

MICHIGAN LETTER CARRIER

Voice of the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers

Volume 33

Issue 2

December 2024



*Merry Christmas &
Happy New Year!*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

CARL E BLASSINGAME, JR.

After the 2024 Presidential Election a lot of people are wondering what happened and how can it be that someone with 34 felony counts can become the President of the United States?

Charged with paying a porn star \$130,000 through his lawyer to keep quiet about her alleged affair with the then presidential candidate. Trump was indicted by a federal grand jury in June 2023 over his alleged mis-handling of classified documents after leaving the White House, making him the first U.S. president to face federal criminal charges.

Trump is charged with 32 counts of willful retention of national defense information (a violation of the Espionage Act). Charged with Racketeering. Among the most serious charges is a violation of Georgia's RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Act, a charge most often associated with organized crime.

Brothers and Sisters, around 50% of people in this country voted for someone with a rap sheet as long as my arm to be the President of the United States, yet, almost anyone with a felony on their record can't get a job. Help me make sense of that. A man who has lied, cheated, and stolen from the American people is allowed to run this country.

A man who is now talking about going after his political opponents, and court martialing Military Generals, because of the withdrawing of our troops from Afghanistan. Yet, it was Trump's administration in February 2020 who negotiated a withdrawal agreement with the Taliban that excluded the Afghan government, freed 5,000 imprisoned Taliban soldiers and set a date certain of May 1, 2021.

Let's not forget he wants to eliminate Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security from our seniors. Abolishing the Public School system. How about cutting the funds from our Military Men and Women and their families because he thinks they don't deserve it? I can go on and on but I think you get the message. I don't care if they are Republicans or Democrats, but I do care about when we put someone in the White House that has no integrity or respect for those less fortunate.

Many voters went for Trump because of high prices. Well, does anyone think Trump and the GOP are going to enact a price control on these corporations? Don't hold your breath. It was the Republicans who voted against the price gouging act, which would have lowered the gas prices. It was the Republicans who voted against the Inflation Reduction Act. These are Bills that have strengthened the econo-

my, but all that will be lost in this next Administration.

1 Samuel Chapter 8 serves as a powerful reminder of the tension between human desires and divine will. Despite God's warning about the implications of a monarchy, the Israelites insist on their own way, signifying their lack of faith and obedience. It's an invitation for introspection on whether we are seeking God's guidance in our decisions or simply imposing our will without considering divine wisdom.

It further represents a pivotal moment in the history of the Israelites. It portrays a transition in the leadership structure of Israel from Judges to Monarchs. Amidst Samuel's aging years and his sons' failure to carry on his just leadership, the people of Israel demand a king, leading to a profound exchange between Samuel and God regarding the people's desire and God's warning. God help us all.

Carl Blassingame,

President

A Third Class Christmas?

Prior to 1968 many people sent Christmas



Cards by Third Class Mail—people mailed Christmas cards in unsealed envelopes with no personal messages written on them so the cards would qualify for third-class postage rates, which were 1 or 1 ½ cents cheaper. Third-class mail was not returned or forwarded if it could not be delivered. In 1950, it was estimated that 75 percent of Christmas cards were mailed at third-class rates, and that thousands were destroyed each season because they were undeliverable. A First Class Stamp was 3 cents from 1932–1958. On January 7, 1968, the minimum postage rates for both third-class single-piece mail and First-Class Mail were raised to the same amount — 6 cents — eliminating the incentive for customers to mail greeting cards as third-class mail.

Earlier in the century people began using Christmas Seals (as pictured above) that benefited charity as Christmas Stamps did not exist.

The officers of the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers want to wish you a joyous, prosperous and safe holiday season and best wishes for a Happy New Year.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ERIK VENZKE

The 2024 election has come to an end and although not all letter carriers will agree on the representatives that were elected, I think we all agree that we are glad the onslaught of political mailings will stop for now.

As for the results of the U.S. House and Senate races in the state of Michigan there weren't many surprises as all eleven incumbent House candidates retained their seats. However, there was one seat previously held by Democrats in the seventh district that flipped Republican. Where Republican Tom Barrett won the seat vacated by Democrat Elissa Slotkin who had ran for and was elected to the Senate replacing Debbie Stabenow.

