

# MICHIGAN LETTER CARRIER

Voice of the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers

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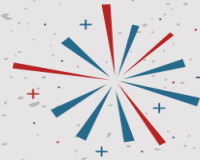
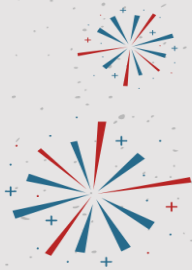


Michigan State Association of Letter  
Carriers would like to invite you to join us  
for the

## DETROIT LABOR DAY

# March

SEPTEMBER 1ST



SHOW OFF YOUR UNION PRIDE BY JOINING THE  
DETROIT LABOR DAY MARCH WITH THE NALC

**7:30A | 1400 TRUMBULL, DETROIT**

- STAGING AT 7:30AM AT BRANCH 1'S HALL, BE THERE BY 8:30A!
- Please wear a plain red shirt or the "Fight like Hell" shirts, we will have some but the supply is limited. We will also have about 50 signs, please bring your own if you have them.
- March starts promptly at 9am, unsure where we will fall in the line up...BE ON TIME!
- Water will be supplied, but if you need snacks, pack your own please.
- Kids & family are welcome!
- There is a Tigers game after if you would like to make a day event out of it, but due to time constraints, cannot be a state sponsored.

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## RON ZALEWSKI

Since the convention I've had several members ask why I got involved with the legislative and political part of unionism and what I want to do now that I've been elected. This really isn't about me, though. Each of us on the board ran with a common goal - representing letter carriers with our elected officials. I am SO fortunate to have a team around me of outstanding unionists who are motivated, skilled, and professional. They are the reason that we'll be successful.

In 2018, I asked my branch president to appoint me to represent my branch at the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO central leadership council. I felt like we weren't getting our money's worth for the dues we were paying. As it turns out, I had a knack for working in the political and legislative arena and was elected to the Metro-D executive board in 2019 and was appointed to fill a vacant position as trustee in 2020, a seat I still hold. In 2023, I was elected to be an executive board member of the MISALC. I felt that with the help of the 10 people who ran with me we could revitalize the state, so I ran for president in 2025.

That leaves us with the question - what are we going to do? That's a tough question to answer. Promise too little and people think that you're not taking the job seriously. Promise too much and you sound like a blowhard that is all hat and no cattle. Worst of all, fail to deliver on your promises and you put your reputation and integrity into question. Let's look at a couple of things that we have already started to change. First, the entire board committed to be present. "Go to the places and do the things" is the phrase that best describes that commitment. Shortly after the convention the NBA's office did training for local negotiations. There were five in-person trainings across the state. While the training was entirely the NBA's area of responsibility and expertise, there was a board member representing the state at each of the trainings. We've already done a branch meeting visit, a topic I'll discuss more later. Most of the board was at the Detroit Gleaner's Food Drive kickoff. I was honored to be asked to speak - my first showing representing the State Association in front of non-members. We had four board members at Camp Cavell last month. (There were also 3 more letter carriers - big thanks to them for coming out to support MDA.) An upcoming commitment already in the works is that the State Association will participate in the Detroit Labor Day March - our first appearance there since COVID.

Social media is becoming more and more influential among members. Our first step in that direction was to resume using the state Facebook page. I know not everyone uses Facebook, and we will eventually look into other social media providers, but it's a big first step to have our message go out to those who do use Facebook. We will investigate where our effort will have a return in contacting more carriers and will increase our efforts toward those areas. The great thing about Facebook is that we can get info out in a timely manner. When national issues a Take Action notice we all need to flood those congressional offices with messages. Our webpage hasn't really been utilized of late. Whether we continue to have a webpage or go in another direction is being considered by the board. We will also consider scheduling WebEx meetings if there's both a demand and an adequate amount of material to justify the state having its own meeting. I've discussed with the NBA getting a few minutes during the region 6 WebEx if there's a hot topic I need to disseminate. Thanks to David Mudd for graciously allowing me that privilege. The newsletter that you're reading right now is another method that we will use to contact members, though obviously it's not as timely as electronic communication. The publication dates for the newsletter will be moved to best impact our mission. An example: the fall 2026 newsletter will be about the November election and will be in mailboxes early enough to have an impact. In addition to the state newsletter, I've committed to providing branch editors with about a half-page of copy on a regular basis to use in their newsletters. While this article will be penned by me as we kick off the program, it is my hope that we can "pass the torch" around the board so that each of your officers gets to share.

Earlier I mentioned branch meeting visits. We would like to talk to your branch about legislation. We would like to talk about LCPF as well. Our visits are tailored to your branch's needs so we can work with your time constraints. Branch presidents simply need to contact me with your meeting schedule and we will get a date that works for everyone involved. If your branch uses Zoom, WebEx, or another virtual meeting solution, we can appear remotely, too. That makes signing people up for LCPF a bit more challenging but that's not anything that can't be overcome.

