

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 1

Winter 2023



MARLCA

# BACKROADS JOURNAL



## A Look Through the NRLCA Archives



### Report of the President

Robert "Bob" Richardson



Well, hello again fellow Rural Carriers,

It seems like I just wrote an article for the BRJ, but time does fly by if you're not paying attention. There are a few things that I want to talk about in this issue of the BRJ.

Where I have been, what I have been doing, the annual Fall Booster Meeting, and the upcoming holiday season. So, let's begin with where I have been. In October, I along with 11 other "NEW" State Presidents, or "newly elected" State Presidents gathered at

... (continued p.3)

### Inside this issue:

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## Future Dates to Remember

- Dec. 24—Christmas Eve
- Dec.25—Christmas Day
- Dec. 31—New Year's Eve
- Jan. 1—New Year's Day
- Jan. 15— Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Feb. 7—District 1 Meeting
- Feb. 19—President's Day
- March 15-17—Eastern States Convention
- May 5—Spring State Booster Meeting
- District 2 & 3 Spring Meetings—TBD

## MARLCA EDITOR

*Wyatt Aloisio*  
backroads.marlca@gmail.com

**BRJ SPRING  
DEADLINE  
March 6, 2024**

*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.

# December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 PP-26
3	4	5	6	7 Hanukkah	8 Pay Day	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 PP-01
17	18	19	20	21 Winter Begins	22 Pay Day	23
24 Christ- mas Eve	25 Christ- mas Day	26	27	28	29	30 PP-02

# January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 New Year's E	1 New Year's D	2	3	4	5 Pay Day	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 PP-03
14	15 MLK	16	17	18	19 Pay Day	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27 PP-04
28	29	30	31			

# February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Pay Day	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 PP-05
11	12	13	14	15	16 Pay Day	17
18	19 Presi- dents' D	20	21	22	23	24 PP-06
25	26	27	28	29		



## Report of the President

Robert "Bob" Richardson



...(continued p.1)

the NRLCA home office in Alexandria, Va. for a week of Presidents training. This was 3 days going over topics that we as presidents would be facing. These topics ranged from accounting, parliamentary procedures, appeals, etc... We met with 4 of the National Officers during the week where they gave us a view of what their job is and how we would be working together. There are many adjectives that would describe this week. Interesting, confusing, long, and most of all scary. All in all, a well presented and informative week of knowledge. I hope I don't forget any of it.

On to the Fall Booster Meeting. In case you are new to the organization or Association, the first Sunday in November is the date of this meeting. As our membership continues to fluctuate, so does the turnout at meetings, whether it be district or state. So maybe it was a blessing in disguise that the turn out was LOW, as this meeting being my first time running a State Meeting. I'll be totally honest with everyone; I don't know how to fix the attendance at these meetings. What I do know and can tell you, is that this is where the information is!! Knowledge is power!! District Representative Art Courcy was in attendance and presented a fantastic PowerPoint regarding DPM and LTM. Do you know what these two acronyms are? You should by now. If you don't know them, please ask your steward. Let's stay with these two for another question. Ready, how often should a carrier update these programs? If you don't know, ask your steward for help. If, your manager tells you that these programs are all set, he/she is lying to you. It is YOUR money, it is YOUR DUTY, to update these programs MONTHLY!! They {management} cannot do it for you while you are out on the route. You need to be on the clock so your route gets credit for doing this. It can be done on End of Shift Duties, or under Start Load time. What I have just been saying is all part of the new evaluation process. We, as carriers need to stay on top of these issues if we want our route evaluation to stay as high as it can be. Art Courcy went on to talk about other issues and answered the members questions. I have always said, "I have never walked out of a meeting and thought that was a waste of time". One bit of information, just one at a time, and you to can be the most knowledgeable carrier.

Moving on to the holiday season. If the new RRECS system hasn't increased your stress level, we enter the Christmas rush. Remember that song when you were younger "It's the most wonderful time of the year"? Well, the person who wrote that song didn't work for the post office. What I am getting at is that if you are feeling stressed out, stop!! There are people who you can call. You are not alone. Yes, we start around 6am and go non stop until 6pm or longer depending on your route, your parcel total, weather conditions, etc... We all know it is coming, now is the time to prepare. Get those items you said you were going to buy last Christmas to help us out for this Christmas. If you need to talk to someone, ask your postmaster for the number to EAP, or talk to another carrier you feel comfortable with.

My fellow carriers, I ask for your help in promoting the Massachusetts Rural Letter Carriers' Association, the "Union". There are carriers out there that are not members. They work in your offices. If you know someone who is not a member, please do your best to convince them why it would be profitable to join. Wrong or mis information regarding the RRECS system which effects your pay and their pay. Voting on the next contract. Only active members get to vote, don't you want a say? Have them get in touch with me and I would be more than happy to talk to them.

A few things as I close this article. I would like to wish each and everyone of you and your families a Happy Thanksgiving, and a safe and Happy Holidays. Please be smart!! When in doubt, STAY OUT!! Please continue to check the National Web Site: [NRLCA.ORG](http://NRLCA.ORG), and the Massachusetts Web Site: [MaRLCA.ORG](http://MaRLCA.ORG) for any updates and information. Be safe everyone, and I look forward to seeing you in February at the District Meetings.

*Robert G. Richardson, MaRLCA President*



## Report of the Vice-President

Jason Dole



Hello fellow union members,

I would like to thank all of you that attended the State meeting. We had a great informative meeting. However the State Board and I would always love to see more members in attendance. We know that it is hard to give up a Sunday off but we also know that it is of the utmost importance to have informed, educated members. There is strength in information and numbers. We are always looking for ideas to get members that don't usually come to meetings to attend these meetings. Don't forget meetings at the District levels, State levels and At levels are paid for by your dues. So again come get some food, meet some new people, express concerns and get your questions answered.