Although not all the NALC's preferred candidates won their respective races in the 2024 election it's time to turn the page and look to the future by building new relationships within Congress. We need to educate our newly elected officials, and some of the old ones, on issues affecting letter carriers and seek their support for bills that are introduced on behalf of the NALC and the Postal Service.

On 11/12/2024, H.R. 82 the Social Securities Fairness Act passed its first challenge to become law with a 327-75 vote in the House. Twelve of the thirteen Michigan members of the U.S. House voted for the bill with only R - John Moolenaar of the second district voting against it. The House was able to bring the bill for a vote under a shortcut procedure called the suspensions calendar, where amendments aren't allowed but passage requires a two-thirds vote rather than the usual simple majority. The bill had 330 House co-sponsors, more than the two-thirds majority needed and passed with almost that exact amount. In some instances, members co-sponsor bills for political reasons but don't necessarily vote for them once they reach the floor, however, that wasn't the case with H.R. 82 as it maintained its broad support from both parties in the House.

Although, H.R. 82 passed in the House and its companion Senate Bill S. 597 currently has 62 Co-sponsors which is more than enough to pass in the Senate, there is no date set for S. 597 to be brought to the floor. If it fails to be brought to the floor in the 118th Congress both S. 597 and H.R. 82 will expire at the end of the 2024 term. Putting us in a race against time to have S. 597 and all other bills introduced in the 118th Congress brought for a vote before the term ends. If we're unsuccessful and these bills expire, we'll be back to square one with the 119th Congress in get-

ting equivalent bills reintroduced with no guarantee they'll have the needed support to pass. Therefore, we all need to do are part and contact our representatives seeking their support and press them to get these bills on the floor for a vote so the progress that's been made doesn't go to waste.

"Tomorrow, every Fault is to be amended; but that Tomorrow never comes." – Benjamin Franklin

We are close and can see the finish line in getting the Social Securities Fairness Act passed but aren't quite there yet. We're asking that you contact your respective members of Congress by going to the NALC Take Action page or by scanning the QR code below to let them know we need them to support S. 597 and have it brought to a vote in the 118th Congress. At press time we are still waiting for the Senate to act.



In Solidarity,

Erik Venzke,

Vice President

Before 1962, when the first Christmas Stamp was introduced, some customers mailed seasonal greetings using postage stamps with holiday-like designs, like the 1960 Fifth World Forestry Congress stamp



used to mail a Christmas card in 1960, picturing

what looked like a giant Christmas tree, and the Olympic Winter Games stamp, featuring a snowflake.



REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

JOHN SERWACH

For many of us our focus has moved on from the Fall elections to discussion of the proposed Tentative Agreement. While I will not opine on our TA I would urge you to read it thoroughly and seek answers to any questions you may have before casting your ballot.

While the tentative agreement may be number one on most peoples minds, the State Association's purpose is to handle politics and legislation so I will try to bring you up to speed on the current political landscape as I see it.

The election results while not surprising, were disappointing to organized labor. In Michigan we fared fairly well with some disappointments both on the state and federal levels. The Michigan Supreme Court results were encouraging and will help temper the fires of "big business." Nationally the vote broke late and broke hard toward the GOP. Despite President-elect Trump's flaws enough of the country was persuaded that the ideas he laid out and his outsized personality will be the direction we will go in for the next four years. While I'm certain we will hear much fear mongering and hand wringing I urge you to not be afraid. There will be talks of privatization, and some assaults on the federal workforce but overall, we are the employees who **do** the work. If you hear voices talking about waste and inefficiency, tell them – yes there are some. But the waste and inefficiency are on the part of management not the letter carrier! Most of us could give management numerous ideas that would reduce work hours and create savings if only management would listen! They could start following our contract for example!

On the legislative front we do have one victory that's close and that is the Social Security Fairness Act. This is legislation that we have been working on for many, many years. Anyone remember the SOAR breakfasts? SOAR was an annual event in Michigan that brought in numerous Congressmen and gave us the opportunity to persuade them on issues of importance to Federal Employees. Federal workers from all parts of government banded together to try to pass legislation that would remove penalties incurred by federal annuitants who also qualified for Social Security. It has been a long, hard struggle, let's hope these retirees get the outcome they have long deserved.