*...Continued on page 3*

One of the most important things that the bylaws charge me with doing is to appoint legislative liaisons. Letter Carrier Congressional Liaisons could be the most important tool we have for influencing congress. For those who attend the Region WebEx, you already know that I've asked those who are currently LCCLs or who have been in the past to contact me. I've also asked anyone who desires to help as a LCCL to talk with their branch president then either of you can contact me as well. As the LCCL for MI-13, I know that LCCLs haven't been used to their full potential. We're going to fix that. I've asked Director of Education John Dick to develop a one-on-one training course for new and returning LCCLs. He will be coordinating with Regional LPO Matt Tanner to make sure that nothing gets left out of the syllabus. Once trained, the new LCCL will do their first contact (or two) with a mentor LCCL. While that's likely to be John Dick or myself we certainly can and will use experienced LCCLs to do this as well. The idea is that you will have someone to assist you until you're comfortable doing it by yourself. Ultimately, we want each LCCL to be well known by your representative's staff and hopefully by the representative as well. That way, when you call, you'll be a well-known voice. Now comes the part everyone tells me is going to be difficult - finding volunteers to be LCCLs. I know legislative work isn't for everyone. I just happen to think that a lot of people sell themselves short when thinking about our legislative work. If you'd have asked me in 2010 if I wanted to get involved in lobbying congress I would have given you the side eye and moved along. As I mentioned earlier, it turns out I have a knack for the work. 15 years later, here we are! I would encourage each of you reading this to consider becoming a LCCL. Even if your congressional district already has a LCCL, there's room for two, or three, or four. If you're interested, we'll train you. Another point to consider is that you can still be a LCCL even if you live in an area that's not within your branch. I mentioned that I am the LCCL for MI-13. My branch doesn't deliver to a single address within my congressional district. That's not a problem.

The Detroit Labor Day March is a tradition going back a long time. There was a break for COVID, just like every other gathering, but it came back a couple of years ago and it's high time that letter carrier come back to the march. There will be more info as the event draws closer but here's a rough outline. The MISALC will stage on Trumbull near Branch 1 which is at 1400 Trumbull St at Porter St. Parking will be in Branch 1's lot, at the closed bank next door to Branch 1, or on the side streets around Branch 1. Times are still tentative, but you can pencil in the staging to start around 8AM with the march to begin around 9:00. Please wear your red "Fight Like Hell" t-shirts from the March & April rallies. If you don't have one, wear a red t-shirt but be prepared to change shirts. I've contacted national and we will have a limited supply of additional shirts available at staging. If your branch has a stash of left-overs from the rallies, bring them along with you. I don't know if we will have food or refreshments beyond bottled water, so stay tuned for further updates. If you don't hear anything, plan accordingly. This invitation extends to all carriers and retirees across the state. I do realize, however, that Detroit is at the far southeast corner of the state. If your branch has an event closer to home that you support, please continue to do so. If the state can help you with something regarding your event, contact us. We will do what we can. A side note: the red-hot Detroit Tigers are playing at home on Labor Day afternoon. There are still tickets left if you want to turn your morning into a day-long outing. Unfortunately, there was insufficient time to set up a group outing for this year's march.

Every year is an election year. 2025 is no exception. This newsletter will reach you after the August 5<sup>th</sup> primary. Not much we could do about that - we put most state business on hold so our board members who were on branch negotiating committees could concentrate on local negotiations. Our deadline for the newsletter was July 10<sup>th</sup>, the same day as our first board meeting. Given the time it takes to edit, publish, and mail, there was no way to get this out in time to remind you to vote in the primary. We won't be publishing again before local elections in November - that is only about two months and this is a twice-a-year publication. The following paragraph is from an article I made available to branches to publish in their July newsletter. Here's the rub, most every branch, including my own, suspends publication in July. So here is the gist of what I sent:

"As the State Association, we really don't get involved in local elections that much. Our goal is to affect national legislation. That obviously includes taking a stance on who represents us in Washington, DC. Our representatives and senators are the moving force behind the legislation that we need to improve the lives of City Letter Carriers. The president is head of the executive branch - of which the USPS is a part, so who holds that office matters to us as well. In general, a city councilperson doesn't have much influence in, say, the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, so we, as an Association don't exert much influence in local elections. Here's the rub - that councilperson may have an outsized influence on your life. A local ordinance may have a large impact on your quality of life. That impact may be positive or negative. Paying attention to who gets elected to council or the school board is important."

*...Continued on page 4*

I will also take this opportunity to point out that many, but not all, of us have a local election in November. Your local AFL-CIO CLC will probably have endorsements - contact them to see who's friendly to organized labor in your neighborhood races. Be informed and make a plan to vote!