On that subject the Eastern States Conference is being held in our backyard this March. It is being held from March 15th through the 17th at the Wyndam Newport Hotel in Middletown, RI. The National office has added to its menu on the National website a drop down icon that says area conference. It provides you with the information about the conference and also the registration form. We have a great room rate of \$129 a night and the state will pay for your registration fee. So please use this opportunity to be active in your union.

The National board will be at the conference. It's a great place to again educate yourself not only about your craft but to learn what National board does for you and the members of the NARLCA. This will be my first time attending and I'm hoping to have a great attendance from Massachusetts to show the Nation Board that we are dedicated to our union.

Lastly, I said this at the last state meeting but I will say it again. We all know what's coming in the next two months and is most likely happening by the time you read this. All Heck is going to break loose. First it's the piles of catalogs that seem to never end followed by mounds of parcels and hundreds of grossly misaddressed Christmas Cards from Grandma.

The most important thing is that we stay calm, stay healthy, and stay rested if that is all possible. I wish the members the best of Luck this holiday season. Please have a safe Happy Thanksgiving and I hope to see you at Eastern States or meetings this spring.

*Jason Dole*, MaRLCA Vice-President







## Sec-Treasurer's Two Cents

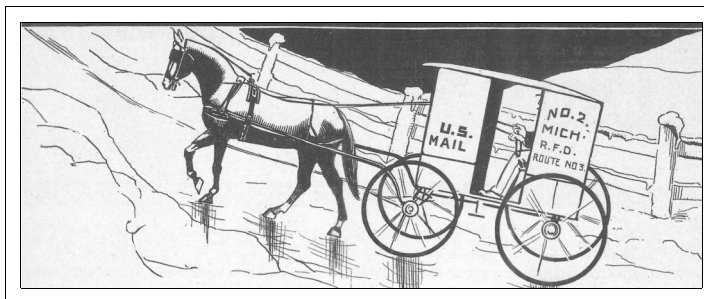
Lorraine Pacheco



11:05 AM  
11/06/23  
Cash Basis

### MaRLCA Statement of Financial Position As of October 31, 2023

	Oct 31, 23	Oct 31, 22	\$ Change
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
1100000 · APCU Savings Account	209,999.57	203,285.09	6,714.48
1100500 · APCU Checking Account	8,352.64	11,768.32	-3,415.68
1200000 · APCU CD's			
1200080 - CD #80	12,244.20	11,877.78	366.42
1200070 · CD #70	30,030.84	29,324.23	706.61
1200075 · CD #75	24,547.06	23,953.82	593.24
1200077 · CD #77	24,396.80	23,774.88	621.92
1200079 · CD #79	31,245.65	30,453.13	792.52
<b>Total 1200000 · APCU CD's</b>	<b>122,464.55</b>	<b>119,383.84</b>	<b>3,080.71</b>
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>340,816.76</b>	<b>334,437.25</b>	<b>6,379.51</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>340,816.76</b>	<b>334,437.25</b>	<b>6,379.51</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>340,816.76</b>	<b>334,437.25</b>	<b>6,379.51</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>			
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities	3,218.51	604.20	2,614.31
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>3,218.51</b>	<b>604.20</b>	<b>2,614.31</b>
Equity			
3900 · Net Assets	331,384.28	330,376.48	1,007.80
Net Income	6,213.97	3,456.57	2,757.40
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>337,598.25</b>	<b>333,833.05</b>	<b>3,765.20</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>340,816.76</b>	<b>334,437.25</b>	<b>6,379.51</b>





## Sec-Treasurer's Two Cents

Lorraine Pacheco



Hello Everyone,

The winter issue of the Backroads Journal can only mean one thing, 2023 is coming to an end. Time sure does fly when you're busy. It takes a lot of time and preparation to keep our state running smooth and in compliance with the national office.

This year we held a retirement luncheon for the retired members that continue to support our union. It was great to listen everyone reminisce about the good old days when they carried mail. Hopefully, we will be able to make this an annual event.

This year we had 14 delegates attend the national convention in Grand Rapids MI. I'm happy to report that the resolutions Massachusetts submitted moved up. Being a national delegate is NOT a vacation. I appreciate all the hard work and long hours our delegates endured this past convention. I'm sure that they all walked away with a better of understanding of the process and how it affects our members. If you're considering running for national delegate, fill out the nomination form and get on the ballot in the spring. The 2024 national convention will be held August 27-30th in Reno Nevada.

Eastern States conference will be held in Middletown RI March 15-17,2024.The conference is a great way to network with carriers from other states and meet members of your national board. The conference features several workshops and a banquet on Saturday night. If this is something you're interested in attending, please fill out the registration form and mail it to me by the deadline. Our state will pay your registration fee. Conference information can be found in the national magazine and the MARLCA website. (marlca.org)

Elections will be held in the spring for both district and state officers, and delegates for the 2024 national convention. If you've ever thought of running for an elected position, now is the time. District officers are elected at their respective meetings. Ballots for State officers and national delegates will be sent out in April to every member. All nominations need to be in the designated PO Box by close of business on March 16th. The election process is very costly to our state. Please exercise your right as a member and vote.

Lastly, I'd like to wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season. This time of year is very stressful for rural carriers. EAP is a great resource and only a phone call away. Their phone number is 1-800-EAP-4YOU.

Happy Holidays,

*Lorraine Pacheco*, MaRLCA Secretary / Treasurer



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## District Dialogues

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Kathy Makowski-Cote

District 3 Secretary/Treasurer

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### RRECS Tidbits

As I write this, we were just issued our Oct 7th RRECS evaluation. From a rough look online, it seems that some of the carriers regained pay that was lost in the 1st iteration – I'm glad for that. Both carriers and management are learning a bit more each day about how this is all supposed to work. There is a lot of dispersed information in my brain: some I picked up at various meetings, some on the NRLCA website Q&A, some from issued MOUs. While Facebook isn't the best place to find the 'correct answer', I do find it one place to get a pulse for how many of us are getting better at this system and what's going on in other states. I thought I would take a moment to brain-dump what I find most important.

