

MICHIGAN LETTER CARRIER

Voice of the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers

Volume 26

Issue 1

April 2018



PRESIDENTS REPORT

CARL E BLASSINGAME, JR.

The Midterm elections are just around the corner on November 6, 2018. This election is important because we have the opportunity to vote for the politicians that support the issues that affect our job and benefits. This is our opportunity to ensure that our voices are heard in Washington.

Before you head for the polls you can review the record of our congressional representatives in Michigan and see whether they support the issues that affect our work. With the many challenges we face concerning our future in the Postal Service, we have the choice to have our voices heard and vote for representatives that protect our interests. Below you will find a list of the 14 congressional districts in Michigan, the representative's name, committees they sit on and that date that they signed onto the House Resolutions that affect the Postal Service. If there is no date under the House Resolution then call and ask your representative why they do not support it and tell them why you would like them to support it.

HR 15 Calls on Congress and the USPS to take all appropriate steps to continue six day delivery

HR 28 Protects door delivery for all business and residential customers

HR 31 Calls on the USPS to restore the service standards that were in effect prior to July 1, 2012

HR 756 Postal Service Reform Act of 2017

HR 760 Postal Service Financial Improvement Act of 2017

Below is a list of Michigan's Congressional Representatives and the date that they co-sponsored the following House Resolutions. Dark gray indicates they do not support the bill, light gray indicates they did support it in earlier sessions.

District #	Representative	Committee Assignments	H. Res. 15	H. Res. 28	H. Res. 31	H. Res. 756	H. Res. 760
1	Bergman, Jack (R)	Natural Resources, Budget, Vet Affairs					
2	Huizenga, Bill (R)	Financial Services					
3	Amash Justin (R)	Oversight (term expired)					
4	Moolenaar, John (R)	Appropriations (term expired)					
5	Kildee, Danial T (D)	Financial Services	2/2/2017	1/13/2017	1/31/2017		
6	Upton, Fred (R)	Energy & Commerce (Term expired)					
7	Walberg, Tim (R)	Education & Workforce, Energy					
8	Bishop, Mike (R)	Education & Workforce, Judiciary			2/6/2017		
9	Levin, Sander (D)	Ways & Means	7/11/2017	2/16/2017	3/15/2017		
10	Mitchell, Paul (R)	Education & Workforce, Oversight, Transportation					
11	Trott, Dave (R)	Financial Services					
12	Dingell, Debbie (D)	Energy & Commerce (Term expired)	11/30/2017	2/13/2017			
13	Conyers Jr., John (D)	Judiciary	6/6/2017	3/15/2017	9/21/2017		
14	Lawrence, Brenda (D)	Oversight, Transportation	4/26/2017	1/13/2017	9/6/2017	2/13/2017	

There is an alarming Anti-Labor legislation bill (H. Res 3441) which passed the House of Representatives on a near party-line vote. As written this bill amends the National Labor Relations Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to limit what is known as the “Joint Employer” Liability.

This bill would strip away workers’ rights regarding unfair wages and labor practices under multiple employers. The bill now proceeds to the Senate where, if passed and signed by President Trump, would reverse the “Browning-Ferris” rule, which takes a broad definition of “joint employer. As written, H.R. 3441 cripples workers’ rights to bargain collectively when workers have joint employers; which includes a loophole for employers to avoid liability for wage theft, overtime, labor violations and more.

It also gives powerful franchisors (such as the corporate sides of McDonald’s, Hertz or ACE Hardware) a blank check to dictate small-business franchisees’ employment practices, leaving franchisees on the hook for any violations.

Michigan co-sponsors for this bill are:

Rep. Bill Hutzenga 2nd District
Rep. John Moolenaar 4th District

Rep. Fred Upton 6th District
Rep. Tim Walberg 7th District

Rep. Mike Bishop 8th District
Rep. Paul Mitchell 10th District
Rep. David Trott 11th District

The Congressional Leaders who support this bill are voting against your best interest and the right to be able to bargain in good faith for every worker and their future.

The **Hatch Act**: The simple way to protect yourself as a Federal employee working under the Hatch Act is to remember **NOTHING POLITICAL ON THE CLOCK, IN UNIFORM, OR ON POSTAL PROPERTY** (including postal vehicles) and you may not hold any partisan position or raise political funds for a candidate.

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel has updated the **Hatch Act to include Social Media**.