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the previous board. Thanks to Carl Blassingame who led the Association for 10 years. Carl, I can only hope to fill your shoes. Eric Venzke, though you served less time than Carl, we can all look to you as an example of selfless service. Jayme Romine, you even continued to serve after the election by producing the convention minutes. That's inspirational. I remember when John Serwach was elected to the board - thank you for being so generous with your time for more than a decade. Finally, Darryl Clay. I enjoyed working with you on the executive board and hope that we can work on something together again. I also want to mention the additional six delegates who ran unsuccessfully for positions on the State Board: John Odegard, Mark Owen, Tracy Shuck, Shane Gritzmaker, Zach Schassberger and Katelyn Pueschel. Each of you stepped out and said "YES" to taking on another set of duties beyond your branch. Your commitment to the State Association did not go unnoticed.

Here's a list of handy contact points:

Facebook group: NALC Michigan  
Facebook: Ronald S Zalewski  
Email: rszalewski@aol.com  
State Office: 734-999-8080  
Cell/SMS: 586-206-3770  
Mailing Address: MISALC / PO BOX 794 / TAYLOR, MI 48180

*Ron Zalewski,*

President



### **Need assistance signing up branch members for the Letter Carrier Political Fund?**

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**Let us help!**

**MISALC Officer's are eagerly awaiting an invitation to your General Membership Meeting to help.**

**Contact President Zalewski at 734-999-8080 or MISALC.org**

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 United States Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. Any guideline amounts are merely suggestions, and you may contribute more or less than the guidelines suggest and the union will not favor or disadvantage you by reason of the amount of your contribution or your decision not to contribute. 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 administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, mailing address, name of employer and occupation of individuals whose contributions exceed \$200 in a calendar year.

## VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### ELAINE JONES

I had the joyous opportunity to assist with the planning and execution of my first MISALC (Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers) Convention as part of the State Officers. I must admit, it was a lot of work, especially when you're still an active employee. But once it's all over, I can take a deep breath and start the process all over again.

The Convention was held at the Great Wolf Lodge Resort in Traverse City, MI. from April 27-29, 2025. This venue was chosen to ensure that all delegates had the opportunity to be surrounded by amenities that might have been overlooked before coming to the convention. I mention this because there are a lot of behind-the-scenes activities that not everyone may realize are happening—many last-minute necessities that tend to get forgotten.

We had a local Staples nearby for much-needed copies and office supplies. Stores were conveniently located for those of us who forgot to pack certain items. I paid attention to these details because I value the convenience of having everything close by, especially when the site committee presents proposals for the next convention location.

The schedule was packed throughout the entire three days. We offered classes on Retiree information, TSP, OWCP, MDA fundraising and more. The knowledge shared with our brothers and sisters at the convention was invaluable. The General Session featured an excellent legislative presentation by the Director of Education, John Serwach.

We were also honored to have our National Secretary-Treasurer, Nicole Rhine in attendance. She provided updates on future changes in portals related to finances. These changes include dues deductions and the ability for letter carriers to make donations to the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) and the Disaster Relief Fund—all from one amount deducted from our paychecks and sent to NALC.

Looking ahead, I'm excited about the new opportunities that are on the horizon for us. I'm looking forward to working alongside all of you as we continue to grow and push for the improvements that benefit our brothers and sisters in the field.

In the coming months, I will be taking a more active role in leading and promoting MDA (Muscular Dystrophy Association) activities across our state. My goal is to energize and engage more members in creative fundraising efforts that are not only impactful but also fun and inclusive. We will be introducing new initiatives such as branch fundraising challenges, MDA-themed social events and partnerships with local businesses to amplify our efforts. I also plan to develop a resource toolkit for branches that includes promotional materials, ideas for year-round engagement and success stories from previous campaigns. Education and awareness will be at the forefront, and I'll be working to ensure all members understand the incredible work MDA does and how our contributions directly help families in need. Together, we can build stronger participation and make a lasting difference. Stay tuned for upcoming announcements and ways you can get involved—we're just getting started.

It's clear that we have a lot of work ahead to preserve our jobs and the benefits we've fought so hard to achieve and I'm eager to do this alongside such dedicated colleagues.

*Elaine Jones,*

Vice-President



## SECRETARY'S REPORT

### MORGAN HARRINGTON

Hello Brothers, Sisters & Cousins,

Firstly, I would like to thank my predecessors, Jane and Jayme for both offering to assist me in taking on this new role and for their work for our membership, I am sure with their help we will be able to do a lot of fantastic work. I am thrilled to work with all of you over the next two years! I would like to begin by introducing myself so you know who your new Secretary is. I began my journey with the Postal Service in 2014 as a City Carrier Assistant, and I became a Full-time Regular employee in 2018. I work in the small office in Allegan, MI. I spent four challenging years as a non-career employee, and I'm grateful that none of you will have to go through that experience again, although I understand that many of you have had even longer non-career experiences than I did.

