



NORTH CAROLINA RURAL CARRIER

Official News Publication of the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers' Association

Volume 36

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Safety Captain Position No Longer Exists

**Carriers Have Until November 15 to Cease Acting in
that Position to Remain a Member in Good Standing**

See page 4 for more information.

Inside This Issue

Christmas Period

Open Season

SAC Info

Payment of Retroactive Salary Increases

The NRLCA has been notified by USPS that all of the retroactive salary increases included in the 2018-2021 National Agreement are scheduled to be included in the paychecks for PP03-2020 (February 7, 2020).

This adjustment will include all eligible rural carriers and all retroactive salary changes negotiated in the new National Agreement. Posted salary charts have already been adjusted to reflect the current negotiated salary rates.



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Sea Level	23	Peach Belt	5	Southeastern	8
Guilford	30	Central Carolina	16	Foothills	10
Roanoke	44	Yadkin River	26	Cleveland/Gaston/Lincoln	29
Rutherford/Polk	47	Watauga/Avery	57	Randolph	42
Tidewater	52				

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Smokey Mountain	11	Wake	24	Johnston	34
Durham/Orange	12	Piedmont	50	McDowell/Mt Mitchell	36
Caswell/ Rockingham	14	Union	54	Mecklenburg	38

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Articles are the opinion of the Author and not necessarily the NCRLCA, the NCRLCA or the Editor.

National Emergency Hotline

**1-888 EMERGNC
(1- 888-363-7462)**

is a toll-free number for USPS employees to use in the event of a facility or weather-related emergency.

In an emergency, the hotline provides employees with information about the status of their facility and special instructions or guidance.

Please keep this phone number for future use.

WEBSITE

Please visit

www.NCRLCA.org
for all the latest news.

This month the password will be **M-Xmas@25!**

The password will be changed to the above on November 30, 2019.

At this time the password is only needed to access the Junior Auxiliary page.

We are working on adding more information for you.

If there is something you would like to see added to the website please let any member of the State Board know. We welcome your ideas & feedback.

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President
Brenda Gibbs



Make Plans for SAC Now

After the Fall Booster in November comes the South Atlantic Conference (SAC) in January.

This rural carrier meeting includes carriers from our neighboring states and is also attended by most of our National Board. SAC runs January 25 through 27, 2020 in Atlanta, Georgia.

The conference is held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel located at 1325 Virginia Avenue in Atlanta, Georgia. Reservations may be made by calling 888-233-9527 (IHG group will answer). Rooms are \$98.00 nightly plus taxes. There is a \$50.00 incidental fee that will be refunded if you don't use it. Parking is free to those staying at the hotel. Reservations must be made by January 8th.

The Atlanta Postal Credit Union (APCU) also holds their annual meeting on the 25th. They always have an amazing speaker and plenty of giveaways.

Make your plans now to attend.

POLITICS - POLITICS - POLITICS

Questions are

Do we care? *Are we registered to vote?*

Are we informed? *Do we follow all the candidates?*

Do we listen to the candidates? *Do we vote in the primaries?*

Do we pick the person that looks or acts a certain way?

Can we afford to make assumptions?

Do we research the candidates to find out what they've done before? *Will we vote in November 2020?*

Answers are

If we don't care. We let ourselves down!

If we're not informed. We could lose money and benefits!

If we don't listen. We could end up with laws that do irreversible damage to us and our families!

If we only go skin deep. Our decision could be a life-long mistake!

If we don't take time to research. Because it's not just about the contract. It's also about our leaders in congress and how they vote!

To find your Representative see pages 14-15 for a map of the North Carolina Congressional Districts along with a chart with contact information for each district.

For contact information to email them, go to www.house.gov/representatives. then click on "N" and scroll down to NC. Then go to your Representatives name and click on it. You have now opened their webpage and can then email them or signup for their newsletters. That's how you stay informed about what they are doing and what they care about.

Take some time this Holiday Season to just sit back (for a few minutes) and relax. We all get so wrapped up in delivering the mail and packages and more packages and even more packages that we sometimes forget to take some time for yourself, friends and family, and to enjoy the holidays.

Happy Holidays!! See you in 2020!

(Continued from page 1) **Safety Position**

Since 1974, this union has endorsed Article 14 of our contract and our members' participation in the Safety Captain program. The USPS has "rebranded" the position of Safety Captain as Safety Ambassador, effectively eliminating the Safety Captain position. Unfortunately, the USPS has included duties for the Safety Ambassador position such as observing and reporting safety infractions by rural carriers. Obviously, this would cross the line of what this union has long defined as management work and would subject the member to the restrictions imposed on those performing management duties as defined in our Constitution.

The National Board realizes that there may be many rural carriers, including local stewards, who have been and might still be acting as Safety Captains.

Therefore, all rural carriers are hereby notified that the Safety Captain position no longer exists.

Carriers who have been acting as Safety Captains will have until close of business on November 15, 2019 to resign and cease acting in that position, to maintain their eligibility to participate as Union officers, stewards or delegates.

Any rural carrier who is acting as a Safety Ambassador after November 15 will be considered to be acting in a management position.



Chaplain's Message

**Jesse Ray Farmer Jr.,
Chaplain**

Reminder: For any needs of prayer and/or spiritual support, please feel free to contact me on my cell phone. My number is 252-939-6826. You may call or text me. I will get back to you as soon as I can.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!

This Little Light of Mine

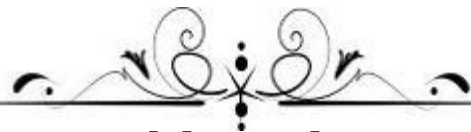
Read Phillipians 2: 1-18

Sunday mornings at church are usually filled with the lifting spirits of smiles, singing and attentiveness to the word of God. How often do we wake up on Monday morning with a list of demands or complaints that we are ready to fire off for the day? We often change out of our Sunday best to put on the uniform of day to day living.