You may never solicit political contributions, including invitations to fundraising events, you **may not use an alias** to raise funds or invite people to a fundraiser either.

You may not like, share or retweet a **post that solicits political contributions** etc.

You may not use a **social media account in an official capacity** to post or share messages **directed at the success or failure of a political party or candidate** etc.

You may post, share or tweet support of a candidate or opposition to a political party, candidate in a partisan race or group **off the clock, not at work**.

You may like, follow or friend a social media account of a political party, candidate or partisan race or group **off the clock, not at work**.

You may use an alias on social media to engage in any activity indicates the success or failure of a political party etc. **off the clock, not at work**.

You may accept invitations to or mark yourself “attending “ fundraising events **off the clock, not at work**.

You may at anytime **include your official title or position and where you work in your social media profile**, even if you also **include your political affiliation or otherwise use your account to engage in political activity**, except fund raising.

You may continue to follow, be friends with or like the official social media accounts of government officials after they become candidates for re-election.

For the **complete list go to NALC.org**. **Don’t put your job in jeopardy**. If you have any questions contact your Branch President or contact Carl Blassingame at **misalc15@gmail.com**

Finally, I would like to introduce the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers (MISALC) website. On this website you will find information about legislative issues that affect your job, Branch MDA totals and events, the National Agreement and much more. Visit us often as we are still adding information to educate our members so you may make the best decision whether at the polls or at work. Check it out at **MISALC.org**.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BRAD MCKENNA

SAVING OUR JOBS

Congress is made up of 535 individuals who have massive control over our jobs, benefits and future. Every year those jobs, benefits and future are attacked through legislation in Congress. The Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) is our non-partisan political action committee (PAC) that helps educate Congress about our issues and supports qualified candidates who support letter carriers. We need to educate Congress to help them make informed decisions. To date, we have done that quite successfully. We need a strong PAC because we know these attacks will never end.

This is how politics works in this country. The only way to be successful is to work within this system. **Union dues cannot be used to support candidates for political offices so we must depend on the LCPF.** It is very difficult to get a congressional representatives attention when we aren't helping support his or her campaign.

In just the past few years Congress has looked at privatizing the USPS, eliminating future COLA's, requiring employees and retirees to pay a higher percentage of health care premiums, eliminate the TSP, decrease returns on the TSP, increase employee contribution toward retirement, base annuities on high 5 years (instead of 3 years) eliminate delivery days, end door to door delivery, and change USPS delivery standards. And those are just off the top of my head, so I may have missed some.

In 2013 and again in 2014 Congress did raise the amount paid by new employees toward their retirement. These small changes will cause a new career employee to pay tens of thousands of dollars more for their retirement with no additional benefit. We can count on every new budget to continually try and pick away at our benefits. Federal employees can be a favorite target when politicians are trying to balance a budget.

The easiest way to try and stop these attacks is to elect legislators who support our cause, to mobilize our membership, and to have strong letter carrier advocates in Washington. This is what LCPF does. The NALC relies 100% on membership contributions to fund LCPF. The LCPF donates to candidates campaign funds to cover their costs. It pays to release letter carriers to work in specific areas to help with a Get Out the Vote Campaign and it works on developing and maintaining relationships with Congressman on both sides of the aisle to gain their support. **Our PAC brings together strong letter carrier activists, from all political parties who help advocate for a strong USPS and letter carrier issues.**

Letter carriers work in every congressional district across the country. Our issues often cross partisan political lines. Our membership is very diverse as is our political views. **We need support from each of you.**

Sadly, a very small percentage of letter carriers are supporting LCPF. We need to educate each and every member on the legislative challenges we face and the need to support LCPF. In Michigan most branches have fewer than 10% of members donating to LCPF. We have a few super star branches: Mid-Michigan Branch 256, 22.9%, Branch 122 Lansing, 18.8%, Branch 5041 Ontonagon, 33.3%, Branch 13 Muskegon 15.8%, Branch 438 Escanaba, 19.0%, Branch 775 Niles, 15.9%, and Branch 2555 East Lansing 16.7%

We don't need large contributions from any one member. We need \$5 per pay period from a large percentage of active members or any small donation per month from retirees. If you are already contributing, THANK YOU! What will it take to get every one else on board? **What will we have to lose before our other brothers and sisters realize how important LCPF is?** Isn't paying \$5 per pay period pretty cheap job insurance? If you're not contributing now, please sign up for automatic withdrawal through Postal Ease.

