the list. Any ballots without a return name and address will be voided. Each year the elections committee has a few ballots come in with these issues that I just stated. So please be careful, and once again, read the instructions first. If you make a mistake, please do not cross things out, contact the elections committee chairperson for a new ballot. The union pays a lot of money to have these ballots printed and mailed out so please vote. By not voting, you are just throwing money away. Last thing about elections, **DO NOT WAIT** to make your selections!! It only takes a few minutes.

To close out this article, the election results will be made public at the State Meeting on Sunday May 7th, 2023 at the Best Western Royal Plaza in Marlboro, MA. Welcome reception begins at 8 a.m. with the meeting commencing at 9 a.m. This is an all-day meeting with lunch being served. Please come and hear or air out your concerns regarding the mini mail survey, hot topics, make a resolution, donate to PAC, etc.. At the time of typing this article, a National Officer has not been named to attend, but please check the Massachusetts web site weekly for any updates.

... (continued p.6)

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BACKROADS JOURNAL



Sec-Treasurer's Two Cents

Lorraine Pacheco



12:41 PM 03/04/23 Cash Basis

MaRLCA Statement of Financial Position

As of February 28, 2023

Feb 28, 23	Feb 28, 22	\$ Change
0.00	12,715.63	-12,715.63
•		20,500.43
6,653.34	5,005.50	1,647.84
-	,	331.44
•	,	345.65
,		291.59
•		171.55
30,512.58	30,300.35	212.23
119,882.43	118,529.97	1,352.46
353,543.72	342,758.62	10,785.10
353,543.72	342,758.62	10,785.10
353,543.72	342,758.62	10,785.10
780.37	413.39	366.98
330,376.48	279,988.00	50,388.48
22,386.87	62,357.23	-39,970.36
352,763.35	342,345.23	10,418.12
353,543.72	342,758.62	10,785.10
	0.00 227,007.95 6,653.34 11,962.20 29,496.43 24,094.48 23,816.74 30,512.58 119,882.43 353,543.72 353,543.72 780.37 780.37 330,376.48 22,386.87 352,763.35	0.00 12,715.63 227,007.95 206,507.52 6,653.34 5,005.50 11,962.20 11,630.76 29,496.43 29,150.78 24,094.48 23,802.89 23,816.74 23,645.19 30,512.58 30,300.35 119,882.43 118,529.97 353,543.72 342,758.62 353,543.72 342,758.62 780.37 413.39 330,376.48 279,988.00 22,386.87 62,357.23 352,763.35 342,345.23

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Report of the Vice-President

Robert "Bob" Richardson



... (continued p. 4)

Winter seems to have made a comeback the last few weeks so don't let your guard down. Stay focused, and be aware of your surroundings at all times. Use those hand rails, wear the proper footwear, and most important DO NOT RUSH!!

I look forward to seeing you and talking to you at the meeting. Stay safe and good luck carriers.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Richardson, MaRLCA Vice-President

Recognitions



A special thank you to the many MARLCA members who turned out to attend their Spring District Meetings. We hope to see many of you in attendance at the Spring State Meeting on May 7th!

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Sec-Treasurer's Two Cents

Lorraine Pacheco



Spring is here, and you know what that means...it's time for another state election.

Ballots will be mailed the second week of April for state officers and delegates for our national convention. There will be two ballots in the envelope. One for state officers' and the other for delegates. Please read the voting instructions. Do not vote for more delegates than the maximum number listed on the top of the ballot. If you do your ballot will be deemed null and void.

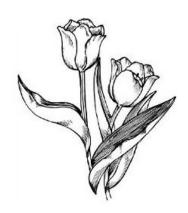
The cost of running a state election is very costly when you factor in postage, printing, room rental, & election committee salaries. Please take a few minutes and vote. All ballots need to be received by Thursday May 4, 2023. The election committee will report the results at our spring state meeting on Sunday May 7, 2023

The spring state meeting will be held at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel in Marlborough. This is an all-day meeting. Lunch will be provided at no cost. As of now we are planning on having a national officer attend along with our district representative Art Courcy. I will be sending the meeting notice out in April.