When others listen to you talk or see your actions at work or home, do they see a different kind of light coming from you than others that do not believe in Him? We need to be careful that what we say or do does not become so heavily woven into the ways of the world that we are not even recognized as being a child of Him.

There are often times that I wait at a local restaurant prior to picking up my wife from work to pass the time. I have noticed that wearing my suit after church tends to draw people to ask me if I am a pastor. I have often felt lead to pray with strangers in the middle of McDonalds or the mall or wherever I may be. However, I am not wearing a suit at all these times. Sometimes I may be in my rural carrier clothing or I have recently cut grass. I have asked the spirit to use my light to shine by opening my heart to others. Sometimes a friendly gesture, a conversation, a simple prayer, or a small meal to a family in need may be all you can do physically. This is your light shining. If I was cussing about traffic or complaining about my wife to a stranger instead, where would this get me in sharing the love of God? Not everyday is our best day. However, choose this day forward to let your light shine. "This is the day the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it!" Psalm 118: 24

Prayer: Lord, thank you for giving me this day. Help lift my spirit today and let your light shine through me.



Obituaries

John Quincy Riddick, 94, of Belvidere, died Wednesday, September 11, 2019.

Mr. Riddick was born in Perquimans County on October 9, 1924, and was the son of the late George Robert, Sr. and Margaret Louise Winslow Riddick.

A retired farmer, he later worked for many years as a US Postal Service rural carrier in the Belvidere community. He was a long standing member of the National Rural Letter Carrier's Association and had received an award for being a member for over 50 years.

He also enjoyed membership with Up River Friends Meeting, B & N Hunt Club where he was known as "Beech Nut", and with the William Paul Stallings Post 126 of the American Legion where he was recently acknowledged for his membership of over 72 years. A veteran, he served in the Army during World War II.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife of 68 years, Lessie Stallings Riddick, and by two brothers, William Elsberry and George Robert Riddick, Jr.









Surviving are his two sons, James Robert "Jimmy" Riddick (Linda) of Hertford and Philip McCoy Riddick (LuAnn) of Belvidere; and several nieces, nephews, and extended family members.

THE UNION DIFFERENCE



Vice President

Audrey Solomon

-  **Wages:** 27% higher for union workers than non-union worker
-  **79%** of union members have health insurance benefits
-  **60%** of union members are more likely to have a pension
-  **VOICE AT WORK:** working conditions and respect
-  **CONTRACT:** protection against unjust firing, discrimination, etc.
-  **SOLIDARITY** in numbers,
-  **ACCESS** to information to keep you informed; through publications, meetings, a website, and a mobile app
-  **ONLY MEMBERS CAN:**
 - Vote for officers or hold office in the union
 - Become Stewards
 - Vote on proposed new contracts
 - Enroll in the Rural Carrier Benefit Plan Health Insurance
 - Receive Union-provided assistance with Worker's Compensation claims



The reasons listed above are just a brief overview of what you receive by being part of the NRLCA.

CAN YOU AFFORD NOT TO BE A MEMBER?

IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER, JOIN TODAY! Enrollment form is on page 20.



I am a Union Worker

**That means I am part
of an organization
that fights not only
for my benefit, but
for everyone's benefit.**

**Unions Set the
Standards**



Safety
Scott Deaf

Buckle Up!

It's the most wonderful time of the year ~ *for parcel volume!*

Thinking about the upcoming peak season and the potential of another record setting year, I just wanted to remind everyone of the seatbelt policy from the PO 603, section 171.51 b.

Seat Belt Requirements — Driving Own or Postal Vehicle

- 1) Seat belts must be worn at all times when operating a Postal Service—owned or leased vehicle. If a privately owned right-hand drive (RHD) vehicle is used on the route, seat belts must be worn at all times and the carrier must be positioned directly behind the steering wheel whenever the vehicle is being operated. Carriers driving RHD vehicles equipped with both shoulder and lap belts may disengage the shoulder belt only in those situations when the shoulder belt prevents their ability to deliver or collect mail from curbside mailboxes. The lap belt must be worn at all times the vehicle is being operated. A privately owned vehicle fully equipped with dual controls (steering wheel, brake, and gas pedals) is considered an RHD vehicle for the purpose of this requirement.
- 2) When operating a privately owned left-hand drive (LHD) vehicle, seat belts must be worn and the carrier must be positioned directly behind the steering wheel when traveling to and from the route, between Postal Service units, and during any deviations from the established line of travel beyond one-half mile for delivery, including travel between routes when service is provided on more than one route. A privately owned vehicle partially equipped with dual controls is considered an LHD vehicle for the purpose of this requirement.
- 3) If a privately owned left-hand drive (LHD) vehicle is used on the route, it is advisable that the rural carrier use seat belts and be positioned behind the steering wheel when delivery and collection activities do not unduly encumber, delay, or fatigue the rural carrier. When using a privately owned LHD vehicle on the route, the

rural carrier may operate the vehicle without use of the seat belt and/or without being positioned directly behind the steering wheel provided the carrier determines it is safe to do so. The rural carrier should consider the following factors when assessing the use of the seat belt and appropriate seating position:

- a) Distance between stops.
- b) Traffic density and weather conditions.
- c) Road design characteristics, such as number of intersections traversed, road shoulder width, and surface conditions.
- d) Other factors affecting safety.

Even though we buckle/unbuckle our seatbelt hundreds of times a day, **we must** take the time to do so for our safety!

If you do not have a seatbelt in your POV, I encourage you to look into a seatbelt extender or wheelchair accessible belt from your vehicles manufacturer to see if there is some way to get strapped in.