**Monthly mapping** – I mapped my route before leaving for National Convention in August. It was in OK shape, with the one exception that many of my Traffic Control Points (TCPs) had been deleted by either a manager or a program oddity (IMO). The folks on Facebook say that if you 'California Roll' your stop signs, that the program will delete them. Oddly enough, the Boxford Police recently pulled me over in my personal vehicle for a 'California Roll', so I really started thinking about my driving habits. I'm testing out making harder stops at my TCPs – I have over 50 and they make a big difference. How? Well, the number of stops you map, including TCPs, are used to calculate your **drive speed**, shown on your 4241a. My drive speed calculation is 15 mph, ½ as fast as the pre-RRECS standard, and likely responsible for most of my salary gain (43K up to 48K). So, in August I remapped my TCPs and a few front doors that had moved mysteriously. Right before the mini-mail survey ended, I decided to do a quick check of my mapping, and found a *disaster*. I emailed Art (Courcy), who told me to file a grievance for management making changes without the carriers. That grievance was really effective so far, my mapping hasn't changed a single bit that I've found since then without me being the one sitting at the computer – I think the management team in my office now understands that I consider the mapping program as a payroll system. My point being, **YOU** need to check your mapping the last week of **every month** – unfortunately, we cannot all trust that our mapping is the same way that we last left it. **YOU** need to act like an auditor and check your most important variables:

- 1)First off, the procedure says the carrier can map every month. **If you're not doing it, I would guess your manager is**, because otherwise the office lands on a naughty list. You do not want managers mapping without you – learn from my disaster. File a grievance if you aren't given time the last week of every month. **Even if you didn't make edit book changes.**
- 2)Filter for issues. Address them, but don't stop there.
- 3)Go to the addresses for some of your longest customer driveways. Are the door and associated park point still mapped correctly?
- 4)Do you have CBUs? If so, click on some of the addresses that are furthest from the CBU. Are those door deliveries still mapped correctly? Spot check a handful until you're satisfied.
- 5)If anything has changed for boxes or park points for your dismounts, the program has a glitch where it deletes all the associated fields on the dismount page. Go to the dismount page and check

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## District Dialogues

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Kathy Makowski-Cote

District 3 Secretary/Treasurer

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...(continued p.7)

that all the fields are complete.

6) Make sure your manager understands that they **don't have to clear threshold errors!** This drives me batty that it even exists. We are required to deliver a parcel a lot further than 500 feet from the mailbox.

7) Run the line of travel manager (LTM). Do you know where all your TCPs are? If you have 50+ like me, take a notepad out on the route with you and jot them down over several days. Don't rely on your memory every month. Make sure they are all still mapped.

8) If there is an error in your line of travel, pause the program. Click on the line where the error is – there is usually the option to choose a different path.

9) Check for LTM errors. Mine gives me an error for mapping a school crosswalk directly before a stop sign. That's the way it really is. It lets me submit it after acknowledging that I reviewed the error.

10) Sit there while your manager enters their credentials and submits the LTM. **Have them print the summary for you.** Take it home and compare it to your last 4241a. Did you miss anything? Mileage change? Lost TCPs? Lost dismounts or footage? Keep a file at home of all these forms so you can compare them over time. It's your pay.

11) How do you get paid for this time? The system is set up for you to be doing this as part of End of Shift Duties. If that's not possible in your office, then you punch to load vehicle time in the morning while you map. **Both of these time categories accumulate actual time toward your evaluation.**

**Mini-mail survey**—Easy right? Your manager counts a handful of raw mail in the morning and you're good? Not so fast.

1) What's a raw piece of mail?

A) For me, a small percentage of my raw mail is that morning stuff.

B) I had **A TON** of inverted mail this mail survey. How many of you counted it? I had so many one day that my head was spinning trying to keep an accurate tally on the street – something like 1000 inverted pieces. You divide those by 4, and Voila!!, that's another 250 raw letters. Well, after that day, I sat every morning and counted the inverts in the DPS before I took it out to the street to save my sanity for the rest of the day. Not worth it to you? My 4241a shows 189.47 minutes for raw letters a week, roughly 3 standard hours. Manager doesn't want to count it? Call your steward right away.

C) Did you find any missorted mail that was deliverable later in your route? That's all raw mail pieces. If your manager doesn't believe your number, then bring it back at the end of the day to be

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## District Dialogues

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**Kathy Makowski-Cote**

District 3 Secretary/Treasurer

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...(continued p.8)

counted, and deliver it the next day.

D)UBBM, another thorn in my side. I don't find it fair that the longer you've worked a route, the more UBBM you will recognize and bring back, but that is another oddity of the count. RAW MAIL – ALL OF IT.

E) Forwards = raw mail pieces. Anything else you pull from automated mail = raw mail.

2)How do you know you got credit for all those WSH and bundled flats? Well, I kept a side count of all my carrier routed and all my bundled flats. Pain in my rear, you say? It sure is. Worth it? Well, it made me feel better that I agree with my numbers from the plant. I added up entire weeks and compared it to the RADAR report and found them to be pretty darned close. Just count it as you case it - makes it sting less. Keep your own notepad for the count weeks. Write down what management credits you. Write down what you count separately. This is also the data you often need to support evaluation disputes. Where does your manager find this RADAR report? From the September issue of the National Magazine: The path to the RADAR RRECS Volume Report is: Blue.usps.gov > Essential Links > RADAR > Function 2 > Reports > RRECS Volume