With all the changes happening in our craft right now I would hope that attendance would be great at this meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorraine Pacheco, MaRLCA Secretary / Treasurer



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From The District Rep's Desk

Art Courcy, MA-RI and CT DR



Safety

I would like to see everyone make a commitment this year to make it the safest year that you have ever worked thus far in your career and carry on that mentality and performance. Rural carriers have a very dangerous job. From distracted drivers, cell phones, scanners, dogs, children, ice, and inclement weather. These conditions all factor into you working safely as being a must. Recently we have had some very major incidents of motor vehicle accidents and carriers sustaining serious injuries. As we all know, if you are driving an LLV, they are getting very old. If you have a vehicle that the horn does not work, turn signals do not work, headlights/brake lights are not working, do not drive that vehicle!

The stories that we are hearing sometimes seem beyond belief. A recent example is that an LLV did not have working headlights, so a manager instructed the carrier to be back at the office by 3:30 PM to obtain another vehicle. **NO!!** Do not let this type of scenario occur. Shame on the manager that makes a poor decision like this and puts our carriers at risk. Your health and life are much too important to take these chances. Your manager has an obligation to provide you with safe working conditions.

As per the Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM);

Managers must:

- a. Demonstrate a commitment to providing safe and healthful working conditions in all Postal Service owned and leased installations,
- b. Become involved in day-to-day safety performance, and
- c. Be held accountable for safety performance and compliance with OSHA standards and regulations

The safety philosophy of the Postal Service is stated below:

Any occupational injury or illness can be prevented. This goal is realistic, not theoretical. Supervisors and

... (continued p.9)

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BACKROADS JOURNAL

From The District Rep's Desk

Art Courcy, MA-RI and CT DR



... (continued p. 8)

managers have primary responsibility for the well-being of employees and must fully accept this principle.

If you find yourself in a possible unsafe situation, first, discuss the concerns with your manager. If you still feel that it is unsafe, a PS Form 1767 should be completed and given to the manager for a written response. And of course, as always, if you feel the need to confer with a steward, please do not hesitate to call one us.

DACA Code G

Per the 2021-2024 Agreement between the NRLCA and USPS: Effective the Presidents' Day 2023 holiday, regular rural carriers who work their holiday, at their option, may elect to have their annual leave balance credited with one day of annual leave in lieu of holiday pay. DACA code G has been established for this purpose and will be valid beginning in PP 05/2023. DACA G work hours must be included in Actual Weekly Work Hours. DACA G will pay 1 day's evaluation as applicable. Employees using DACA G will have their leave balance credited with 1 day of annual leave but will not receive holiday pay for the observed holiday. DACA G is only valid for Des/Act 71-0 Regular Rural Carriers. Des/Act 74-0 RCA's assigned to a regular route are not eligible for DACA G.

Rural Carrier Academies

Attention: All regular rural carriers, we are looking for good, dedicated, qualified rural carriers to help with the training of our new RCAs in the rural carrier academies. Our newly hired RCAs need you! We are looking for academy trainers in our New Haven and Enfield academies. Many postings for new instructors have gone out to all rural offices from the district training department and my belief is that they do not always get posted in individual offices. Therefore, I felt the need to announce through other means, such as your Union newsletter. Our academy trainers are an integral part of the development of

... (continued p. 10)

From The District Rep's Desk

Art Courcy, MA-RI and CT DR



... (continued p.9)

our newly hired leave replacements. The experience learned and the proper instruction from qualified trainers is imperative to the success of the rural craft. I know that we have many outstanding regular carriers that would help to bolster our academy training staff. Please contact me if you have any questions or need further information.

Rural carrier instructors must exhibit exemplary behavior and presentation skills, as well as a professional appearance while always maintaining a positive attitude. The USPS RCA academy represents a corporate commitment to the training and development of rural letter carrier employees. Therefore, instructors who demonstrate the principles of effective interpersonal behavior are a major element in ensuring the success of this national program. Course instructors are responsible for managing the learning process in the Rural Carrier Academy. Facilitators must successfully complete the Facilitator Skills Training (FST) - LCL. In addition to this requirement, new facilitators must attend an RCA academy to observe, cofacilitate with a seasoned facilitator, and then facilitate on their own with a seasoned facilitator observing and coaching. Those interested in this unique academy instructor opportunity should submit a letter of interest to me at arthur.courcy@nrlca.org or to John Papa, john.f.papa@usps.gov Employee Development Specialist, MA-RI District, providing the following information: Name, address, current work location, number of years with the US Postal Service, number of years as a rural carrier, brief narrative of any training and communication experience and most importantly why you would like to participate in this ad hoc RCA academy instructor training opportunity.