I wanted to close with a thought on the recruitment of new members since this edition goes out to all carriers. I have found that the easiest way to answer the question of “What can the Union do for me?” is simply “What can you do for the Union?” Our Union is only as strong as our members...**We** all have something to contribute.

As always, thank you for your time and the service you provide. **Be safe, wear your seatbelt**, and I hope everyone has the Happiest of Holidays and a Merry Christmas!

NCRLCA Dues for 2019-2020

Regular, PTF...Cash.....	\$702.07
1187...Bi-Weekly.....	\$27.00
Retired.....Cash.....	\$111.00
1187R...Monthly.....	\$9.25
73, RCA, RCR, ARC.....Cash.....	\$234.42
1187.....Bi-Weekly.....	\$9.02

The membership year begins July 1, ends June 30. Please make checks payable to **NCRLCA**. Checks or membership forms should be mailed to Vicki Gray, NCRLCA Secretary/Treasurer, 424 Wapiti Dr., Spring Lake, NC 28390.

NOTE: “Dues, assessments, contributions or gifts to the NCRLCA are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

Retirement

Brian Hamlett



Thrift Savings

New Withdrawal Options

The Thrift Savings Plan has added several new withdrawal options to give participants more flexibility in planning for retirement or using their TSP funds after separation. There are also options for beneficiary withdrawals upon a TSP participant's death. Here's a rundown of the changes that have been recently implemented.

When did these changes happen?

All of the new withdrawal options went into effect September 15, 2019.

What's changed?

You now have more options for how and when you can access money from your TSP account. These options fall into the following categories:

- After you separate from service, you can take multiple post-separation partial withdrawals.
- If you're 59½ or older and still working in federal civilian or uniformed service, you can take up to four in-service withdrawals each year.
- You can choose whether your withdrawal should come from your Roth balance, your traditional balance, or a proportional mix of both.
- You no longer need to make a full withdrawal election after you turn 70½ and are separated from federal service. (You will still need to receive IRS required minimum distributions (RMDs).)
- If you're a separated participant, you can take monthly, quarterly, or annual payments.
- You can stop, start, or make changes to your installment payments at any time.
- You now have enhanced online tools to help you make withdrawals in the My Account section of tsp.gov.

Read the following sections for more details.

Partial Withdrawals

Before these changes, you were limited to one partial withdrawal in your lifetime—either an age-based

in-service withdrawal (when you're 59½ or older) or a partial post-separation withdrawal. Now,

- you can take up to four age-based in-service withdrawals per calendar year;¹
- there is no limit of the number of partial withdrawals you can take after separating from federal service (except that you won't be able to take more than one every 30 calendar days);
- you can take partial withdrawals while you're receiving post-separation installment payments; and
- having taken age-based in-service withdrawals does not prevent you from taking post-separation partial withdrawals.

¹ The rules on the number of in-service hardship withdrawals have not changed

Roth, Traditional, or Both

It used to be that when you took a withdrawal, the money came from your traditional and Roth balances on a pro rata basis. For example, if 80% of your account was in your traditional balance and 20% was in Roth, any withdrawal you took was 80% traditional and 20% Roth. Under the current rules, you can still use this method, but you also have the option to take your withdrawal only from your Roth balance or only from your traditional balance. These options are available for all types of withdrawals.

Withdrawal Deadline

Previously, the law required that you make a full withdrawal election once you turned 70½ and were separated from federal service. If you failed to do that, we would initiate an account "abandonment" process.

The TSP Modernization Act did away with this requirement. You will never be required to make a full withdrawal election, and we are no longer abandoning accounts as we have in years past.

If your account has already been abandoned, you can restore the account without making a full withdrawal election. Your restored balance can remain in the plan (subject to RMDs) with all the new withdrawal options available.

The changes we've made do not change required minimum distribution (RMD) rules. If you're subject to RMDs, you can satisfy the requirement by taking a partial withdrawal or installment payments. If you take no action or just don't withdraw enough to meet your RMD, we will automatically send you the remaining RMD amount.

(Continued on page 9)

Installment Payments

- Monthly payments used to be the only frequency option you had for receiving regular postseparation or beneficiary participant installment distributions from your account. Now you can choose to receive payments quarterly or annually.
- Under the previous rules, if you were receiving monthly payments, you could only change the amount of those payments during an open season between October 1 and December 15. Now you can change the amount and frequency (monthly, quarterly, annual) of your installment payments—and change from life-expectancy payments to a fixed dollar amount²—at any time throughout the year.
- Before, if you wanted to stop your monthly payments, you had to receive the remainder of your account in a final withdrawal paid to you or transferred to an IRA or other eligible plan. The new rule eliminates that requirement, allowing you to stop and start your payments any time.

² This is a one-time-only change. As has always been the case, once you choose to receive “dollar-amount” payments, you cannot switch to life-expectancy.

What is the withdrawal process under the current rules?

We are now using enhanced online tools to make the withdrawal process even more efficient. Instead of just providing you with a completed paper form to send in, our new online tools allow you to complete at least part of the transaction online. In many cases

you'll still need to provide notarized signatures or other materials in paper form. But when that happens, you'll be given only the necessary pages to complete and submit. When we receive those pages, we'll be able to link them to the information you've already submitted securely online and complete your transaction. This will greatly reduce the chance of errors that could cause delays, rejections, or—worse—unintended withdrawals that can't be reversed.

Can beneficiary participants use the new withdrawal options?

Yes, beneficiary participants, the spouses of deceased TSP participants who've had accounts established for them, can make all the same withdrawals as separated TSP participants.

If I've already begun receiving monthly payments from my TSP account, are the additional withdrawal options available to me? How about if I took a partial withdrawal (either in-service or post-separation) before the changes took place? Does that prevent me from being able to take additional withdrawals later?