Starting in 2016, I ran a non-profit organization for veterans and first responders, connecting them with mental health care professionals who specialized in their unique needs. This experience ignited my passion for helping others and being a voice for those who lacked the strength to advocate for themselves. I continued this work until early 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and my grandparents required additional care. During this time, I also approached my branch, Branch 246 of the Southwest Michigan Letter Carriers, to request a steward position in late 2019. Although my existing steward was doing an adequate job, we rarely saw results, and he often encouraged me to step up. I ultimately decided to take on that responsibility. I quickly expanded my role by serving as an outside steward for multiple offices. Currently, I am the steward and formal A representative for seven offices within my branch. In 2022, I became the Financial Secretary for our branch, and in 2023, I was appointed as the branch secretary—a position I still hold. Additionally, in 2023, I took on the role of MDA coordinator for our branch, a position that had lacked commitment for some time.

After I started taking on various roles within the Union, I began to pay attention to politics and what they meant for me and for all of us. Before that, I would do a little research before a national presidential election, but I really didn't follow politics at any other time. Understanding how much Congress could affect my job impacted me deeply and personally. The more I paid attention, the more I realized there was more that we could be doing. We are not a small organization, and when we come together for a common cause, we create a movement for change that cannot be ignored. I'm sure I am not the only one questioning what exactly our state board does. When I discovered their role is to work on our legislative and political agenda, I became interested! No matter which side of the aisle you find yourself on, there are constant attacks on the postal service and unions. If we want a say in what happens to us, we must have a seat at the table, and our state board makes that possible. We have all seen recently what can happen when we unite. The recent budget reconciliation bill that was introduced was filled with attacks on federal workers, including us. Through our noise, phone calls, emails, and persistent advocacy, we managed to have those proposals removed from the bill. That is the power we hold, and every single one of you is a part of it.

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with each and every one of you over the next few years. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who took the time to speak with me at the convention and offered their support. I cannot express enough gratitude for the chance to serve you all. I am proud to be a member and now the Secretary of the great Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers. Now, let's get to work!

*Morgan Harrington,*

Secretary

Visit the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers on Facebook group:

**NALC Michigan**

## TREASURER'S REPORT

### PETE PALMER

When I was approached to run for the position of Treasurer for the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers, I was honored just to be considered for the position. When, at the convention in Traverse City, I was nominated and was unopposed it was a surprise and a relief. That is when I began to wonder why no one else ran. Now that I have had some time to think about the position, I realize that it is not as simple as I thought at first. Since the new team is in place and almost every position has a new person in it, we will be learning our new roles. I am sure that each one of us will have something to teach or help the rest of us. I know that I will do my best at the position and work well with the rest of the officers.

Since the convention I have worked with our President, Ron Zalewski; our Vice-President, Elaine Jones; our Secretary, Morgan Harrington along with our former treasurer, Cathy Tondreau, in order to get started in my role as Treasurer.

I have held the positions of Trustee, Financial Secretary, and Recording Secretary in my branch, now it will be a new experience learning the Treasurer position. I am sure that I will get guidance and support from our team with learning my new role.

*Pete Palmer,*

Treasurer



### **3 Ways to give to the LCPF**

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

- 1) **Payroll Deduction:** Contribute automatically, using PostalEASE (either online or by phone) to set up an allotment deduction from your USPS paycheck.
- 2) **Direct bank withdrawal:** You can authorize the funds to withdraw a monthly electronic contribution directly from your personal checking account.
- 3) **Annuity deduction:** Retired Letter Carriers can elect to give monthly via an automatic deduction from your monthly annuity.

**NALC.org or see your local union Leadership!**



## REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

### MIKE SHERIDAN

Congress has passed the Big Ugly Bill, and we must suffer the consequences. All anti-Postal Service provisions were eliminated from the final bill. Some of these provisions included raising the FERS contribution to 15.4%!!!! It also eliminated all electric vehicles and infrastructure from the USPS. The high five versus high three for retirement calculations was also stripped from the final bill. Passage hinged on a final vote in the Senate with VP JD Vance breaking the tie, resulting in a 51-50 final vote. We can usually count on Lisa Murkowski, Republican of Alaska and Susan Collins, Republican of Maine to side with the Democrats but a deal was struck with Murkowski to give extra to Alaska, and so she voted in favor. Senators Thom Tillis, Republican of North Carolina and Rand Paul, Republican of Kentucky as well as Collins voted nay. Murkowski's no vote would have killed the bill but alas, it was not to be. Millions of Americans will lose their health coverage, and the hard-fought green incentives will have to wait for a sane President. This should pose a crushing defeat in the midterms and our focus must be to take back the House and the Senate to take control of the legislative agenda. We must remember that 38% of the electorate did not vote in the last Presidential election. Trump won 31.59% and Kamala won 30.66% of the total voting age population (hardly a mandate or a landslide). Trump is still insanely alleging that he won the 2020 election and is asking for investigations even though he lost sixty-two times in court.