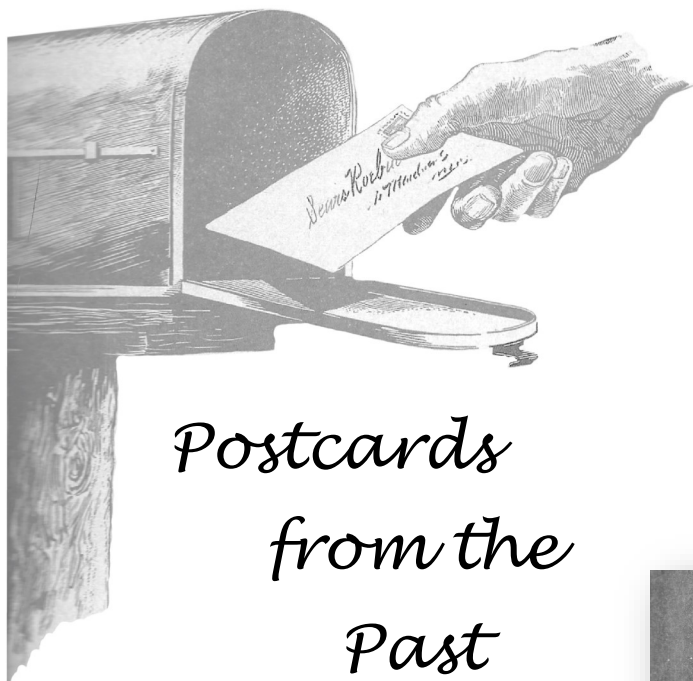
### Other important time credits–

1)Load time starts as soon as you start pushing a cart away from your case, until you return that cart to it's storage location. When I worked at a past office, we had to wait on a freight elevator to get to our vehicles. I hope those carriers are including that in load time now. You can do a partial load, come back and case, and load more later – that would be two sets of load punches, perfectly fine. As many as it takes, including loading parcel runs during the holiday peak.

2)End of Shift (EOS) time – Punch return to office right after your turn off the key parking your vehicle. I know a lot of you like to case DPS. Personally, anything I find in my DPS gets tossed in a single pile and I disposition it during End of Shift duties. That is how RRECS pays you for that work. It is a new habit to make, just rubber band it and throw it to the end of the day to deal with then. **If you handle mis-sort/misssent/forwards from your DPS in the morning, you are shorting yourself time, compared with a carrier that takes DPS to the street.** Update your case labels when needed. I'm doing mine now, a few strips per afternoon, so I don't land on a report for a spike in EOS time. EOS was designed to compensate you for all these odds and ends.

3)This is just an observation on my part, and I have no data either to support or refute it. We are paid for what we do **out on our route**. There is a geo fence around your post office. Personally, I take my hold and forward parcels to the street, stop at that address, make the appropriate scans, then bring it all back to be dealt with during End of Shift duties. Paranoid? Maybe so..... Pay holding up? So far, yes.

*Kathy Makowski-Cote.*

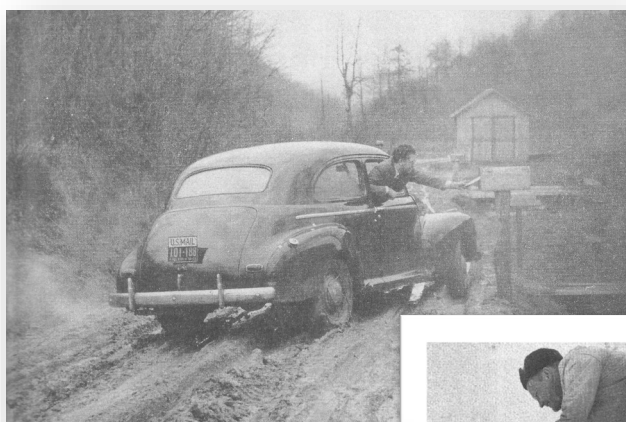


## Postcards from the Past

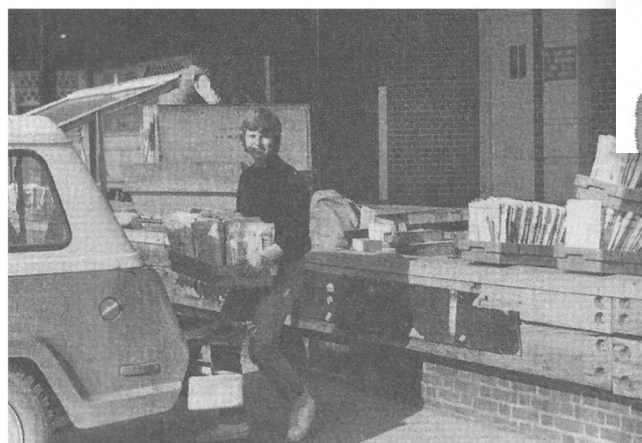
The *Backroads Journal* is pleased to present our fellow rural carriers with a collection of images gathered from throughout the history of our profession.

Originally published within *The National Rural Letter Carrier* magazine, these images were some of many compiled by Author Lester F. Miller as part of the larger *NRLCA Centennial Portrait* work released in 2003. This sample showcase of photos, artwork, and advertisements highlights now more than 100 years of the NRLCA on the road.

Special thanks to District 3 President Clifford Morris, for providing access to this unique archive.



Winter on the R.F.D.



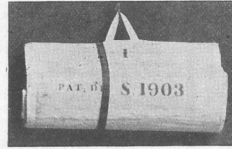


## From the Archives



### THE CARRIERS' BEST FRIEND

**No Bunching  
Saves Time  
Saves Trouble  
Saves Money**

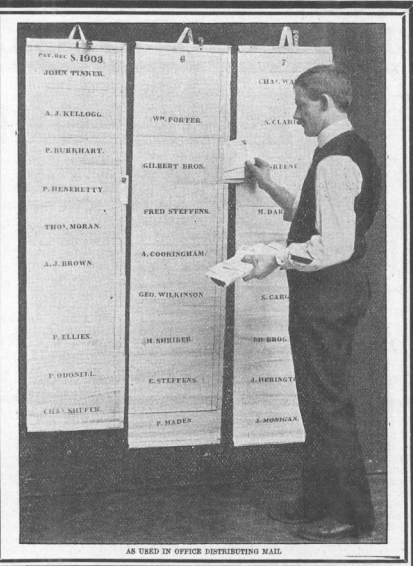


**READY FOR THE ROAD**  
MAIL ALWAYS SORTED AND READY FOR INSTANT DELIVERY

Testimonial letters from R. F. D. Carriers stating that these bags save 20 times their cost annually.