If you had an account balance when the new rules went into effect, even if you had begun receiving monthly payments or had taken a partial withdrawal before then, you can take advantage of the new withdrawal options. Note that, as was always the case, if you are receiving installment payments and elect to make a change that affects the duration of your payments, there may be tax consequences. For more information, see the TSP tax notice *Important Tax Information About Payments From Your TSP Account*.

North Carolina Armed Forces Veterans Club

Veterans Day is Monday, November 11th



Veterans Day is a federal holiday in the United States and is observed annually on November 11.

It is for honoring our military veterans, that is, persons who have served in the United States Armed Forces.

It also coincides with other holidays including Armistice Day and Remembrance Day, which are celebrated in other countries, that mark the anniversary of the end of World War I.

Major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, when the Armistice with Germany went into effect.

At the urging of major U.S. veteran organizations, Armistice Day was renamed Veterans Day in 1954.

Please take a moment to remember and honor our veterans for their service and their sacrifice to our country.



RCHBP

Elaine Althoff

Preparing for Open Season

Open Season is Monday, November 11 through Monday, December 9, 2019

What is Open Season? Open Season is once a year and allows you to make any necessary changes to your health, dental, and vision insurance coverage. Unless you have a Qualifying Life Event (QLE), it is your only opportunity during the year to make changes to your health coverage. This is also the only time you can change and/or enroll in flexible spending account (FSA) programs.

Open season is approaching fast, keep your stress levels down and start comparing your plan options today. Get any questions you might have answered early on. In a few weeks you will be mailed/or have been mailed your Health Insurance Plan guide or a brochure with the new updates on coverage options or premiums changes. You can also review plans online. Don't wait until the last minute to start comparing policies, start today.

Whether you are a new employee eligible to enroll, a current employee, or retired, maybe you had a qualifying life event this past year and need to make additional changes, take a few minutes to sit down and compare your options for the upcoming open season. No matter who you are, you will need to think carefully about your choice and a plan that fits you & your family's health care needs.

Compare out-of-pocket costs, co-pays, what's covered, what's not, ask yourself, "Do I/we need to add a Vision & Dental plan, or Life or Disability Insurance?" "Do I even need to make changes to my current plan?"

If you do plan to make coverage changes, check that your current Physicians participate with your new insurance company as well. It all can be a bit overwhelming so start early. I urge you to look at your current plan and compare it to the RCBP plan and all it has to offer. See **Important numbers and web sites** section in this article. Thank you for being a member of RCBP you can log on to RCBPhealth.com and select "Official Plan Documents: under "Member Resources: to view the Official Plan Brochure and to help you understand the benefits and resources available to you and how to access them.

What Insurance is Available for RCAs

The USPS Health Benefits Plan is available to eligible non-career employees. (RCA Health Plan). This plan is underwritten by United Healthcare. Due to the current Ratification changes this plan has changed. If you did not sign-up during the Special Enrollment Period from August 26 – September 27 as a result of the new NRLCA Agreement don't miss out on this opportunity to enroll in the USPS Health Benefits Plan.

Also available to you thru RCBP ~ Dental, Vision, Life and Disability plans, but you must be a member to have access See: WHAT'S AVAILABE TO ALL CARRIERS?

Employer Contribution and Premiums (See Chart Below for current rates)

•USPS contributes \$125 per pay period for Self Only Premiums

•USPS contributes 65% for non-career employees their first year

•USPS contributes 75% for non-career employees with more than one year of service (applies to Self Plus One and Family coverage)

Premiums are paid bi-weekly. LiteBlue, PostalEASE and HRSSC are your best sources for more information.

Coverage Type	Current Rates	Less than 1 year in service	More than 1 year in service
SELF	\$60	\$60	\$60
Self Plus One	\$295	\$147	\$105
Self and Family	\$470	\$208.25	\$148.75

HEALTH INSURANCE IN RETIREMENT

There two requirements to keeping Health Insurance Coverage into Retirement. If you are planning on retirement in the next 5 years don't skip this section. Retired carriers and annuitants can make changes through the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 888-767-6738.

Two requirements:

- Retire on an Immediate Annuity

(Continued on page 11)

(Continued from page 10)

- Enrolled in FEHB Program for **Five Years** immediately before retiring (Example: 2 years on BlueCross and 3 years on RCBP. It doesn't have to be the same plan, just a plan in a Federal Plan 5 years before retiring.)

No special enrollment form to complete, and the premium is deducted from your Retirement Benefit

*You must maintain NRLCA membership to be in the RCBP

Surviving Spouse Health Insurance Coverage Two Requirements:

- Elect a Survivor Annuity Benefit
- Be Enrolled in Family Coverage When Retiree Dies

The Premium is deducted from Survivor Annuity Benefit

MEDICARE PROGRAM

What is Medicare?

Health Insurance Coverage for Elderly, Disabled, Individuals with End Stage Renal Disease (kidney failure).

Part A (Hospital Insurance)

- ✦ Coverage includes hospital care, skilled nursing care, home health services, etc.

Part B (Medical Insurance)

- ✦ Coverage includes services at the doctor's office, durable medical equipment, preventive services, etc.

Part C (Medicare Advantage Plan)

Part D (Prescription Drug)

It is recommend having A, B + RCBP you will pay next to nothing in out of pocket costs. What Medicare doesn't pay RCBP covers. There is a premium penalty, if you don't have Medicare Part B once you turn 65.