Please see , Saving Our Jobs, page 4

Saving our Jobs continued...

We all need to make sure every member understands the value of the LCPF. Imagine how effective our PAC could be if every branch had 20% or 30% participation. I'm confident if our membership becomes more aware of these threats to our livelihood they will contribute to LCPF. Please make sure the members in your branch understand the need for each of us to contribute.

MDA

Save the dates.

On Sunday June 24, 2018, from 11:00 am. to 3:00 pm. The Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers will be at Camp Cavell in Lexington, Michigan for NALC Day.

MDA will also be holding a "VIP Day" on Tuesday June 19, 2018 at the MDA Summer Camp at Sherman Lakes in Augusta Michigan 49012. The VIP day runs from 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. More info will be sent out soon on these camps.

The MISALC has a new website MISALC.org the website is full of great information. If your branch has any upcoming MDA events, please let me know so I can get it displayed on the website. Send me an email at **brad100@sbcglobal.net** with information on the event or a copy of your flier.



JOIN THE MISALC AT MDA CAMP

Tuesday, June 19th in Augusta, MI

At Camp Sherman Lake

And

Sunday, June 24th in Lexington, MI

At Camp Cavell

Information will be mailed to

Your Branch

Or you may contact us at

Brad100@sbcglobal.net

SECRETARY'S REPORT

JANE GRANT

This article will serve as the official annual report of the Michigan State Association.

Based on the December 2017 information received from the National NALC Secretary-Treasurer Membership Department.

The MISALC had a total of 7,382 active members, 2,973 retired members and 616 retired life members, 2 military members for a total of 10,973 members.

During 2017 Branch 5179, Spring Lake merged with Branch 1147, Grand Haven

Uniform Allowance

City Letter Carriers uniform allowance is \$441.00 as of May 21, 2017. We will receive a \$14.00 increase on May 21, 2018 which will increase our allowance to \$455.00 for your next uniform allowance after that date.

City Carrier Assistants that have received their first uniform allowance after May 21, 2017 should have received an additional \$102.00 for a total of \$543.00. We have had problems with CCAs not receiving that increase in their first allowance. City Carrier Assistants receiving their first allowance on May 21, 2018 or after that date will have an increased amount of \$104.00 and will receive a total of \$559.00, again only for your first uniform allowance.

City Carrier Assistants will receive their first allowance approximately 120 days after your hire date. This date will remain your uniform allowance date for the rest of your career. City Carrier Assistants or former CCAs that have been converted that are not receiving their annual uniform allowance should call your local branch immediately.

Safety Depends on me?

Article 14 states, in part, that it is the responsibility of management to provide safe working conditions. The union will cooperate with and assist management to live up to this responsibility.

Management will tell you that safety is everyone's responsibility. What is the responsibility of the employees? Many of us work in chaos every day. Overburden routes, heavy parcel volumes, not enough clerks to get the mail to us timely, overbearing supervisors and extreme weather conditions.

The one thing we do have control over is our own personal safety!

So lift from the knees, pick up those straps on the floor, wear your seatbelt at all times. Make sure you put those vehicles in park, pull that hand brake, curb the wheels and remove that key each time you exit that postal vehicle! While management must provide us with a safe, clean building, ice and snow free parking lots and vehicles that are in proper working order. **We must always work in a safe manner and get home to our families in good health; they're depending on us!**

The next **Michigan State convention** will be held on April 28 through April 30, 2019 in Traverse City, Michigan. The convention call will be sent out to each branch in January of 2019.

Any branch in need of assistance signing up members for LCPF, or if you need training to learn how to sign your member up, please contact President Blassingame. misalc15@gmail.com

TREASURER'S REPORT

CATHY TONDREAU

By now, most of you should have finished your LM reports. If not, it should be completed and sent in by March 30, 2018. Your 990s are due May 15, 2018. The LMRDA (Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act) requires unions to submit annual reports within 90 days after the end of their fiscal year.

The LMRDA also requires all unions with property and annual reports greater than \$5,000 secure a bond for at least 10% of the receipts and assets handled. All officers and employees should be bonded. If you are having trouble with this, the national headquarters can assist you. For any new Treasurers, I recommend getting the **NALC Branch Officers Guide to Finance and Administration**. There is a lot of helpful information in it.