With John James, of the 10<sup>th</sup> district deciding to run for Governor we have a real chance to recapture this seat. The independent redistricting commission has restored all the southern base in this district as far south as 8 Mile Rd and this is a traditionally Democratic area so it may come down, again, to voter turnout. We must get behind a candidate early and not rest until the election is over. Remember that James voted with Trump 100% of the time. It is equally important that we maintain our two Democratic Senators and Michigan is considered pivotal on the national scene as a toss up race. It is our civic duty to vote, and we must take this responsibility seriously!!

*Mike Sheridan,*

Director of Retirees





# REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

## JOHN DICK

Greetings to all members of the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers. I would like to thank the delegates to our recent Convention for electing me to the position of Director of Education for this two-year term. I ran on the "Take Action" slate, and that is precisely what I intend to do along with the other members of the MISALC Executive Board. This certainly is no time for sitting on our laurels.

These are certainly challenging times for the NALC and the United States Postal Service as a whole. The announcement of our new Postmaster General is disappointing and alarming. The new PMG, David P. Steiner, comes directly from service on FedEx's board of directors. NALC President Brian Renfro has released this statement: "His selection isn't just a conflict of interest-it's an aggressive step toward handing America's mail system over to corporate interests. Private shippers have been waiting to get USPS out of parcel delivery for years. Steiner's selection is an open invitation to do just that."

What this means is that the MISALC and its directive to engage in the political and legislative agenda for the betterment of our members is more vital than ever. It is time to Take Action, and we are now developing that strategy for the next two years. It is time to engage all of you to Take Action as well. Below are a few of the initiatives that we hope to accomplish over the next two years.

We need to increase the Letter Carrier Political Fund participation in all of the branches throughout the state. We currently only hover around 13% participation statewide. I have a personal goal of increasing that to 20% within the next two years. We will work on a strategy of one-on-one discussions with our fellow members about the importance of the LCPF. I have found that personal communication, direct one-on-one conversation, is the strongest influencer for getting a member to sign up. A little money from a lot of people goes a long way!

We need to have at least one Letter Carrier Congressional Liaison in all of Michigan's thirteen Congressional districts. MISALC President Zalewski has tasked me to develop a training program for that mission. This training will be done in a very hands-on way that will assist a newer LCCL to feel comfortable in communicating the NALC's message to their Congressional representative. I will be traveling around the state when needed for this mission. If you are interested, please talk to your Branch President.

During next year's mid-term elections, we will Take Action to ensure that all of our members statewide are educated on the candidates that are running, and at the same time using our resources to support any candidates that the NALC deems necessary. We will actively engage all of our members on that front.

The MISALC Executive Board will Take Action to increase its presence at branch events throughout the state. We want you to know who we are! Michigan is a huge state, but please send an invitation to President Zalewski if you wish to have one of us attend. We want to engage and hear from your members on their thoughts concerning NALC's political and legislative efforts.

This year, we will reinstate our presence at the Labor Day March in Detroit. The MISALC was an active participant for many years in the Labor Day March before the Covid pandemic. The March has been reorganized and we have already begun discussions with the new leadership of the Labor Day March. More details will be forthcoming and we hope to see you down there on the morning of Labor Day.

When an NALC rally or other event is planned that needs a big turnout, the MISALC Executive Board will assist in any way possible for that cause. The members need to be ready to spring into action when called. It is time for the American public to hear our message of Hell No to Privatization loud and clear and in the streets!

*...Continued on page 9*

Members of the MISALC attended this year's MDA Summer Camp in Lexington for the first time since Covid. We have already talked about how we can be more actively involved in next year's MDA Camp, and possibly host an MDA event for branches to raise funds for this important cause. Thank you to the MISALC MDA coordinator Vice-President Jones for making this year's participation in the Camp possible. It is so heartwarming and humbling to see the strong spirits of these kids in person.

These are just some of the things we hope to accomplish over the next two years. Getting elected to this position was the easy part. Now it is time to roll up our sleeves and get the job done. I know we, the MISALC Executive Board, can't do it alone. We will need all of your help make this agenda successful. We all have a precarious stake in the future of the NALC and the USPS. This is not a time for mere words. It is time to Take Action. Have a great summer and **Don't let the bastards get you down!**

*John Dick,*

Director of Education



**The Michigan Labor History Society  
Annual Labor Day Mobilization Luncheon  
Wednesday, August 20, 2025**

11:30am – 1:00pm  
at

**IBEW Local 58  
1358 Abbott St.  
Detroit, MI 48226**

**Tickets: \$40.00 per person**  
(includes luncheon and one-year membership in MLHS)

The theme for 2025:  
**“Michigan Labor: Unwaivered -  
Unconquered - Unbreakable!”**

For tickets or more information contact:  
**Michigan Labor History Society: (313) 577-4003**  
**Metro Detroit AFL-CIO: (313) 961-0800**  
**UAW Region 1: (586) 427-9200**  
**UAW Region 1A: (313) 291-2750**

## REPORTS FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD

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### TONYA CASEY CHAIRPERSON

I would like to thank all of you, my brothers and sisters for voting me onto your Executive Board. I am extremely grateful and humbled by the overwhelmingly amount of confidence and faith you have placed in me. It is my honor to serve you, and I will do everything I can to live up to those expectations.