2019 Deductibles

- Part A (Hospital): \$1,364
- Part B (Medical): \$185

2019 Part B Premium

- \$135.50/month-paid by most beneficiaries

The benefits of Medicare Part A & B and RCBP

- Called Coordination of Benefits
- Medical deductibles, copays and coin-insurance covered or waived
- 93% of RCBP retirees; over 18,000 members

CAREER CARRIERS (FULL-TIME CARRIERS)

Health Benefits:

- Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP)
- E.g. Rural Carrier Benefits Plan (RCBP)
- Blue Cross FEP
- Supplemental-Federal Plans
- FEDVIP-Dental and Vision Insurance
- FEGLI-Life Insurance
- FLTCIP-Long-Term Care

Cameron stated that the "FEDVIP plan, you are not going to find a better plan you are encouraged to compare. "Term Life Insurance he highly recommends this site as well www.selectquote.com .

WHAT'S AVAILABE TO ALL CARRIERS?

Supplemental Insurance:

Available as benefit of NRLCA Membership

- Administered by Greater Insurance Services
- Insurance Options Include:
 - Dental & Vision If your 65-70 ask yourself what your dental needs are? dentures, cosmetic.
 - Life
 - Disability

Visit or call for more information:

www.rc-benefits.com

800-747-4472

Discount Dental & Vision Plan

Administered by Careington International

Other Benefits:

- Cheaper Monthly or Annual Fee (approx. \$100-\$150 annually)
- Discounts based on fee schedule; i.e. you know what each service costs
- Discount on orthodontia, cosmetic dentistry and dentures

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

HALLMARKS OF THE RURAL CARRIER BENEFIT PLAN:

- RCBP is a Closed Plan (Exclusive to only rural carriers)
- You must be a member of the NRLCA; in good standing
- \$20. Copays for doctors and specialists
- Competitive premiums
- 100% cancer coverage
- Long-term partnerships with Aetna and CVS
- Massage therapy benefits

New Benefits for 2019 RCPB

There were not a lot of changes this year.

- Diabetic management program
Transform Diabetes.
- Comprehensive Pain Management Program
In response to the Opioid Crisis
- Focused on Pain management
- TruHearing
- TransElite Universal Life Insurance

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS

Flexible Spending Accounts: www.fsafeds.com

Flexible Spending Account (FSA) helps you save on everyday medical, dental, vision or dependent care expenses

FSAFEDS for 2019 Administered by WageWorks
Paperless reimbursement

Must be selected when enrolling/opting into FSA

The maximum contribution is limited to \$2,700 with a \$500 Carryover into the following year.

Contributions put more money in your pocket!

This is just a summary of the benefits afforded to you and your family please see all plan sites or call the respected Plan holder for complete description of all benefits.

For full details, read the Official Plan Brochure(s).

Go to HR then to Health Benefits to get 24/7 access to the Handbook EL-520, Guide to USPS Health Benefits Plan, and other plan information. As well as accessing PostalEASE call at 1-877-477-3273, option 5.

Current employees can make changes through LiteBlue, PostalEase or by calling HR Shared Services Center at 1- 877-477-3273; select Option 5 when prompted. All eligibility and enrollment questions are

handled by USPS through HRSSC.

Retired carriers and annuitants can make changes through the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) at 1- 888-767-6738 or mail to:

US Office of Personnel Management
Retirement Operations Center
P O Box 45,
Boyers PA 16017-0045

WEBSITES



Below are some important numbers and web sites to visit for making and comparing changes a bit easier prior to Open Season.

RCBP www.RCBPhealth.com

or by calling Customer Service 800-638-8432 (Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.)

FEHB www.opm.gov/insure

To use the plan comparison tool feature, go to: www.opm.gov/FEHBcompare

USPS Health Benefits Plan (RCAs)

www.liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/benefits/insurance/benefits-noncareer

For Dental and Vision compare plans at:

www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/dental-vision/plan-information

CVS Caremark customer service 1-800-292-4182
www.caremark.com

NRLCA Insurance Department 703-684-5552

FEDVIP coverage information or to make changes visit www.FSAFEDS.com or by calling 1-877-372-3337, TTY 866-353-8058

LiteBlue www.liteblue.usps.gov

Flexible Spending Accounts www.fsafeds.com

Term Life Insurance www.selectquote.com

This open season is for the 2020 plan year of federal benefit programs.

South Atlantic Conference

SAC Board Member

Derek Harpe

January 25th-27th , 2020

Reservations are now open!

The South Atlantic Conference will be held at the Crowne Plaza near the Atlanta Airport on January 25-27. The address is 1325 Virginia Ave., Atlanta, GA 30344. Shuttle service if needed is provided from the Atlanta airport to the hotel.

Reservations are open now!

Cut off date is January 8th, 2020 but don't wait, the block fills up fast! Room rates are \$99 plus tax. Crowne Plaza's phone number is 404-768-

6660. Call now! Limited rooms available!

On Saturday the Atlanta Postal Credit Union will be conducting their annual meeting. Buses will be available to take you from the hotel to the meeting.

The South Atlantic Conference presents lots of information to our members. We will have many guest speakers. President Ronnie Stutts will be the keynote speaker on Sunday. All National Officers are expected to be in attendance and there will be Q & A with all the NRLCA National Officers on Sunday. On Monday, Southern Area USPS Postal Management will be with us. They will also take questions from the floor. There will be several informative seminars and more!

See some of the highlights below. I hope to see you in Atlanta!

Merry Christmas to all!

SAC SEMINARS

Saturday Evening Seminar

Retirement7:00PM - 9.00PM

Don Maston NRLCA Vice President

Sunday Afternoon Seminars

Retirees and Health Benefits3:30-4: 30

Paul Swartz, Director Governmental Affairs, NRLCA

Cameron Demi, Manager, Rural Carrier Benefit Plan, NRLCA

RCA Seminar.....3:30 - 4:30

Sunday Evening Seminars

TSP and 5 Mistakes.....6:30 - 8:00

Todd Hassler Members Wealth Management

Sponsored by APCU and National General Insurance

Labor Seminar8:00 - 9:30

PTF's Formula Offices

Executive Committeemen, NRLCA

This is just some of the information available at SAC. We hope to see you there!