While we have several other legislative priorities such as the "Protect Our Letter Carriers Act" -POLCA and the "Federal Retirement Fairness Act" just to name a few, we will have to see how the legislative ground on Capitol Hill shifts after January to handicap the likelihood of either of these bills becoming a reality in the near future. To be

frank, the majority in the House is so narrow that I expect there to be substantial gridlock, which might not be a bad thing. I do hope that now that the election is over and one way or another our contract will finally be resolved it will encourage more of our members to support our political action fund, LCPF. The changes in Washington may make many of our members realize just how important what happens in DC is to all of us and our retirements and benefits. We will discuss LCPF, these bills and many more legislative challenges that are sure to happen in depth at our State Convention in 2025. The convention will be in Traverse City April 28th and 29th and branches should be receiving a Convention Call in the very near future. I hope you can attend and I hope Brother Joe Golonka is able to forecast some good weather for us! We will be returning to the Great Wolf Lodge again where we convened in 2019.

As the New Year approaches it's a great time to reflect on the past year and review and reflect on your goals for 2025 and beyond. I hope you are all able to find the time to do so and I wish everyone a Merry Christmas, a Seasons Greetings and best wishes for a Happy New Year from my family, to yours.

John Serwach,

Director of Education



TREASURER'S REPORT

CATHERINE TONDREAU

I have attended numerous training classes for treasurers and now that it is getting close to the end of the year, I have been reviewing some of the items that I received. There are a couple of things that the officers and members of each branch should remember especially new officers. David Dorsey, CPA has given a class on conducting audits in small unions, a guide for trustees and the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) of 1959. The LMRDA requires that all unions with property and annual reports greater than \$5,000 secure a bond for at least 10% of the receipts and assets handled. Also, all officers and employees should be bonded.

The LMRDA also requires unions to submit an annual financial report within 90 days after the end of their fiscal year, for most of us that would be March 31.

Dave Dorsey also gave us some warning signs to look for when conducting audits.

Some warning signs include:

- apparent extravagance
- absent local officials
- membership complaints
- phone calls not returned.
- vacations not taken.
- one-person office
- delinquent LM and 990 reports
- change in lifestyles.
- changes in personal health or habits
- abusive credit card usage
- unusual cash usage
- disorganized office

and “little birdies” to name a few.

He also spoke on Internal Financial Controls. Union officials must ensure the union's funds and other assets are used solely for the benefit of the union and its members. Some effective controls can be established even in one-person operations. One example is requiring two signatures on all checks: establishing a separation between func-

tions and responsibilities. To prevent or at least deter the misuse or embezzlements of union funds, he suggests making regular deposits, getting prior authorization, avoid signature stamps or pre signed checks, require the financial officers give a report on the branch's finances at each membership meeting and encourage trustee or audit committee members to conduct periodic audits.

I hope each branch has a copy of the NALC Branch Officer's Guide to Finance and Administration. It really comes in handy for numerous things. As an officer of your branch, I would recommend you sign up to attend Branch Officers Training, formerly known as the Secretary Treasurer Training, offered by NALC. It has been quite educational for me.

I look forward to seeing you at the State Convention in April, and Happy Holidays!

Catherine Tondreau

Treasurer

In 1962 the Post Office released the first Christmas Stamp (pictured in last year's State paper) to sales of over 800 Million stamps,

Sales records were broken again the next year by the second Christmas stamp issued, featuring the National Christmas Tree in front of the

White House. Determined not to run out of stamps, the Department ordered 1,291,250,000 of the stamps printed — a new record. Again, sales were strong, with many postmasters reporting a 50 percent increase from the previous year. But the Christmas Stamp was about to face a controversy (see page 6)



REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF RETIREES

MIKE SHERIDAN

The cost of living for retirees in CSRS is 2.5% this year effective with our January 1st annuity payment. FERS retirees receive 2.0% this year effective with the same monthly payment. This will help offset the \$1.25 a month my NALC Health Benefit went up. Social Security also went up 2.5% for those FERS retirees who are sixty-two or over.