The Manager, Employee Development, will then coordinate the selection of the instructors with the district leadership serving as review committee members and jointly with the NRLCA District Representative. I know that we have many carriers that are fully qualified and capable of taking on this experience and we hope to hear from you soon. Please stay safe!

Art Courcy, MA-RI and CT District Rep

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2022 State Elections Candidate's Corner (in order of receipt)



Hello Fellow Members,

My name is Cliff Morris and I'm looking for your vote to the National Convention . I've been a Shop Steward for 5 years and I've worked in many offices throughout Massachusetts. I am currently the President of District 3.

I feel that the only way to keep the membership informed is to gain all the information I can by attending the National Convention for 2023.

Thank you for your consideration!

Hello Fellow Members,

I ask for your vote for National Delegate. Diversity within our voters is key! Send some folks from Table 2 (that's me!), some from Table 1, some RCAs. Make our contract stronger for all of us.

Come to the May State Meeting to vote on my resolution to bring the total duration of Table 2 down to the same time frame as Table 1.

Kathy Makowski-Cote



Fellow members,

It's that time again to vote for Delegates to the National Convention. My experience with the USPS and the NRLCA is as follows: District President, Academy Instructor, OJI Trainor, Chairman of the Constitution and Resolution Committee, State VP, past dele-

gate and over 21 years in the postal service. I enjoy doing work to contribute to **our** union. I take all votes on resolutions and National Board positions seriously because they impact **all of us** as rural carriers. **Let me be your voice!** I ask you for your support. Please vote for Robert "Bob" Richardson as a Delegate.



Members of the MaRLCA,

I am Robert "Bob" Richardson and I'm running for the position of State President. I have over 20 years of experience with the postal service and this union. I am currently your State Vice President, Academy Instructor, and contact for the Provident

Guild. I have been a District President, "on the job instructor", and an executive committeeman. I feel that it is time for me to take the next step and become your President and continue to lead this union forward. My promise is simple, to make the best decisions for this union as a whole.



Hello, Fellow Members,

I am running for delegate for the 2023 National Convention. The changes our craft is going through are overwhelming. The job as we once knew is changing and, like you, I don't like not knowing what my salary will be every six months.

Many of you have reached out to me with your concerns. As most of you know I have been around for many years and involved in different roles throughout this union. I would like the opportunity to represent the MaRLCA this year and will continue to fight for what is fair.

Lorraine Pacheco

2022 State Elections Candidate's Corner (in order of receipt)



Greetings,

I have been a member of the union for 7 years, have served as your PAC Chair for the last year and a half. I am hoping for your vote as a delegate to the 2023 National Convention. I had an amazing time at last Convention and learned so much. There are still many things I am looking forward to learning and having the ability to attend National Convention once again would be a great honor.

I do hope you consider my request and vote for me as one of your delegates for this year.

Thank You!

Chrissy Chamberland



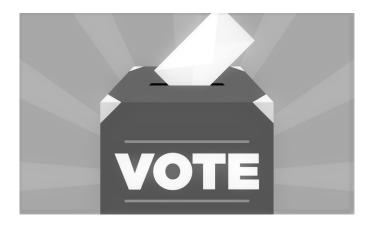
Hello Fellow Members,

My name is William Piwowarski and I am running for delegate to the National Convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan 2023. I believe that I am qualified to represent you as I have been a delegate and your state president these past few years. While being a delegate I have been tasked with being a sergeant at arms and member of the elections committee as well as a Chairman on the elections committee.

I would greatly appreciate your support to send me as a delegate to National in Grand Rapids.

Thank You,

William J Piwowarski



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BACKROADS JOURNAL

Correspondences

Using the Circle of Control

How to Deal with Difficult Work Situations

From the Desk of the USPS Employee Assistance Program

Focus on "Who," "What," "Where," and "How"

How you react and respond to difficult situations at work can go a long way toward having a positive outcome. It's easy to get caught up in feelings and causation when involved in a difficult situation. There is sometimes a tendency to focus on why something happened which often is a question that can't be answered. Why something is happening may be the result of things outside your control. It may also be impossible to determine. Focusing on the facts such as who, what, where and how, will help you keep heated emotions at bay while communicating more effectively.