In recent issues of this Newsletter I have talked about the “Buy-Back Bill.” If this bill passes it has the potential to make a big difference in how much money you receive when you retire, especially for those of you that spent many years as an RCA.

The form letter to mail to your member of Congress was printed in the last edition of our Newsletter. The instructions for how to download the letter from the National website are:

1. Go to NRLCA.org and Log in,
2. Move your mouse over the word “LEGISLATIVE”
And click. From the drop down menu, click on “Grassroots; Contact Congress!”
3. Scroll down to the headline “FIGHT TO BUY BACK YOUR TIME AS AN RCA!”
4. Click on the red print “**H.R. 2478 Form Letter**”
5. At the top, add the date and add your member of Congress’ name,
6. At the bottom, add your name and address, phone number and email address (if you have one).
7. Print and mail.

The contact information for all NC members of Congress is printed in this issue.

If you are not comfortable on a computer, asks



Legislative Representative

Van Heath

Your Letters Needed

your child or grandchild to do this for you. I will guarantee they have done this in school at a very young age.

If we don’t get this passed in this congress, we may never have another chance. Yes, it is that important.

Currently; G.K. Butterfield (D,1st) is the only member of the NC delegation to sign on as a cosponsor. I would like to encourage our members from the 1st Congressional District to send him a thank you note.

All others, get those letters mailed and when your member does become a cosponsor, send them a thank you note as well. I will keep you informed when more sign on.

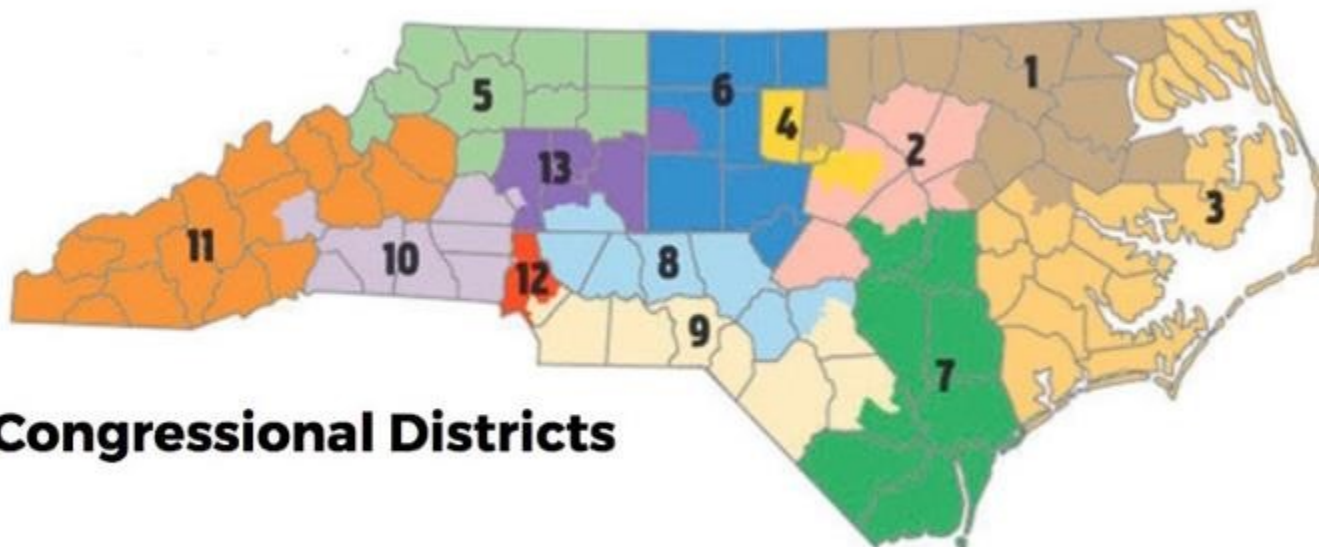
I wish for everyone a Happy Christmas and a very Merry New Year.

Find Your Congressional District

From the map below.

Then Contact Your District Representatives

From the list on the next page.



Congressional Districts

Contact Info for NC Congress

House of Representatives

District	Name	Party	Phone	Home Office	Home Office Phone
1st	Butterfield, G.K.	D	(202) 225-3101	Wilson, NC	(252)237-9816
2nd	Holding, George	R	(202) 225-3032	Raleigh, NC	(919)782-4400
3rd	Murphy, Gregory F	R	(202) 225-3415	Greenville, NC	Not Available
4th	Price, David	D	(202) 225-1784	Chapel Hill, NC	(919)967-7924
5th	Foxx, Virginia	R	(202) 225-2071	Boone, NC	(828)265-0240
6th	Walker, Mark	R	(202) 225-3065	Greensboro, NC	(336)333-5005
7th	Rouzer, David	R	(202) 225-2731	Wilmington, NC	(910)395-0202
8th	Hudson, Richard	R	(202) 225-3715	Fayetteville, NC	(910)997-2070
9th	Bishop, Dan	R	(202) 225-1976	Monroe, NC	(704) 218-5300
10th	McHenry, Patrick	R	(202) 225-2576	Hickory, NC	(828)327-6100
11th	Meadows, Mark	R	(202) 225-6401	Hendersonville, NC	(828)693-5660
12th	Adams, Alma	D	(202) 225-1510	Charlotte, NC	(704)344-9950
13th	Budd, Ted	R	(202) 225-4531	Advance, NC	(336)998-1313

Senators

	Richard Burr	R	Asheville (828)350-2437 Rocky Mount (252)977-9522 Washington, DC (202)224-3154	Winston Salem (800)685-8916 Wilmington (888)848-1833
	Thom Tillis	R	Charlotte (704)509-9087 High Point (336)885-0685 Washington, DC (202)224-6342	Greenville (252)329-0371 Raleigh (919)856-4630



PAC CHAIR

Robert Gurganus

PAC \$\$\$ Gets Us Access to Congress

Hello everyone! I just want to say it's been great attending some of the district meetings and being able to meet all of you. I'm looking forward to attending some more and meeting you all.