By the time you read this we will all be joining the Postal Service Health Benefit plan. Those in southeast Michigan who were in Blue Care Network now realize their health plan will not be offered in the new PSHB. Your letter from OPM stated that they are putting you into the FEP Blue Cross plan. Hopefully, you made the switch to the best health plan which is the NALC Health plan. It has exceptionally low premiums, excellent coverage, and an extensive network of Cigna providers (nalchbp.org). Those of us who are in, or signed up for Medicare B during the Special Enrollment Period (SEP) which ended on September 30th also have the option of joining Aetna Medicare Advantage within the NALC Health Plan which offers \$900 in reimbursement for both you and your spouse each year. Medicare B is projected to have a \$12.00 per month increase next year (not released as of this article). The other change is that both retirees and active will see an effective date of January 1st for the new plan (instead of first day of the first pay period in the new year). My branch 4374 has over three hundred members in the NALC Health Plan and my next goal is four hundred members!!!

Election 2024

Kyra Harris Bolden and Kimberly Ann Thomas were both elected to the Michigan Supreme Court and

Elissa Slotkin survived a very close election to succeed Debbie Stabenow in the US Senate. We maintain both seats in the Senate for our Democrats but lose our majority in that body. It could be a rough 4 years for a President that knows very few norms about how to govern and very little about governing at all. Time will tell but, in my thinking, history will not grade him very highly in his turbulent presidencies. Despite our valiant efforts Kamal Harris came up short but did well for having only 107 days until election. She maintained the high road against the constant bullying of a man whose only concern is his own ego.

Thanks for the well wishes!

It was a narrow escape, but my guardian angel was on the volleyball court that day. Maria Lauinger brought me back to life. As a former ICU nurse she jumped into action with CPR and administered the AED that started my ticker again. I will be forever grateful for her quick action that saved my life. No heart damage, no blockages, only an “electrical” problem that brought me to the floor. I am sincerely grateful for all the well wishes and cards and assure you I am stronger every day, and I will be back at volleyball!!!

Mike Sheridan,

Director of Retirees

For 1965, the post office decided to try something different: a painting of the angel Gabriel based on an early New England weathervane. It didn't reckon on critics who'd attack the stamp for portraying a bosomy angel, even though Gabriel was male (see stamp at left). Ga-



*br*iel would return for Christmas three years later, this time based on *The Annunciation*, a painting by the 15th century master Jan van Eyck in the collection of the National Gallery of Art. (See stamp at right) Perhaps because of the painting's prestigious provenance, the 1968 stamp did not invite any ire, although its Gabriel could also be mistaken for female—though a decidedly less bosomy one.



SECRETARY'S REPORT

JAYME ROMINE

I tend to favor the route adjustment and route protection aspects of the city craft. I spent two years on the TIAREAP team analyzing route data. One surprising trend my partner and I found was that routes evaluated short of eight hours due in large part to lack of office time. We saw several carriers' percent to standard in the 70 percent range, and a few in the 60s. We even saw a route that the average office time was lower than their fixed office time. Blown away by this, I started focusing on my home office's office times. Seeing most hit the street faster than standard, I distributed An Expanded Vehicle Safety Check to every case.

One highly criticized MOU in the TA is the modification to fixed office time in a joint environment.

This new MOU recognizes the need to modify methods for determining fixed office time in a joint process to fit office activities in the current work environment by recording most office activities other than casing mail and pulling down mail as either recurring or non-recurring. Activities previously recorded under Lines 8-13 and 15 would now be recorded under Line 21. When determining minimum line-item values in the modified method, the MOU would prohibit such values from being less than indicated values for the following items:

Line 14 – Accountables – 2 minutes

Line 19 – Vehicle Inspection – 3 minutes

Line 20 – Personal needs – 5 minutes

Line 21 - Office work not covered - 10 minutes

THESE ARE MINIMUMS. The goal is to credit an appropriate fixed office time to every route. If you do your job correctly and thoroughly, your route should be credited with the right fixed office time, regardless of any changes to our National Agreement.

One easy way to ensure safety and fixed office time is in your vehicle inspection.