**CATALOGUE FREE ON REQUEST**

**United States R. F. D. Bag Co.**  
17 ELM STREET, : : ROCHESTER, N. Y.



AS USED IN OFFICE DISTRIBUTING MAIL



### Drop Us a Postal Card



And Request Our  
Mail Carriers'

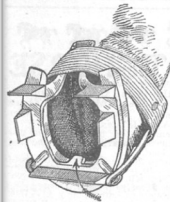
### UNIFORM CATALOG

We will tell you how  
to secure comfort in  
Caps and Clothing  
with the least  
expense

**DO IT TODAY!**

**THE HENDERSON-AMES CO.**  
KALAMAZOO, MICH.

### Horse Overshoes Which are Sharp Shod for Icy Weather



Guaranteed to prevent slipping on icy roads, buckled on in a minute. Let us send you a sample set C. O. D. \$3.50. Extra treads or sharp claws may be had for \$1.50 per set. If not satisfied on receipt of goods, return them and we will refund your money. We Want More Agents. This is something that you can sell to every horse owner, to have on his wagon in case of emergency. Save your horse from slipping and falling. Send for Agents' prices at once. Herman Mfg. Co., Dept. R, 1420 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, D. C.

### \$17.50 Puts the Bohon Storm Buggy In Your Barn

The balance on easy payments. I am making this special offer to rural mail carriers only. Here's your chance to cover your route this winter in absolute comfort.

Full wrought, straight grain, second growth hickory. Stands rough roads. Warm proof doors. Double strength glass. The snugest buggy ever built.

**30 Days' Trial**  
Unlimited guarantee. Only a few on hand. Write quick.

**D. T. BOHON**  
561 Main St.  
Harrodsburg, Ky.

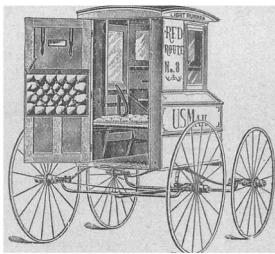
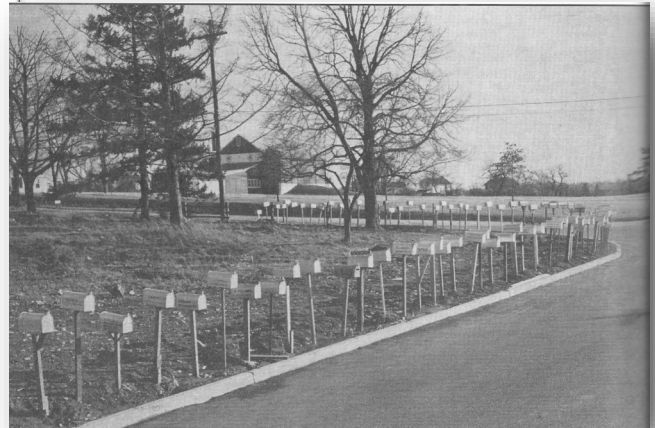


### R. F. D. Carriers

#### GET THE BEST CAP MADE

Fur-lined turndown \$1.65 prepaid. Lion Heel Plates 10 cents per pair, all sizes. Men's, women's and children's. Order what you want; I've got it. Your patronage is solicited. Address

**HARRY W. BURCH**  
643-5 E. Lincoln St., Homestead, Ill., Dent. R.





## From The District Rep's Desk

Art Courcy, MA-RI and CT DR



### **Rural Route Evaluated Compensation System** Mini-Mail Survey #2—*"What's in Your Wallet?"*

Greetings Everyone,

The RRECS evaluation results from the second mini mail survey indicate much improvement from the first round. As we expected, carriers are continuing to learn more and more of the RRECS system and improving in areas of scanning and mapping of their routes. These are two extremely vital functions that contribute to your route's evaluation. The MA-RI District now has an increase in overburdened routes (routes that are 47K and 48K). 314 out of the 1,111 rural routes in the district are now overburdened (28.3%). 669 out of 1,111 (60.2%) routes saw an increase to the standard weekly hours for their October 7, 2023 RRECS evaluations. There are 938 rural routes in the state of Massachusetts. 269 of those are now overburdened (28.68%). Of the 938 MA routes, 487 routes stayed the same or increased their weekly standard hours (51.92%). The remaining 173 of 1,111 routes in the district are in Rhode Island. Of those, 45 are now overburdened (26%). 128 of the 173 stayed the same or had an increase in weekly standard hours (74%). Broken down a little further, 154 of the 173 (89%) stayed within 1 hour and 19 lost 1 hour or more (10.98%).

So, what are we doing right and what are we doing wrong? Carriers' daily scan activities have improved over the six months between the first survey and the second. However, we need to continue to improve in this area. Mapping is still a big issue. Rural carriers have a great responsibility regarding the mapping of their routes. This has been explained exhaustively in various forums, but we still have some carriers that do not understand, do not take the time to educate themselves, do not attend meetings for information, do not read articles that contain pertinent information or do not go on the NRLCA national website for updates. I cannot help but think of the credit card commercial that states, "What's in your wallet"? Are you getting everything that you are entitled to? I know that unfortunately many are not. When speaking to carriers daily from various offices, it is troubling to hear that some are completely in the dark regarding what their responsibilities are to protect their route evaluation. At the recent MARLCA Fall Booster Meeting, it was also troubling for me to see how many carriers are not going into their mapping program monthly to be sure that DPM and LTM is updated and accurate. The managers in these offices certainly are going into it because this is a monthly requirement (and obviously without the assigned carrier being present). If you are in this situation, go to your manager and request to review your DPM and LTM, if you are refused, call me please. This needs to stop and stop now! Grievances need to be filed, if necessary, but normally, once we are made aware that carriers are not going into the mapping, a simple call to the district gets it straightened out. For you to get the most time credits in your route evaluation (and the most in your wallet), is to take your responsibility seriously. If all scans are not being done accurately, if your route is not mapped properly, it ultimately affects "What's in your wallet".