There are so many important legislative issues before congress right now that affect all of us.

Our PAC dollars help us gain access to our elected officials so that we can have a voice in matters that mean so much not only to us, but to the people who will follow us as rural carriers for years to come. Your PAC contributions are important!

There are many anti-labor forces at work in our government that would love nothing more than to get rid of our union and cut our wages and benefits.

Make no mistake, the NRLCA PAC makes sure that our representatives know that we are watching and that we **vote!**

Those of you who make a contribution to our PAC will have a chance at winning one of two **\$500 Visa gift cards** to be given away at the State Convention in Cherokee this June. You don't have to be present to win, but I'm hoping you'll join us there. Come out and see your fellow carriers!

There is nothing I love more than talking to other carriers and comparing notes. Please come see me at the PAC table and let me tell you how easy it is to become a sustaining donor.

I am looking forward to meeting you all ~ please come say hello to Porkchop!

God bless you all, and God bless this union.

PAC SUSTAINING DONOR LIST

Althoff, Elaine
Arsenault, Bonnie M
Atwater, Andrea
Beheler, Cynthia W
Bennett, Debra
Bright, Stacy N
Britt, Celeste S
Buchanan, Inez H
Cantler, Marlene A
Caudill, Michael
Church, Joanne R
Corriher, Sally B
Cullifer, Samanta C
Deal, Scott
DeMurry, Sandra
Derrick, Christopher
Futch, Kelly P Kenny
Gibbs, Brenda
Greer, Tracy D
Gray, Vicki
Harpe, Derek S
Heath, Van R

Hedgepeth, Priscilla B
Heller, Kathleen
Hogan, Catherine M
Huffines, Jerry L
Hunter, Eric E
Inman, Robert
Johnson, Bonnie B
Johnson, Renee C
Josewitz, Mary E
Kight, Janet
Klamer, Cynthia S
Laney, Christine E
Lawrence, Karen D
Lewis, Traci L
Ligon, Martha Sue S
Liverman, Melissa A
McClanahan, Catherine
McIntyre, Crystal L
McKendree, Mark
Mildner, Norbert
Morrison Jr, James E
Morris, Sabra H
Naillon, Gail

Neal, Deborah F
O'Neal, G. Mike
Parker, Donna H
Patterson, Rachell C
Prevatte, Brenda
Prichard, Andrew, J
Ranker, Kim E
Rasnick, David
Reaves, Cecil E
Reece, Mitchell
Schreiber, Jay J
Simmoms, Phillip R
Small, Bethany
Solomon, Audrey
Stow, Joshua
Talini-Zamora, Lisa
Vance, Michelle
Wagoner, Doretha
Waisner, Sara
Westbrook, Betty
Wolbert, Jonathan C
Young, Arthur

Please consider becoming a Sustaining Donor



I hereby authorize my bank to deduct from my checking account the
monthly sum of: (circle one) \$45 \$25 \$20 \$15 \$10 Other: \$_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____

Employee ID Number: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone Number: _____

Please attach a voided check

Send to NRLCA-PAC 1630 Duke St, Floor 2 Alexandria, VA 22314



Provident Guild Representative

Dale Sain

Happy fall to all my North Carolina rural carrier friends. I am including some important information for current and future Provident Guild members. When you need to file a claim please contact the National Provident Guild Secretary/Treasurer Diane Cox.

Address: Provident Guild Sec/Treas. Diane Cox
4780 Stony Creek Road
Urbana, OH. 43078-9454
Phone: 419-501-2213

Do you Know?

1. The PROVIDENT GUILD is a Non-Profit, Fraternal organization, created and operated by Rural Carriers, for our membership and Auxiliary Members to give their survivors an amount of READY CASH for those days when routine procedures of the courts and legal action tie up our estates after death.
2. The GUILD is NOT an insurance. Rather, it is a Fraternal Death Benefit Fund which guarantees you at least 30 times your annual dues and, depending on the number of claims in any given year, can pay you up to 100 times your annual dues.
3. There are no physical examinations - No assessments - No commissions - No high salaries.
4. This low cost protection does not decrease, nor can it be cancelled when you reach age 65.
5. You can become a GUILD member until you reach age 56. After that age, you cannot enter the program BUT you do remain in it as long as you pay your GUILD dues annually.
6. Claims are to be filed within 30 days after death. The claim form together with a copy of the death certificate are to be mailed directly to the Secretary-Treasurer. If death certificate is not available within this time please advise the current Secretary-Treasurer. IT NEED NOT BE HANDLED BY A LAWYER
7. Upon receipt of forms listed in item #6, an IMMEDIATE RELIEF CHECK for 30% of the maximum payment is mailed to the beneficiary. The balance of settlement is mailed in August, following our Board meeting which is held during the NRLCA Convention.
8. Your GUILD dues are payable in advance. The Provident Guild Secretary-Treasurer will mail you a dues notice during the month of May for the following year. These are then payable by June 30th.
9. Members joining later in the year pay only a portion of the full year's dues. The fiscal year runs from July 1st to the next June 30th. Those who become members during July, August and September pay full dues. During October, November and December, you pay 75%; January, February and March, 50%; and those joining in April, May and June pay only 25%.
10. The entrance fee of \$2.00 is payable when joining during any part of the year.