An expanded vehicle safety check has 27 points of inspection on it, and if done completely and thoroughly, will almost always take longer than 3 minutes. Checking your vehicle with a buddy is the safest way, and normally takes around twice as long. It is essential on The Week of Count and Inspection to perform your job as usual. If you are interested in any kind of route protection, you should be doing a thorough expanded vehicle safety check every single day.

Office work for city carriers has evolved due to changing mail mix which has impacted caseable mail volume, parcel volume, and accountable mail. But the importance of performing all of our office duties, including the expanded vehicle safety check is unwavering.

Jayme Romine,

Secretary

The design of the 1966 and 1967 Christmas stamps — the first to feature the Madonna and Child (Pictured below)— sparked even more controversy. In 1966, a representative of the American Jewish Congress urged the Postmaster General not to issue the stamp. In 1967, Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State sued Postmaster General Lawrence O'Brien, complaining that “the likeness of the Madonna is a religious symbol commonly associated with the Roman Catholic

*Church; and that, therefore, for the Government to issue such a postage stamp violates the First Amendment to the Constitution.”*IA federal judge dismissed the complaint, finding that the plaintiffs had no standing to sue.



In November 1970, the Postal Service first issued dual Christmas stamps — a “traditional” stamp with a religious theme and a “contemporary” stamp with a secular theme. Since that time, both traditional and contemporary holiday stamps have been regularly issued. Traditional stamps have usually featured a famous painting of the Madonna and Child, for example, the Niccolini-Cowper Madonna by Raphael, issued in 1983, and Ignacio Chacon’s Madonna and Child with Bird, featured in 2006. Popular subjects of contemporary Christmas stamps have included toys, holiday decorations, and Santa Claus.



REPORTS FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE BOARD

JOHN DICK

This is not the article I wanted to write, and for many of you, this is certainly not the one that you wanted to read. The country has spoken, and we will have the trifecta of a Republican President, with a majority Republican Senate and House starting in 2025 and for the next four years. I watched from a distance, and I can say that I definitely was not surprised. I could see for months that the mood in our country was changing.

I spent the days leading up to Election night in a foreign land. My son, his wife, and our two grandchildren live in Geneva, Switzerland. He has lived there since the end of 2010, and has decided to make his home and raise a family there. He was never politically aware when he lived in the States, even though his father was knee deep into American politics. But once he moved to Europe, he began to see things more clearly through the scope of American politics. He joined the Geneva chapter of Dems Abroad and became quite active in that association. We began to talk about American politics on a regular basis, and I was quite proud of his activities and his civic awakening.

I was invited by my son to join him on Election Day for a Dems Abroad watch party, where everyone could see the vote tallies coming through on a large screen. Because of the six-hour difference between Geneva and Eastern Standard Time, the party began at 11:00 P.M. It was a festive event, very well attended with mostly a younger, enthusiastic crowd of expats who all generally were from the United States. I helped put up some decorations and imbibed at the cash bar tended by a lovely French woman dressed in a tuxedo. Hot dogs and Krispy Creme donuts were the fare of the night. The mood was festive and lively. Then the election results began to slowly pour in.

Around 2:00 A.M. the first tallies were posted. Nothing shocking at first, but Trump received the first batch of electoral votes. At 3:00 A.M., I noticed a shift within my soul, and a sense of foreboding began to emanate throughout the crowd. The clock ticked 4:00 A.M. and the sea of red electoral votes swam over the room. The party was to last until 6:00 A.M., but just before 5:00 A.M. I suggested to my son that maybe we should go home. He agreed, and we both laid our forlorn heads on our pillows in the early morning hours of November 6th. The rest is history.

Vice President Kamala Harris spoke to her alma mater, Howard University, to concede the election to Trump. She thanked her supporters and reiterated that she believes Americans have far more in common than what separates us. In what appears to be a message to Trump, she noted: ***“A fundamental principle of American democracy is that when we lose an election, we accept the results. At the same time in our nation, we owe loyalty not to a president or a party, but to the Constitution of the United States, and loyalty to our conscience and to our God.”***

She also told those of us who are feeling after the election that the world is dark these days to ***“fill the sky with the light of a billion bright stars, the light of optimism, of faith, of truth and service. Let that work guide us, even in the face of setbacks, toward the extra ordinary promise of the United States of America.”***

As I said goodbye to my two grandchildren two days after the election, knowing that it would be months before I got to hold them again, I promised myself that I would keep fighting for my political and social ideals and not give up. Not for myself, but for them. I owe them a better world than the one that we have right now.