I know that we still have many places where carriers are not involved with the mapping of their routes by the RREDP disputes that we received after the second mini mail survey. Over 50% of these disputes

... (continued p.13)





## From The District Rep's Desk

Art Courcy, MA-RI and CT DR



...(continued p.12)

would not have been needed if the routes were mapped properly. Missing dismounts, missing dismount distances, missing traffic control points etc.... need to be accurate for you to obtain an accurate route evaluation and get the most that you are entitled to. Yes, we can get it corrected through the dispute process, which could take a couple of months from initial filing of the dispute to implementation, but why continue down this path? By not updating the DPM and LTM monthly, which causes loss of time values and lowers your standard hours, you must then wait for retroactive payment that you should have received immediately. Wouldn't you rather have your evaluation accurate and receive appropriate compensation immediately? Again, it begs the question, "What's in your wallet"?

Most carriers that selected the high option evaluation during the second round of the MMS, provided that the route and the carrier were eligible, were given that option timely. We did have some cases that for whatever the reason, the high option did not go through. Keep in mind that this issue is not a part of the RRECS dispute process. If you are not given a high option and are entitled to it, a grievance would need to be filed to make that change.

If you filed an RREDP dispute, you should receive a copy of the Evaluation Dispute Form 2. This form is signed off on by the NRLCA District Representative and USPS Labor Relations Representative. There are one of three disposition options to your dispute. Those options are No Action, Resolved or Impasse. Along with the disposition will be a reason given for that decision. The decisions are sent to the local postmaster and the carrier that filed the dispute should also receive a copy of the dispute form 2. If you filed a dispute and have not received a district level response, inquire with your postmaster to request your copy.

Some rural routes throughout the district have been and are being re-assigned a right-hand drive Mercedes Metris in place of their LLV. Many carriers are not happy with this change as they are taking away "their" vehicle. Please keep in mind that they are not our vehicles. If your route is assigned a vehicle, which almost all routes in this district are, the Postal Service has an obligation to provide you with a right-hand drive government vehicle. There is no contractual requirement that this must be an LLV or some other specific vehicle type. I know that we as rural carriers have never liked change, but some of these changes just need to be adapted to when there is no violation. In this instance, the Postal Service has not violated any contractual language. If you have a specific concern that may be unique to your route, please don't hesitate to contact a steward or myself to discuss the issue. If there is something there that we need to address, that will certainly be done. But in most cases, the USPS is within their rights to make this change.

As we head into peak season and that inclement Northeast winter weather, please be safe. Do not take shortcuts that could put you in harm's way. Go home to your family each day in the same way that you went to work that morning. Thank you all for what you do every day and above all, stay safe!

*Art Courcy*, MA-RI and CT District Rep

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## From The Assistant District Rep's Desk

Joan Tenerella, MA-RI and CT ADR

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Greetings,

As I write this, we have just completed the second Mini Mail Survey and the new RRECS evaluations have been implemented. Carriers' evaluations have fared much better this time around for the most part. Of course, with higher evaluations, the Postal Service is scrutinizing many aspects of our on-street scanning. They have begun to set benchmarks, telling carriers they can have no more than 20 minutes on their return to delivery unit scan or they have too many additional authorized discounts, trips to door, unscannable parcels, ETC. Postal managers and supervisors in many offices are directing carriers to show them their unscannable parcels, tell them how many additional trips to door or additional authorized discounts they will have that day, before they leave for the road. They use a national average as the measuring tool for the numbers they come up with. If the national average for additional authorized discounts is 10 then they believe it stands to reason that every carrier should have no more than 10, right? Wrong. I have attached the 2002 national Mail count Arbitration award by National Arbitrator, Dana Edward Eishen (See p.16).

The issue in this case involved the practice of benchmarking, thresholds, targets to establish a constant among all rural routes for column R time in the National 2002 Mail Count. This directive was widespread throughout the districts and much like at present time there was a report that showed the routes who did not fall within the "benchmarks" established by the averages of all routes. Today it is called the out-Lier report. If a carrier exceeds the "benchmark" they appear on this report and local management must answer to upper management as to why? In most cases there are reasonable explanations for the, "above the national average numbers" and you would think that the postal service would consider that all routes are not alike, all characteristics are not uniform, and not all rural routes receive the same mail volume, but they do not. You will see by the attached award of the 2002 Mail count arbitration; it did not go well for the Postal service then and we need to ensure it does not now.

If you are having an issue in your office with benchmarking it is imperative that you contact your DR or ADR immediately. We will work with the DSS in your area to stop it and if all else fails we will file a class action grievance. We will also notify our executive committeeman so these issues can be addressed at the area level.

As always, I can be reached at 401-536-8697 or email: [Joan.Tenerella@nrlca.org](mailto:Joan.Tenerella@nrlca.org)

*Joan Tenerella* MA-RI and CT Assistant District Rep



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## From The Assistant District Rep's Desk

Joan Tenerella, MA-RI and CT ADR

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**Case No. Q95R-4Q-C 02101267 ("Mail Count Conduct")**

The Postal Service did violate the National Agreement, before and during the 2002 NMC, by instructing and requiring managers and supervisors, to "target and correct" count totals in Column J, Column Q and Column R of Form 4239 which exceeded certain national average "benchmark/target/threshold" standards unilaterally established, issued, promulgated and enforced by Postal Service managers.