Officer training is also available, if you can attend. For example, Internal Financial Control, you should have two (2) signatures for your checks. Another thing I learned from the classes I attended was that National CPA, Dave Dorsey, does not like signature stamps and discourages debit cards. He also does not like credit cards, but in a lot of instances they are helpful; examples include airline tickets and hotel reservations.

On another note, with upcoming National elections this November, don't forget, we need to elect candidates that are letter carrier friendly. That could mean different things to everyone so please browse the candidate's website to see how they stand on the issues like pre-funding future retiree health benefits, six-day delivery and other issues that are important to us as letter carriers.



As a member of the NALC, there are several easy ways to give to the Letter Carrier Political Fund:

Payroll deduction: Contribute automatically, using PostalEASE (either online or by phone) to set up an allotment deduction from your USPS paycheck.

Direct bank withdrawal: You can authorize the fund to withdraw a monthly electronic contribution directly from your personal checking account.

Annuity deduction: Retired letter carriers can elect to give monthly via an automatic deduction from your monthly annuity.

NALC.org or see you local union leadership

By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until cancelled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

JOHN SERWACH

Pension, Sick Leave, Annual Leave, OWCP benefits, Life Insurance, Health Insurance, TSP, Annuity, Social Security Supplement, Paid Holidays, Uniform Allowance, Seniority, Step Increases, COLA, Pay Raises - these are all benefits that we won at the bargaining table. **Every one of these benefits can be taken away or altered in the halls of Congress.**

The last 30 years has seen major changes to our pension all made through legislation not through collective bargaining. Prior to 1984, Federal employees were working towards a CSRS pension. From 1984 onward we work under the FERS system. Arguably, FERS provides for a richer retirement than CSRS does. Most recently politicians monkeyed with FERS and although **recent hires receive the same FERS annuity that prior employees do, they pay more out of their own pocket for it, a LOT more.** Politics matter. They matter a lot, especially to us as federal employees.

As I write this article the Trump administration has proposed doing away with sick and annual leave and going to something called PTO (paid time off). You would still receive your current level of annual leave plus an additional 3 days leave, you would also receive a short term disability policy in case you got really ill. This would result in a net reduction of ten days of leave per year in exchange for a short term disability policy (the details of which are still unknown). Good deal? I don't think so. It's changes like these that directly threaten our standard of living over and over again and that is why its important to stay politically informed and active. We have a major election this year and its more important than ever that we support candidates who support us.

On a more personal note, I was saddened recently to learn that our long time National Business Agent Patrick Carroll will be stepping down at the end of his term this December. I have had the pleasure of knowing Pat for almost 25 years, I carried mail with him in St. Clair Shores, he was my Branch President when I first hired in. For those of you who don't know Pat, he worked for many years as a Carrier, Steward, Arbitration Advocate, Sgt at Arms, President, Regional Administrative Assistant amongst other positions and finally in 2005 NBA.

As Business Agent, Brother Carroll logged literally hundreds of thousands of miles travelling between Kentucky, Indiana and Michigan on behalf of Letter Carriers in our region. When he traded in his car last year the odometer had over 300,000 miles on it.

For over 30 years Pat Carroll never backed down from a fight with management or hesitated to help a Union Brother or Sister when times were tough. As a St. Ambrose graduate I guess he learned early in life just how much the underdog could achieve. He was always among the first to roll up his sleeves to lend a hand, to offer counsel or just be a sounding board. And when he gave you his word you could take it to the bank.

Pat has been a leader, a mentor and most of all, a friend. His guidance and encouragement has helped so many of us be better advocates for our members and we have been fortunate to have his expertise and knowledge to rely on. Pat, my wish for you is that the next phase of your life will be all that you could ask for and that you and Grace have nothing but happiness ahead. Congratulations my friend, your retirement is earned and well deserved – enjoy it.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

MIKE SHERIDAN

Life Insurance in Retirement

Basic is your salary rounded to next thousand + \$2,000

Annuity Estimate shows \$21.13 Basic with 75% reduction (Reduction begins at age 65)

75% reduction is free at age 65 and begins 2% reduction each month

50% reduction is additional \$46.15 per month (based on Salary of \$62,499.00)

No reduction is \$138.45 per month (based on salary of \$62,499.00)

Option A is \$10,000 in addition to your Basic coverage

Option A is \$4.33 per month until age 60 then rises to \$13.00 per month

Option A is free at age 65 and begins a 2% reduction each month down to \$2500.00