John “Cementhead” Dick,

Trustee

ELAINE JONES

Well, well, well, we made it through this presidential election. The stress of the unknown was overwhelming for a lot of people. Too bad the stress for a lot of us has just begun. We worry about things we can't do anything about, however the reality is that we can take some steps to strategize for our future.

Politics seems to be a never ending part of our daily lives. So many of us don't like discussing politics, but it does not alienate us from being affected by it one way or the other. This is not the time for us to think it's over, we must continue to contact our representatives in Washington DC.

Please note that we have a lot of work ahead of us. We must come together as union brothers and sisters to make sure we have jobs in the future. We need to stop fighting each other and use that energy to form an alliance against those who would like to dismantle the post service.

We are stronger in numbers. Let join together and try to raise our percentage of LCPF contributors, so we can continue to work on the issues that will support our future.

We have a lot of work to do. The work is too much for everyone not to help out, so let's get ready, set and go. I look forward to some more of us stepping up and helping out. I look forward to working with you!!!! Yeah!!!!

Elaine Jones.

Trustee

We hope you have enjoyed a bit of history about Christmas past in the world of Stamps. Christmas has always been a special time at the Post Office. The mix of cards vs packages may have changed but it still takes teamwork, dedication and planning to deliver a successful holiday mailing season — just like it did a hundred years ago.

This holiday season USPS projects delivering over 11 billion mailpieces, most in just 2-3 days and Michigan carriers are the best carriers in the world—you get the job done. You are everyday heroes and a symbol of American determination, regardless of the conditions you are forced to work in.

On behalf of all of us at the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers, thank you for your service, we wish you a Safe, Prosperous, Joyful, "Peak Season". Here's a few more stamp designs from over the years, at left 1964 special "Se-tenant (a block of 4 different designs), 1974 the first self adhesive stamp and 1975 with no denomination, because rates were uncertain.



RON ZALEWSKI

In the last two days, I've had union brothers ask me about why there isn't a provision in the tentative agreement regarding buy-back on non-career time. The simple answer is that there's no provision because we can't negotiate for buy-back of non-career time. It will take a change in federal law. Which brings us to the world of legislative activism.

HR 5995 is the Federal Retirement Fairness Act. It was introduced by Representative Derek Klimer (D-WA-6). Rep Klimer has introduced similar bills in previous congresses. The point of the bill is to allow certain federal service to be credited toward retirement once a deposit has been made in the federal retirement system by the employee. There's 130 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors are members of the House who sign on to the bill indicating their support. They may do so when the bill is introduced or later in the process. For the Federal Retirement Fairness Act there are two House members from Michigan who have co-sponsored: Rep Hayley Stevens (D-MI-11) and Rep Elissa Slotkin (D-MI-7). Co-sponsorship is important: in addition to showing support for a bill, there are procedural advantages to having additional sponsors. If a bill reaches a minimum number of cosponsors (290 currently) as has them for a minimum number of calendar days (25 currently) the bill may be brought to the house floor without a committee vote. This isn't as important when the majority party wants the bill to pass but can overcome a committee trying to kill the bill by not voting on it so that it can't be reported to the floor. A current example would be HR 82, the Social Security Fairness Act. It has 330 cosponsors and may be brought to the floor for a vote during the lame duck session. Lame duck sessions are when congress meets after the November election but before the new Congress begins. This is important because all bills are extinguished when the new Congress convenes on January 3rd of odd numbered years. That's when the results of the previous November's general election become effective for the Legislative branch. The lame duck session gives the old congress a chance to clean up their agenda going into the new congress.