**REMEDY**

- 1) The counts or results of the 2002 NMC relative to Columns J-Q and R are hereby rendered null and void.
- 2) The Postal Service is directed to "re-build" the Standard Hours of each rural route counted during the tainted 2002 NMC, using the data set for Columns J-Q and R from the mail count of that particular route which most recently precedes the 2002 NMC and the 2002 NMC data set for all other elements except Columns J-Q and R, and to calculate for each such rural route constructive Evaluated Hours based on that "hybrid" mail count data;
- 3) The Postal Service is directed to pay to each regular and relief carrier serving on the rural routes counted during the 2002 NMC, for the time period beginning with the effective date of the 2002 NMC evaluated pay and ending with a new evaluation based upon the properly conducted mail count of that particular route which next follows the 2002 NMC, the difference between the "hybrid" evaluated pay calculated in accordance with ¶ 2 of this Award and the 2002 NMC evaluated pay invalidated by ¶ 1 of this Award.
- 4) In accordance with the last sentence of Article 15, §5 of the Agreement, costs of the arbitration of these two consolidated cases are assessed 2/3 to the Postal Service and 1/3 to the NRLCA.
- 5) Arbitral jurisdiction is retained to resolve any disputes which may arise between the Parties regarding the meaning, application or implementation of this National Arbitration Award in Cases Nos. Q95R-4Q-C02101253 and Q95R-4Q-C02101267.

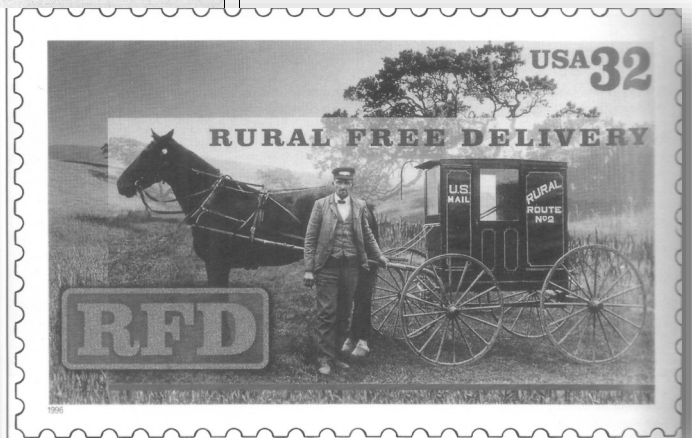
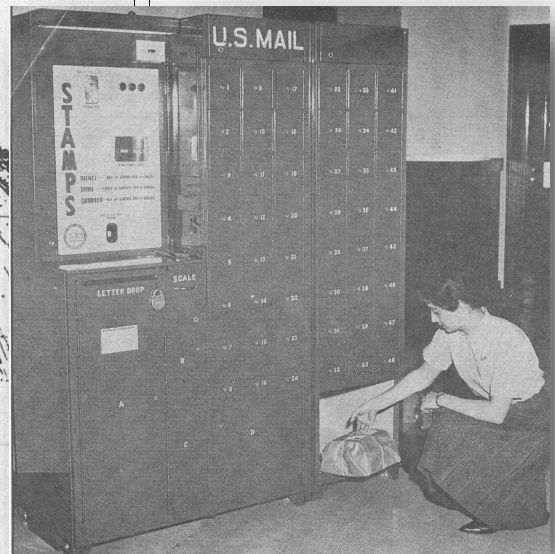


Dana Edward Eischen

STATE OF NEW YORK }  
COUNTY OF TOMPKINS } ss:

On this 15<sup>th</sup> day of May 2006, I, DANA E. EISCHEN, upon my oath as National Arbitrator, do hereby affirm and certify, pursuant to Section 7507 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules of the State of New York, that I have executed and issued the foregoing instrument and I acknowledge that it is my Opinion and Award in Case Nos. Q95R-4Q-C02101253 and Q95R-4Q-C02101267.

## From the Archives



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## Political Action Committee (PAC)

Chrissy Chamberland, PAC Chair

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Greetings,

I hope you are well. I have several updates for you in regard to PAC. Some exciting stuff at that. First off here is where we stand currently (as of August 1 the new fiscal year for PAC).

Sustaining Donor & Convention Total: \$1199

D1 Meeting: \$185     D2 Meeting: \$385     D3 Meeting: \$220

State Meeting: \$375 (total) \$307.50 (after 50/50 drawing)

**Total Raised: \$2296.50**

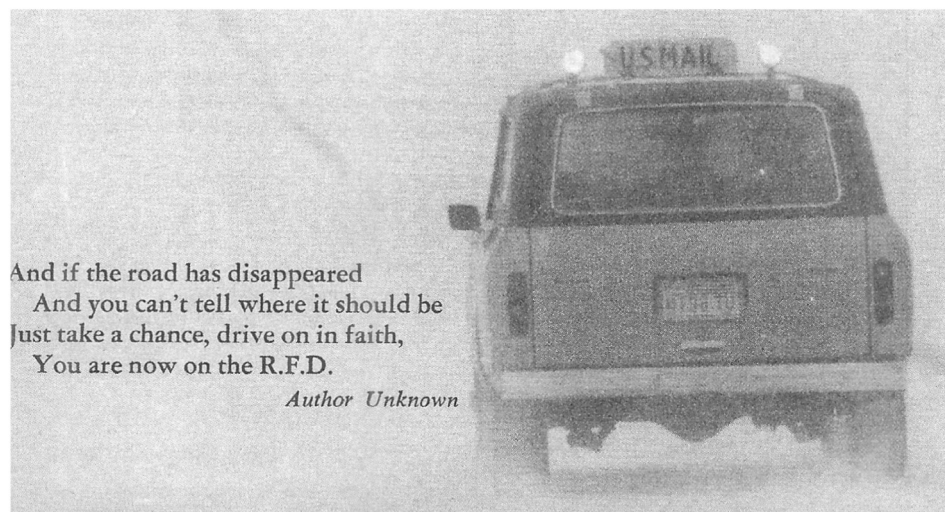
**Thank you to everyone who has donated so far!**

To quote our Director of Government Affairs Paul Swartz: “Everyone has health insurance, car insurance, or homeowners’ insurance. Contributing to PAC is like buying job insurance. It is the best protection you have in supporting the issues controlled by Congress that are important to you.” Donating to PAC makes sure the issues that directly affect us as Postal Workers are given the attention they deserve by our elected officials.