The duties of the State Executive Board as mentioned in our Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers Bylaws is to have charge of the property of this Association. To approve and hold the bonds of the Secretary and Treasurer. To direct the investment of the funds, and review all funds: collected, deposited and spent, keeping an accurate account of all the bills audited.

The board conducted at least 4 audits throughout the 2 year term, carrying out inspections of the organizations account, systematically and independently from the secretary and presidents involvement. We need to be able, to explain or justify any actions taken to be in the best interests of this association. In short we asked the board to have: transparency, responsibility, accountability, and understand the consequences of their decisions.

Through my last term on the board I've learned the importance of a strong union. In order for that to happen one must be willing to step out of their comfort zone to learn. The State Convention last April, was one of those opportunities. If you missed it, don't worry, there is another opportunity, that will be held over the Columbus Day weekend (October 11-13); the K.I.M. (Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan) Regional Training. Some of the classes offer will be: Legislation, Just Cause, Safety, Better Case Files, and OWCP to name a few. The full lineup of classes can found on the KIM Region Facebook page.

If you are interested in going, I urge you to talk to your union steward now, to see what the qualifications are for attending. Each opportunity you have to learn, or refresh your mind on a particular topic, take it. Protect what's yours by learning more about the things that effect your job. Saying, "I didn't know," can no longer be an excuse. Take time to invest in one of the most important people in your life... yourself. The NBA office, The MISALC, and your local branches are willing to teach, answer questions, guide you if you're willing to hear.

As always, stay safe and informed,

*Tonya Casey*

### ELIZABETH BAYS

Dear Michigan Letter Carriers,

I want to thank everyone for their support and votes. I am honored to have been elected to serve as an Executive Board member for State of Michigan Letter Carriers. As stated during the installation of state officers, I promise to uphold the bylaws of the MISALC and will perform the tasks assigned to me to the best of my ability and will faithfully execute the laws of the National Association of Letter Carriers. I look forward to the opportunity to assist where and when needed throughout my term in office.

*...continued on page 12*

This convention was a very unique experience for me. When I heard that former State President Carl Blassingame was retiring and learned that individuals from across the state were stepping up to run for various positions on the State Board (Take Action Slate), I offered to step up and to be part of a team that wanted to do better by Michigan Letter Carriers. The individuals running on the Take Action Slate successfully secured the support of Michigan delegates and branches with an overwhelming majority. I am honored to be a part of our newly elected State President Ron Zalewski's team as an elected member of the Executive Board and looking forward to doing my part to improve the presence and fulfill the mission of the MISALC Board.

With all the proposed legislation that could affect Letter Carrier benefits out there, I feel it is crucial for our NALC State Officers to be present and educate the membership. Politics is an ugly game but as Federal employees we are dependent on Congress when it comes to our benefits. Therefore, we must be formidable players in this ugly game. We have been successful so far this year in fighting off proposed legislation that would hurt letter carriers, but we have to be persistent and continue educating our representatives. We can do this by donating to the Letter Carrier Political Fund and taking action through the NALC app or NALC.org website.

For the most part the convention was a very positive experience, and it was great to see and meet delegates from across the state. The classes I attended (Retirement and MDA) were both taught with an unconventional approach and provided some great new ideas on how to engage and involve the membership. I am looking forward to utilizing some of those new ideas within the branch.

My only negative experience was in learning that despite the increasing number of women holding leadership positions, whether it is within their branch, the state, region or nationally, there are still individuals out there who have no problem spreading falsities about other women in leadership positions. This is a very ugly reality that women in leadership positions deal with. It is disappointing that in this day and age individuals that promote themselves as female leaders within their own branch resort to spreading lies to minimize and discredit the hard work other females with leadership positions have made. I am a firm believer that if you will not say something directly to someone's face, you should not say it at all. We should lift each other up, not tear each other down.

I will leave you with this, regardless of your position or level of involvement, being part of a union is supposed to be about unity and solidarity. Leadership is not a role that someone fills, it is a series of behaviors that motivates, supports, and encourages others. If my actions inspire others to learn, stand up for their rights or get involved, then I must be doing something right! That is what being part of the NALC means to me and why I am involved.