Here's where we can get involved. Bills that are important to letter carriers can be found under the Legislative Action Center on the Government Affairs tab at NALC.org. You'll find fact sheets there as well. Contact information for your Representative is available on another tab. Contacting your Representative is one of the two most important things a rank and file carrier can do to help bring about our legislative agenda. I'll get into the other momentarily. After you've called your Rep's office and registered your support for a bill, in this case HR 5995, be sure to file a lobbying report which is also available under the Government Affairs tab. Does the process seem a little intimidating? It isn't really. Plus, a leader from your branch, a Letter Carrier Congressional Liaison, or a member of the State Executive Board would love to help you get involved. My first contact as a LCCL was done with an experienced LCCL (John Dick from Br 3126) sitting by my side. You don't have to be a LCCL to contact your Representative. In fact, the more involved letter carriers we have contact their Representatives, the better our chance is to get them to support letter carrier issues.

I'm writing this as the election results come in on November 5th. The election will have a pretty big impact on our agenda. If Trump wins, we know his opinion of the USPS. Remember that he commissioned a panel to privatize us. That's not going to be the top of his list of things to do, but be assured that it's on there somewhere. Elissa Slotkin running for senate impacts us twice. It will be nice to have another friend in the senate, but we have to hope that her replacement in MI-7 is friendly to us as well. I know that Curtis Hertel has courted support from the NALC. Barrett was a state senator that attempted to be thorn in the side of Gov Whitmer during the COVID crisis. MI-8 is the only other district in Michigan in which the incumbent isn't running for reelection. Kristen McDonald Rivet is a former state senator. Paul Junge was an appointee in the Trump administration. In the senate election, Slotkin faces Mike Rogers, a lobbyist and former US Representative. While we support anyone who supports letter carrier issues, it seems that in each of these elections, the dem would be our preferred choice.

The other thing you can do to help our legislative agenda is to support the Letter Carrier Political Fund. Our PAC contributes to politicians that support us. It is really awful that money is the lifeblood of politics, but we have to face the reality of the situation and give our leadership the tools they need to generate support for the legislative agenda. Contributing is easy. Contact your branch leadership or any member of the State Board to start your contribution. You can also find details at NALC.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 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 *(Please see Zalewski on page 11)*

TONYA CASEY

Now that winter is upon us, remember the hazards that come with the cold, snowy weather. Being prepared is the most important step to your safe return home at the end of the day. So if you need: footwear, hats, gloves, a coat, etc. talk to a steward. Most branches have a room at the union hall where donated items can be obtained. Your safety is priceless! If you discover any unsafe/ hazardous conditions within your delivery station report them immediately, using PS Form 1767, (Report of Hazard, Unsafe Conditions or Practice Form). Fill it out and turn it in to your immediate supervisor. If you desire to be anonymous, file the report with the Safety Office. They will immediately return the form to your supervisor for necessary action, and will delete your name from the form to ensure your anonymity. By definition: an unsafe working condition is any condition in the workplace that could cause harm to employees, such as physical injury or illness. Here are some examples: Physical Hazards: Dangerous machinery, exposure to hazardous materials or wiring, poor lighting, or broken equipment Environmental Hazards: slippery floors, or blocked safety exits, mold or dirty working conditions If management wants to say, "safety begins with you", then let's do all we can to be safe.

Tonya Casey,

Trustee

DARRYL CLAY

The 2024 presidential election is finally over. That's the best thing I can say about it. This was without a doubt the ugliest, most divisive presidential election that I can remember. Each candidate seemed to villainize their opponent with unsubstantiated rhetoric. I hope and pray that President-Elect Trump abandons most of, if not all of, project 2025. Only time will tell. Buckle up folks, I think we are headed for a scary, uncertain ride.

The 2024 presidential election results could have significant implications for letter carriers. The new administration's policies might influence funding, labor agreements, and operational changes within the Postal Service.

President-Elect Trump's stance on postal reform and modernization could impact the working conditions and job security of letter carriers.

Overall, the new administration will shape the future of USPS policies and, consequently, the lives of letter carriers.

In closing, I wish you and your families a healthy and happy holiday season.

Darryl Clay,

Trustee

(Zalewski—Continued from page 10) 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 and 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.

Ron Zalewski,

Trustee

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Of Letter Carriers, NALC
PO Box 871857
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.

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