Current Legislation:

- HR 3721 USPS Shipping Equity Act     MA Sponsors: Pressley  
Ability to ship alcohol through the mail.
- HR 82 Social Security Fairness Act of 2023  
294 Sponsors: MA Sponsors: Keating, Lynch, Moulton, Trahan, McGovern, Pressley, Auchincloss  
Full benefits: SS, Pension, etc.
- HR 4268 Federal Retirement Fairness Act. (buy back time) Died with 117th Congress  
If you have any of the old letters, please discard them

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## Political Action Committee (PAC)

Chrissy Chamberland, PAC Chair

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...(continued p.17)

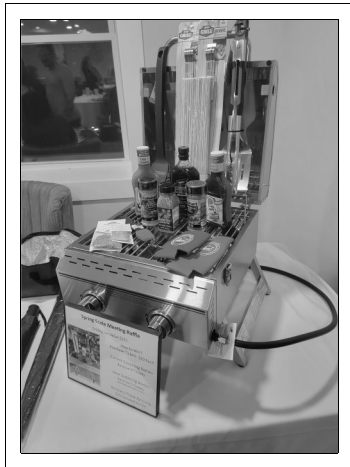
- HR 5995 Federal Retirement Fairness Act (reintroduced): No MA sponsors currently

This is our buy back time.

As a reminder it takes a minimum of 250 senators to sponsor a bill before it is introduced on the house floor. Please send those letters in. If you need letters for any of these bills, and cannot access the website please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope, to Chrissy Chamberland PAC Chair, Po Box 1035, Sturbridge MA 01566. Please indicate which letters you'd like me to send and I will get those out to you as soon as I receive the request. I can also get you the address of your representative if you need that as well.

For the current year my focus is on getting more sustaining donors. So, what does that mean? A sustaining donor is someone who has money taken out of an allotment from their paycheck (bi-weekly) or directly from a bank account (monthly on the 6th). This money goes directly to PAC to help support our causes; the legislation listed above. This can be in any amount of your choosing, it can be as little as \$1, or as much as you want. Most people do \$5 (bi-weekly) or \$10 (monthly). In the end the choice is yours. Copies of "how to" sign up are on the NRLCA website, Legislative tab, then click the "Political Action Committee" tab. I can also mail forms to you. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Chrissy Chamberland PAC Chair, PO Box 1035, Sturbridge MA 01566. Every bit helps, and it does make a difference.

I am always open to new ideas on how to raise money for PAC, so please pass them along. This year we're trying something different from our normal State Meeting raffle gift cards...



At this year's Spring State Meeting we are raffling off a Table Top Grilling Set (value of \$225). It includes BBQ utensils, skewers, grill brush, sauce brush, seasonings, marinades, NRLCA koozies. The legs fold up and the lid latches closed. It is lightweight and easy to carry around. Designed as a table top grill but portable and versatile to travel with you; camping, tailgating, etc. (20 lb tank not included).

Tickets are \$20 each. You will receive 1 entry for every \$20 donated to PAC. If you are a current sustain-

...(continued p.19)

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## Political Action Committee (PAC)

Chrissy Chamberland, PAC Chair

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...(continued p.18)

ing PAC donor you will receive 4 tickets automatically. If you become a sustaining donor between now and the Spring State Meeting you will receive 5 tickets into the raffle. Something new for this year: you can purchase tickets by mail. Send a check or money order to: Chrissy Chamberland PAC Chair, PO Box 1035, Sturbridge MA 01566. Checks or Money Orders **MUST** be made payable to **NRLCA PAC**. You do not need to be present to win. Sustaining donors will be verified through the office of the Director of Government Affairs.

As always, thank you for your support! I hope to see you at one of the upcoming district meetings or at the spring meeting!

*Chrissy Chamberland*, PAC Chair

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## Who Ya Gonna Call?

### Stewards at a glance

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

Art Courcy, [Arthur.Courcy@nrlca.org](mailto:Arthur.Courcy@nrlca.org)  
508-761-6870

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

Joan Tenerella, [Joan.Tenerella@nrlca.org](mailto:Joan.Tenerella@nrlca.org)  
401-536-8697

#### **Full-Time Assistant District Representative (CT)**

Michael Merola, [Michael.Merola@nrlca.org](mailto:Michael.Merola@nrlca.org)  
860-921-7643

#### **Part-Time District Representatives:**

Dan Cote (Massachusetts)  
[Daniel.Cote@nrlca.org](mailto:Daniel.Cote@nrlca.org)  
978-237-2625

Matthew Barrett (Massachusetts)  
[Matthew.Barrett@nrlca.org](mailto:Matthew.Barrett@nrlca.org)  
508-443-7383

#### **Area Stewards:**

Ed Knight  
[Edward.Knight@nrlca.org](mailto:Edward.Knight@nrlca.org)  
413-896-2662

Theron Boudakian  
[Theron.Boudakian@nrlca.org](mailto:Theron.Boudakian@nrlca.org)  
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Wyatt Aloisio, Editor

12 Fox Street

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backroads.marlca@gmail.com

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### State Executive Officers:

**President:** Robert Richardson (978) 314-4449

robert.richardson@nrlca.org

**Vice-President:** Jason Dole

jdole27@yahoo.com

**Sec-Treasurer:** 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:** Steve McCarthy

**PAC Chair:** Chrissy Chamberland

chrissyasm163@gmail.com

**Editor:**

Wyatt Aloisio

### EMAIL ADDRESS:

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