- Who Focus on who is involved in the difficult situation. Listen to others. Different people have
 different point of views and taking them into account may help you be able to frame the problem in
 a different light.
- What Determine the facts. Investigate to find out what specific behaviors have occurred and what consequences resulted. Often in difficult situations, people will get emotional and may have outbursts address the behavior without attacking the other person's character.
- Where Be aware of your setting and the timing. When possible, try to resolve conflicts in a private area. This demonstrates sensitivity and respect for all involved and helps minimize outside gossip and involvement. If possible, consider the timing. It may be more productive to address a difficult situation when all parties are calm versus during the heat of the moment.
- **How** How you handle a situation will affect the outcome. Be courteous, calm and aware of your body language. Walk away and take a break if you need to. Remember to take deep breaths, especially if you are angry. Ask questions in a respectful tone. Make sure you understand what you are responsible for and be certain you understand what must be done and when.

Paying attention to specific facts and details during challenging situations can help you more effectively navigate them. Try not to let your emotions take over. Strive for positive interactions. Try your best and don't act in self-defeating ways when under pressure.

If you struggle with managing difficult situations, or would like to learn more about the circle of control, reach out to the EAP. Call 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU), TTY: 877-492-7341 or visit EAP4YOU.com.

Political Action Committee (PAC)

Chrissy Chamberland, PAC Chair

Hello! Here is your quarterly update, some might be a repeat if you went to one of the meetings, but for the rest its all new and exciting! Well I think so.

HR 3076 Postal Reform (6/2022) Important Dates for Medicare Integration:

- January 2023: any plan participating in PSHB program must include plans with benefits Equivalent to FEHB for postal workers and annuitants
- April 1, 2024: Special enrollment period for annuitants NOT enrolled in Part B to enroll penalty free (6-month period).
- January 1, 2025: Current employees under age 64 as of this date will be required to enroll in Medicare Part B once eligible

NOTE: current annuitants will not be required to enroll in Medicare Part B if they choose to stay out*

HR 4268 Federal Retirement Fairness Act

- Buy Back Time
- 100 Sponsors signed on: MA Legislators: Lynch, McGovern

S1663 Shipping Equity Act

- Allow shipping of alcoholic beverages through USPS prohibition era law still on the books
- 4 Sponsors signed on: MA Legislators: None

HR 82 Social Security Fairness Act of 2023

- Eliminates pension offset (reduced Social Security) for retirement and disability.
- 143 Sponsors signed on: MA Legislators; Keating, Lynch, McGovern, Moulton, Trahan.

+++Each Act needs 250 sponsors before it is brought to the house floor for a vote+++

Spring Meetings: Together we raised \$450, Woo-hoo!

D1: \$105 D2: \$115 D3: \$230

Congratulations to District 3 for raising the most money so far in 2023! Can they be beat? Who will come out on top in the fall?

... (continued p.17)

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Political Action Committee (PAC)

Chrissy Chamberland, PAC Chair

.... (continued p.16)

Last but not least, and very exciting: We have a brand new Asst PAC Chair, she will be attending State meetings, and helping me out at District meetings! She is an RCA in Ware and is eager and excited to learn more about PAC and help to raise funds to promote the pieces of legislation that directly impact us as Rural Carriers. Welcome aboard Karra!

Chrissy Chamberland, PAC Chair

Who Ya Gonna Call? Stewards at a glance

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

Art Courcy, <u>Arthur.Courcy@nrlca.org</u> 508-761-6870

Full-Time Assistant District Representative (MA-RI and CT)

Joan Tenerella, <u>Joan.Tenerella@nrlca.org</u> 401-536-8697

Full-Time Assistant District Representative (CT)

Michael Merola, Michael.Merola@nrlca.org 860-921-7643

Part-Time District Representatives:

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

Matthew Barrett (Massachusetts)
Matthew.Barrett@nrlca.org
508-443-7383

Area Stewards:

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

Theron Boudakian

Theron.Boudakian@nrlca.org

774-266-7056

Thomas Gorman <u>Thomas.Gorman@nrlca.org</u> 774-319-0788



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Backroads Journal

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State Executive Officers:

President: Bill Piwowarski (508) 344-2475

william.piwowarski@nrlca.org

Vice President: Robert Richardson (978) 314-4449

rnrich84@comcast.net

<u>Sec-Treasurer:</u> Lorraine Pacheco (774) 244-0837

Lorraine.pacheco@nrlca.org

District Presidents:

#1: Bruce Lackey

#2: Dianne Daley

#3: Clifford Morris

Appointed Positions:

Assistant

Sec-Treasurer: Chrissy Chamberland

chrissycsm163@gmail.com

PAC Chair: Chrissy Chamberland

Editor:

Wyatt Aloisio

EMAIL ADDRESS:

backroads.marlca@gmail.com