Option B is a multiple of your current salary (\$62,499.00)

Insurance Amount	AGE ➡	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80+
\$63,000	Multiples 1	\$27.28	\$60.04	\$73.71	\$131.04	\$245.70	\$360.36
\$126,000	2	\$54.56	\$120.08	\$147.42	\$262.08	\$496.40	\$720.72
\$189,000	3	\$81.84	\$180.12	\$221.13	\$393.12	\$737.10	\$1081.08
\$252,000	4	\$109.12	\$240.16	\$294.84	\$524.16	\$982.80	\$1441.44
\$315,000	5	\$136.40	\$300.20	\$368.55	\$655.20	\$1228.50	\$1801.80

Option B can be reduced or eliminated at retirement or anytime thereafter

Full reduction multiples begin reducing at age 65 reducing 2% each month until reaching \$0

No reduction multiples stay in force for your lifetime unless you decide later to reduce or cancel Option B

Option C is for spouse/family (Children up to age 22)

\$5,000 spouse per multiple

\$2500 on every child per multiple

Age	Monthly premium per multiple
55-59	\$3.21 per multiple
60-64	\$5.85 per multiple
65-69	\$6.80 per multiple
70-74	\$8.30 per multiple
75-79	\$11.40 per multiple
80+	\$15.60 per multiple

Revised March 2018

Retirement continued...

It is important to consider your life insurance options prior to filling out your retirement paperwork. Many carriers do not recall what they signed up for many years ago. The cost of Option B can be prohibitive as you get older, but it is important to remember that you can reduce or eliminate this coverage post retirement, the most common (and cheapest) is the 75% reduction on your basic insurance which is currently \$65,000.00 (your salary of \$62,499.00 rounded up to \$63,000 and \$2,000 added to that). This means that approximately three years after you turn 65 your insurance will bottom out at \$16,250.00 and never drop below that amount and never require a premium after age 65 if you chose the 75% reduction.

Option A which is an extra \$10,000 in coverage also begins a 2% per month drop in coverage ending up at \$2500 after the 3-year time span and is also free of charge after age 65. It is important to remember that all these options can be reduced or eliminated post retirement but cannot be increased. And you must also keep the basic coverage to continue any of your optional coverage into retirement.

Excellent resources can be found at opm.gov and be sure to try out the FEGLI Calculator to determine your exact cost for each coverage at retirement and as your age increases. Cost increase in five-year increments and peaks at age 80. The complete Federal Employees Group Life Insurance booklet is available on the OPM website as well.



**JOIN THE MISALC ON
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3
FOR THE LABOR DAY PARADE
IN DETROIT**

**INFORMATION WILL BE MAILED TO YOUR
BRANCH**

Introducing the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers website

MISALC.org

Visit us often for updates on Legislation, MDA totals, pictures of Branch events and more!

REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Executive Board Chairperson
Walter McGregor

Midterm Elections

As all of you know, the 2018 Midterm Elections are not that far away. If you haven't registered to vote, please make sure that you do. If you don't know how to register to vote or need assistance in the voting process, don't be shy. Seek out your local NALC Branch for assistance or contact your MISALC President, Carl Blassingame Jr. at (734) 999-8080 - State Association, or at misalc15@gmail.com and he will be glad to assist you.

If you are already registered to vote and normally vote in elections, make sure you take a family member and friend when with you when you vote. Before you make that vote, take some time to research each candidate and see what their record says about them. Look to see have they supported issues in the past that support the Postal Service, which in turn has helped to support you and your family.

Like it or not, our jobs are directly related to politics, both now and forever! We must have politicians up on Capitol Hill that are letter carrier friendly. By far the most effective way that we can do that is by contributing to our Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF).

If you are already signed up for LCPF, great! If not, then why not? NALC National President, Fred Rolando is asking that we all contribute just \$5 a pay period via one of our allotments if we are active. If we are retired, this can easily be done directly from your annuity. This will help our National Union send LCPF donations to letter carrier friendly candidates. In turn, these candidates will support legislation which benefits the Postal Service, as well as enabling us to keep what we all have worked so hard for so many years to earn.

Remember, it doesn't matter if you are a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or support any other political party; if your candidate supports the Postal Service and city letter carrier issues, then that candidate can receive LCPF donations from NALC.

That COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) we all received beginning this past March 3, 2018 is one of many benefits that your Union has fought hard for you to receive. However, many other earned benefits for active and retired letter carriers are at risk from the current administration and its Congressional allies. Do your part to help protect these benefits from those that want to take them away from us. Sign up for LCPF or consider increasing your LCPF donation today. Again, be sure that you are registered to vote. If you are already registered, be sure you take a family member or two with you plus a friend or two to the voting booths to vote in the Michigan primary election on August 7 and especially in the midterm National election on November 6.

The job you save by contributing to LCPF and voting just may very well be your own!

Matt Tanner

SOLIDARITY

Hello Sisters and Brothers. As I am writing this article, it looks as if the weather is going to break. Maybe we can thaw out and enjoy another beautiful Michigan Spring. Any other Tiger fans out there? It sure was great seeing Verlander get his ring, I would have rather it had happened in the old English D. **Go Tigers!!**

Hopefully, you are all aware of our NALC National Convention which is being held in Detroit this year. (July 16th-20th) Maybe you are even a delegate from your branch. If you are not a delegate from your branch you may attend as a guest. I can't encourage you enough, to try and make it to one of the general sessions. Make sure you talk to your Branch President about attending. The feeling of being in a room with around 6000 of your fellow sisters and brothers is very empowering. As the event gets closer, I am sure a schedule will be made available. I have been blessed to be able to attend the last 3 conventions. I absolutely love seeing our great union in action. I hope to see all of you there!

My topic for this newsletter is Solidarity. What does that word mean to you? One of my fellow Branch 122 members wrote an article about this in our last newsletter, I really appreciated his efforts. He felt as a branch we are not as unified or together as we should be. He put together some t-shirts and wrote an article to promote our unity. This is the type of action we all need. Something lit a fire in him to promote this great union. We all need to take pride in this union and do something to promote it.

I am sure by the time this is read, Trump's proposed budget will include slashing and burning our retirement and benefits. That is a product of the world we live in. Problem is a lot of our neighbors out here have already been through some kind of pay cut, lost job or benefit change. So they may feel like "sorry, but it's just your turn". Getting others outside of the Post Office to understand that the Postal Service is actually making money is a tough task with all this "fake news". Without the prefunding we would be in a much better position. I know that every one of you reading this already knows this. So my question to you, is what are you doing about that?

As a union member, we all pay union dues, right? Because we are government employees, our union has to comply with the Hatch Act. This "Act" or law makes it harder for "government unions" to collect money for politics. Private sector unions are able to donate money out of their general funds to help promote their jobs in the political arena. WE CANNOT! If we could, I am sure there probably be a resolution to have our dues be a little higher and that money would be budgeted for that account. As of our February Postal Record, we as a state, have just over 8% of our membership giving a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. I have to believe that that number is so low, because people just don't understand the process or how important this account is.

Clearly, this last election showed us that our Nation is ready for a change. Whether you like it or not, we have a President with no political background. That speaks very loud to the fact that America is not happy with the "status quo". Based on his budget, he is trying to attack our jobs, pensions and benefits. I think we all dislike the political game that seems to be getting played. But again let me ask you, what are you doing about it?

How can only 8 out of every 100 letter carriers, in the State of Michigan, believe that contributing to LCPF is a priority? As a President, I am forced to write about this topic in every single newsletter. Sisters and brothers, I am not trying to say the "sky is falling". But little by little they are taking away our benefits. They continue to attack our retirement.

Please See, Solidarity, Page 12

We have very physical jobs. After doing this job for 30 years, many of us can't physically do this anymore. Right now, most of us qualify for retirement around the age of 57/58. Social Security doesn't kick in until the earliest 62. So if you qualify and retire at your minimum age, there is a Social Security supplement available. (paid by the OPM) The supplement is to help offset the years until you qualify for Social Security benefits. Congress is trying to eliminate this provision all together. I believe mine will be around \$800 a month if it is still available when I hit my minimum retirement age.

I think most carriers, if they are able to, would work until they are 62 or older. Again, the problem is some can't. Don't you want that choice? I am not sure about you, but losing \$800 every month will make that decision a little easier for me. Who can afford that? So if carriers are forced to work longer, that will mean less conversions. So just this little change will affect us all. From retirement all the way back to CCA carriers. This is just one of the changes they are trying to make.