In Solidarity,

**Elizabeth Bays**

## JENNIFER RAKE

Dear fellow Michigan State Association Brothers and Sisters,

I would like to thank everyone for allowing me the opportunity to serve on the Executive Board for the 2025 to 2027 term. I am honored to be a member of the board and look forward to a more active role in state events and helping keep our members well informed. What a wonderful team I am fortunate to be able to work alongside for the next couple of years.

The State convention was held April 27-29 at the Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City this year. This was a unique experience for me. When I was asked to be a part of the "Take Action" slate by Ron I put a lot of thought into making my decision. I've been wanting to get more involved in union issues and this seemed like a perfect opportunity to do so. I am thankful to our newly-elected President Ron Zalewski for asking me to be on his slate and part of the great team he put together. I had a wonderful time getting to meet and talk to so many new people at the convention during both the bonfire and hospitality gathering.

*...continued on page 13*

*JENNIFER RAKE continued....*

During the convention there were multiple classes offered and I chose the e-comp and retirement classes. Both were well attended ,fun and informative. Great job to the organizers and teachers at this year's state convention.

At the general session Nicole Rhine our National Secretary-treasurer spoke about DOGE and how a new Postmaster General may impact our operations moving forward. She also spoke about many of the new contractual changes and when they will be implemented.

Region 6 NBA David Mudd also spoke in length about the Article 8 changes in the new contract, specifically the overtime lists and the process in which they will be applied.

Matt Tanner talked about the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) and how crucial it is for carriers to contribute in order to move our agenda forward. Legislative actions play an enormous role in our careers as letter carriers and the future of the Post Service. We have been successful lately in stopping some of the new bills/laws being brought before Congress by taking action and contacting our representatives. But unfortunately the fight never ends, which is why we all need to contribute to LCPF.

I'm looking forward to the future success of the Michigan State Association and coming up with new ideas and helping the members by bringing more awareness of how the legislative side plays into our job and benefits as letter carriers. If you're on Facebook be sure to join our newly created group page to get current news and updates. Simply search under the groups tab for NALC Michigan to join and then answer a couple quick questions and you're in!

In solidarity,

*Jennifer Rake*

## **BENJAMIN DIXON**

Hello fellow Michigan Association of Letter Carriers my name is Benjamin Dixon and I am one of your newly elected Board Members. I want to start out by thanking my Brothers and Sisters at Branch 1 and all the branches in Michigan that support this team to lead and teach each and everyone in the state on the importance of legislation and the role it plays in keeping and the protection and rights we have earned over the past.

Just a little background on me. I grew up in Highland Park Michigan and graduated from Highland Park High School. I joined the United States Marine Corps right after graduating and served 6 years. My MOS(job) was a Communications Operator with a Top Secret clearance. I was Honorably Discharged. I am a Desert Shield/Storm veteran. I started working at the United States Postal Service in November 1992 as a Transitional Employee in Ann Arbor Michigan. I became a PTF in August of 1993 and a regular in February of 1994. I picked a Swing in March of 1994 and I am still currently in that position with only one route changing in 31 years I have serviced my string. I have been a steward since the mid 1990's and I still hold that position. I have been on several Route Adjustment teams and recently I helped with the development of the Next Generation Delivery Vehicle with carrier input on the design of only the interior not exterior.

I have been to many National and State conventions but the 97th MISALC Convention was the first time I ran for office. I have been the Sergeant of Arms at the 2018 National Convention in Detroit and also the last several state conventions. I have never campaigned for a position so it was different. I drove alone up to Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City, a little nervous. I did however have a great experience talking to and introducing myself.

I also learned what is happening at my office is happening every where else, sometimes worse. I gained knowledge from several veterans about Wounded Warrior Leave and also grievance tips. We had a meet and greet outside the first night. Of course we had a warm spell in Southern Michigan but the North was not quite there. Again talked to some fellow carriers and realized we knew some of the same people.

*...continued on page 14*

*BENJAMIN DIXON continued....*

By far the most important lesson was a class I thought was on retirement, though it was mis-titled and was more about Legislative/Contractual Letter Carrier Benefits. It broke down the time line and benefits. There have been no gains for Letter Carriers that have been more important than what we have won through the help of our friends in the Congress. Starting with Samuel "Sunset" Cox, a Congressman for New York. Our history is so well documented, if you ever get the chance to read Carriers In A Common Cause, it will open your eyes. The things we take for granted were fought for, sometimes lost and later won. From our pay, work hours, leave and retirement. You could get a job without knowing someone before they established a test. You definitely could not get hurt or sick. There was no retirement. Not even a uniform allowance.

My branch had each steward bring a gift to donate to MDA. When I tell you we showed up for the event. I think they had to get an extra table to show case the prizes. Everyone purchased tickets and placed them in a pot in front of the prize you wanted. I won big the last time I was here but Lady Luck was not on my side this time. Congratulations to everyone who won of course, MDA was the big winner. Also thank the motion that the State Association match the donations.