As of the February Postal Record, about 8% of us Michigan NALC members give to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) as I stated above. To the 8%, THANK YOU! To the 92ish, what is it going to take? Solidarity, to me means we are one. We are all city letter carriers and we do everything in our power to promote our jobs, benefits and good working conditions.

I understand that anything outside of work, we may disagree on. Maybe you are a Republican, Democrat or whatever. Maybe you're a member of the NRA, have an opinion on Abortion or maybe Gay rights is an important topic to you. These issues are not in any way, shape or form connected to LCPF.

Our PAC only uses our money to protect and fight for our rights. We give money to political groups that are letter carrier friendly. Can we all agree that protecting our jobs and benefits is important? To simply say, I don't like politics, so I am not going to give, is exactly what the upper 1% want. No matter how much we give we will never even come close to their war chest. But that's why we need everyone to just give a little. I know how hard you work. I know a lot of you keep saying, "oh ya I have to sign up for that?" I know that it may seem difficult to get signed up. Because of the Hatch Act we cannot help you sign up at work, but if you need help getting signed up call me 810-444-5286. I will help every one of you.

Sisters and Brothers, I am here to help. This is 100% why I ran for the state board. I want to do everything in my power to promote solidarity. Recently I was on vacation with some fellow carriers. We were in Cozumel, Mexico. Sitting at a bar, enjoying the amazing weather. I started to talk with a man sitting next to me. He was a retired letter carrier from the Boston area. You should have seen how happy this man was. He loved sharing his stories with us. That's what I want for every one of us. I want you to be able to retire as soon as you can and have as much money as you need to enjoy every single day. I want you to never hear "what time are you leaving?" and "when will you be back?" ever again. Let's protect this together in SOLIDARITY!

Thanks for letting me serve,
Matt

Thomas Minshall

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

I hope everybody had a safe winter and is beginning to thaw out. I want to talk about the Letter Carriers Political Fund or LCPF. I know a lot of people groan when this subject comes up but I am learning more and more how critical it is to contribute. I never really understood how much politicians effect my job until I became a steward. It boggles the mind what these folks in Washington D.C. can do to us. For example, did you know that with the stroke of a pen they can eliminate our contract?

A lot of you are probably thinking “yeah we’ve heard all that”. But have you actually thought about what it means? No pay raises, no cola, reduced healthcare, the inability to grieve when you are mistreated...the list goes on and on and it’s staggering.

As I listened to President Rolando recently at the Committee of Presidents meeting explain things to us. There was so much I was unable to keep up writing everything he said. I was able to get enough to know that there is a faction in this country that is after the middle class. The proposed budget alone has many clauses that would be harmful to Letter Carriers. **The proposed budget would cut operational costs by 45 billion over the next 10 years.** That can only mean **reduced service standards.** **The budget would increase how much we contribute towards retirement.** **It would eliminate cola for FERS employees and reduce it for CSRS.** This is just the tip of the iceberg.

What really blew my mind is when President Rolando told us that out of **280,000 members of the NALC, only 8% contribute to LCPF.** Only 8% care about their job future? I find this hard to believe. I think it is more likely that **most of our members don’t fully understand the dangers we are facing.** We need to educate ourselves and our members. We need to have our voices heard. **We need to protect our jobs.** And we are in a great position to do so. President Rolando pointed out that we have two things going for us:

- 1 The diversity of our members. We have members of this great union that belong to every political party. We have many different beliefs that guide us but one thing we all have in common is our desire to keep our jobs.
- 2 The issues we face are non-partisan. It doesn’t matter if you are Republican, Democrat, Independent, etc...the budget issues we are facing affect all of us.
- 3 So having just celebrated New Years a short time ago, and knowing that this is the time of year for resolutions, I have challenged myself to get 5 members to sign up for LCPF and I am going to challenge them to get 5 and so on. Brothers and Sisters I challenge all of you to do the same. Think how we could make a difference if we all met this challenge!

Cornell Fears

When the State Newsletter gets to you the weather should have broken and spring should have sprung. This winter was really rough. Now throw in cancelled non-scheduled days and letter carriers working ten to twelve hours a day, oh my.

We are losing City Carrier Assists at a very high rate, as well as being down at least by a hundred. Where ever there is a will there's always a way. The Brothers and Sisters of this great union will always prevail. We deserve the Letter Carrier salute.

Please stay focused on any bills at the State and National level that affect Labor. Stay in touch with your Congressional Representatives. We must only support labor friendly political candidates to protect our job and benefits. If you are not donating to the Letter Carriers Political fund, please start. If you are, THANK YOU!