We also had National Officer Secretary Treasurer Nicole Rhine speak on the Contract and everything that went on to negotiate a deal, vote on and put on an expedited arbitration process when it failed to get ratified. Especially in the current environment, we did not want to be without a contract. It has also been explained that at the National Convention we, the body, pass Legislation and Contractual issues we want to try to negotiate with the Postal Service in up-coming Contracts.

Our last day was Election Day at the convention so it was very busy. Trying to wrap everything up and get everyone out to make flights or just drive home. I was glad when it was over and humbled by the experience. Again thanks for the opportunity, I hope to make you proud. Looking forward to working with this team and getting to know every one of you in the Great state of Michigan. We have a real fight on our hands but our history shows we are up for the FIGHT!!!

*Benjamin Dixon*

## **KEVIN "OHIO" WALKER**

Being a political junkie, the curse "May you live in interesting times" has never been felt more strongly in my ten years with the NALC. It is the principle duty of your MISALC Executive Board to ensure that we are bringing to Congress the Voice of the Letter Carrier. This is done in two ways: Relationship Building and Money.

Relationship Building with Congress requires contacting our representatives, working with their teams to ensure the representatives know that their constituents depend on their Letter Carriers and therefore protecting the Letter Carrier must be a Congressional priority. Letter Carriers remember who their friends are. This work is done by Letter Carrier Congressional Liasons (LCCLs). The board is developing its strategy to build out our LCCL team, training them and putting them to work.

If you have an interest in becoming a LCCL please reach out to MISALC President Ron Zalewski.

It is no secret that money is a huge driver when it comes to determining who gets Congress' ear. We are not playing on a level field in this arena, but if we don't play, we will automatically forfeit. The Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) is our non-partisan Political Action Committee (PAC) that has the ability to keep the ear and attention of our congressional representatives.

As we have seen recently, Congress has as much impact on our benefit and retirement structure as contract negotiations has on our rights and pay on the workroom floor. Donating to LCPF is as important to me as a Letter Carrier as the dues I pay for union representation.

Please reach out to Director of Education John Dick at 248-808-2206 to learn more about LCPF and how to donate today!

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Thank you to the delegates at the 2025 Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers for the trust that you have placed in the Take Action Slate. The delegate branches take their roles seriously and heard from a whole host of well qualified candidates that I am proud to call brothers and sisters regardless of whether they were on our slate, the opposing slate or courageous independents.

It is an honor and duty for this team to live up to that trust the delegates have placed in us. The members of the team assembled by President Zalewski are some of the hardest, behind the scene, union activists I know and I am pleased to be working with them and encouraged to dig in as we go about the business of the MISALC Board.

In Solidarity,

Ohio Walker



## **NALC PRIORITY LEGISLATION**

### **ANTI-PRIVATIZATION RESOLUTION (H.RES. 70/S.RES 147)**

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that Congress should take all appropriate measures to ensure that the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the federal government and is not subject to privatization.

Introduced by Reps. Stephen Lynch (D-MA) and Nick LaLota (R-NY), and Sens. Gary Peters (D-MI), Dan Sullivan (R-AK), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Susan Collins (R-ME), Thom Tillis (R-NC) and Maggie Hassan (D-NH)

### **PROTECT OUR LETTER CARRIERS ACT (H.R.1065/S.463)**

To deter crimes and assaults against letter carriers by securing keys and collection boxes, directing U.S. attorney offices to prioritize cases involving assaults against letter carriers, and strengthening sentencing guidelines for those found guilty of these crimes.

Introduced by Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH) and Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Josh Hawley (R-MO)

### **FEDERAL RETIREMENT FAIRNESS ACT (H.R.1522)**

Would allow certain federal employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees after Dec. 31, 1988, making such time creditable service under the Federal Employees Retirement System. This includes letter carriers who served as casuals, transitional employees and city carrier assistants.

Introduced by Reps. Gerry Connolly (D-VA), Nikki Budzinski (D-IL), David Valadao (R-CA), and Don Bacon (R-NE)

### **IMPROVING ACCESS TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION FOR INJURED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ACT (H.R.3170)**

Would expand the role of nurse practitioners and physician assistants to allow them to treat injured federal workers under the federal workers' compensation program.

Introduced by Reps. Tim Walberg (R-MI) and Joe Courtney (D-CT)

### **USPS SHIPPING EQUITY ACT (H.R.3011)**

To amend Title 18, United States Code, and Title 39, United States Code, to provide the United States Postal Service the authority to mail alcoholic beverages, and for other purposes.

Introduced by Reps. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) and Suhas Subramanyam (D-VA)

**NALC** Fact  
Sheets



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**Benjamin Dixon**

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MISALC Voice of the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers

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