The National Convention is fast approaching and will be here before you know it. The National Convention has not been in Detroit in fifty years, welcome back. Detroit is the comeback city of America. We are working hard to make this the greatest convention ever.

We are counting on all the Branches in the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers to join in and make the National Convention 2018 in Detroit a memorable experience. We will see all of you soon. The Letter Carriers of this Region will show up and show out.

MISALC ELECTED OFFICERS

President

Carl E. Blasingame, Jr

Branch 1

Detroit

P.O. Box 871857

Canton, MI 48187-5857

(734) 999-8080

E-Mail misalc15@gmail.com

Vice President

Brad L. Mc Kenna

Branch 74

Saginaw

brad100@sbcglobal.net

Secretary

Jane Grant

Branch 434

Ann Arbor

jcgrant9@hotmail.com

Treasurer

Catherine J. Tondreau

Branch 2184

Western Wayne County

Cathyj1025@yahoo.com

Director of Education

John E. Serwach

Branch 3126

Royal Oak

jesrf1@gmail.com

Director of Retired Member

Michael F. Sheridan

Branch 4374

Utica

sheridanstudios@msn.com

Executive Board

Chairperson

Walter Mc Gregory

Branch 2184

Western Wayne County

walt2184@prodigy.net

Robyn Williams

Branch 320

North Oakland County

nalcbr320@sbcglobal.net

Matthew Tanner

Branch 122

Lansing

corndogkiller@charter.net

Thomas A. Minshall

Branch 246

Kalamazoo

tminshall2003@yahoo.com

Cornell Fears, Sr.

Branch 1

Detroit

sockfears@yahoo.com

Trump Executive order triggers USPS Financial Review

On April 12, 2018 just prior to this paper being sent for publishing, President Trump issued an executive order to form a task force charged with evaluating the finances of the U.S. Postal Service including pricing, policies and workforce costs. This is what we know so far.

The task force has been instructed to regularly consult with the postmaster general and chair of the Postal Regulatory Commission, and will be comprised of department and agency heads or their designees, including chair of the task force Steven Mnuchin (Secretary of the Treasury), Mick Mulvaney (Director of the Office of Management and Budget), Jeff Pon (Director of the Office of Personnel Management) and any other department and agency head the chair may designate.

In a report due no later than Aug. 10, 2018, the task force will provide a “thorough evaluation of the operations and finance of the USPS, including:

- the expansion and pricing of the package delivery market and the USPS's role in competitive markets;
- the decline in mail volume and its implications for USPS self-financing and the USPS monopoly over letter delivery and mailboxes;
- the definition of the "universal service obligation" in light of changes in technology, e-commerce, marketing practices, and customer needs;
- the USPS role in the U.S. economy and in rural areas, communities, and small towns; and
- the state of the USPS business model, workforce, operations, costs, and pricing.”

Once the evaluation is completed, the task force will develop recommendations on administrative and legislative reforms to USPS. According to the executive order, recommendations will consider the views of the USPS workforce and industry.

“NALC is hopeful that the inclusion of the Postal Service workforce in this evaluation and report will provide NALC the opportunity to provide input throughout the process,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said.

“We know that 90 percent of the Postal Service’s losses are not due to improper pricing, but are the direct result of the 2006 congressional mandate to pre-fund retiree health benefits 75 years in advance – an onerous burden that no other private or public entity in America is required to carry. NALC looks forward to working with the administration and Congress to address this issue and to restore financial stability to the agency while protecting the employees and the universal network that is so critical to Americans and their businesses, large and small.”

Every member should remain vigilant; check your NALC bulletin boards, NALC.org and MISALC.org for further updates.

The Michigan Letter Carrier
Michigan State Association
Of Letter Carriers, NALC
PO Box 871857
Canton, MI 48187-5857



The Michigan Letter Carrier Is published by the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers.

This paper is designed and published by the Officers of the MISALC.

Any MISALC member may submit material for possible inclusion in this newsletter.

Submitted materials may be edited for space or suitability.

The opinions expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers

Change of Address Notice (Officers and Steward only)

Send new address to:

MISALC

PO Box 871857

Canton, MI 48187-5857

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Branch Presidents and Secretaries:

Please send us notice of Officers and Stewards with address changes within your branches.