ANNUAL DUES CLASSES \$10 To \$50		IT'S A FACT			MAXIMUM BENEFITS \$5,000	
THE NATIONAL RURAL CARRIERS' PROVIDENT GUILD						
WHAT... The Guild is a Fraternal NON-PROFIT Death Benefit Department.						
WHO... Open to all Regular, Substitute 73, PTF, RCA Rural Carriers and their spouses, who are under 56 years of age.						
DUES..... Your choice of benefit classes, ranging from \$10 to \$50.						
The available classes depend on your age at time of application.						
Available if you are.	Annual Dues Class	Maximum Benefit	Minimum Benefit 30% Max.	Immediate Relief Payment 30% Max.		
Have not reached age 56	\$10	\$1,000	\$300	\$300		
Under 50	15	1,500	450	450		
Under 45	20	2,000	600	600		
Under 40	30	3,000	900	900		
Under 35	40	4,000	1,200	1,200		
	or 50	5,000	1,500	1,500		
<p>Your benefits DO NOT decrease, as you grow older. The class you chose remains in effect as long as you pay annual dues.</p> <p>The President and Secretary-Treasurer are bonded in sufficient amount to cover the funds in their hands at any one time</p> <p>Contact any PROVIDENT GUILD OFFICER; State Association or Auxiliary Officer for details.</p> <p>You can secure an application from them, or write to North Carolina Provident Guild Representative:</p> <p>DALE SAIN 6289 Nobby Lail Rd Connelly Springs, NC 28612-7425 Phone 828-461-5057</p>						



Auto-Home Insurance

Tracy Greer

Are you prepared?

Winter is quickly approaching and that means colder temperatures, wet, icy, snow covered roads and more favorable conditions to be involved in an accident. While these conditions can lead to accidents, they can also cause issues within our homes. I want to give a few pointers that can save you money but also save you a lot of grief and money.

Take a few moments to perform this checklist around your home.

1. Check your home's heating and air conditioning system
2. Clean your gutters
3. Clean your chimney
4. Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
5. Unhook water hoses and drain outside faucets
6. Close foundation vents and make sure water lines

are safe from freezing temperatures

The change of seasons is also a good time to check up on your auto policy. With the more favorable conditions for an accident your odds of having one go up as well. The last thing any of us want, is to have an accident and find out we are not insured properly and have our claim denied.

Check with your current agent and make sure they know you have a POV on a mail route and call NRLCA Insurance Marketplace at 1-888-325-7727 and mention code RRP for your free, no obligation quote and you will receive a \$10.00 gift card for your time.

It doesn't matter if your part time, full time, or even retired, we all receive the same discount through our union and you can receive a quote every 6 months so that's \$20.00 a year for getting those quotes!

On a final note, I want to thank each of you for your time and effort that have called for those quotes and taken policies out. The money our state receives from those helps fund all of our state programs and functions.

I hope you all of you stay accident free and have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

RAFT CHANGES

Recruit A Friend Today (RAFT)

The National Office will once again take over the RAFT reward system.

Under the National system all recruiters will receive **\$50.00** for each regular carrier and **\$25.00** for each RCA or ARC that joins the union.

The rules remain the same in that each new member must still be employed with the rural craft 90 days after their enrollment date. Any member that has separated or moved to another craft within those 90 days is ineligible.

Please make sure that the recruiter's name is added to the 1187.

Thank you to all that have recruited new members. Please continue in your efforts. The more members we have, the stronger our Union.

The North Carolina RAFT Recruiter Raffle has come to an end. The Final Drawing took place on September 30, 2019.

The Winner of \$250 is David Harris!

Secretary/Treasurer

Vicki Gray



Do You Belong?

This issue of the North Carolina Rural Carrier is being sent to all the rural carriers of North Carolina, members and non-members alike.

Are you a member of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association? I hope you are. If not, I hope the information in this issue will help to convince you of the benefits of membership. I believe the benefits our members receive are worth the small cost of our membership dues.

The number one reason, in my opinion, for membership in the NRLCA is that it is the best way to learn your rights as a rural carrier and to stay informed of any and all changes within our craft.

It amazes me that so many carriers do not take full advantage of their membership benefits. I thought it would be appropriate to remind everyone why it is worthwhile to become a member of the NRLCA. Below is a list of several reasons, composed from information in the March 2017 National magazine, of why it pays to be a member of our union. One major new addition is the mobile app that is now available.

Members, I hope you share this information with your co-workers. Non-members, I hope you consider becoming a member.



Why It Pays to Belong to the NRLCA?

(clip and share)

1. The National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (NRLCA) holds exclusive recognition to represent the rural carrier craft with the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) including the negotiation of all labor agreements for the rural carrier craft including wages, benefits, and working conditions.
2. Only NRLCA stewards can represent members of the rural carrier craft in the grievance procedure, including providing protection in disciplinary actions.
3. NRLCA has an excellent Health Insurance program: *The Rural Carrier Benefit Plan* for regular and retired members, and for qualified leave replacements. This plan includes a prescription drug benefit program
4. NRLCA also offers supplemental insurance programs, including term life, disability income insurance, accident, critical illness, and dental and vision insurance.
5. NRLCA also offers the Rural Carrier Vehicle Insurance Plan and the Homeowners' Insurance Plan through National General Insurance. NGIC understands the needs of rural carriers when insuring their route vehicles under the Federal Tort Claims Act.
6. NRLCA provides a monthly publication, *The National Rural Letter Carrier*, to keep its members informed on postal and legislative matters of vital interest. North Carolina also publishes the *North Carolina Rural Carrier* newsletter every 2 months for its members.
7. NRLCA provides information and fellowship for its members at local, state, and national business meetings where all members may participate in the democratic process of developing NRLCA policy.
8. The National Rural Letter Carriers' Association has an effective legislative program in the Congress to promote and protect the interests of rural carriers.
9. NRLCA provides an official website for its members at www.nrlca.org. It includes accurate, up-to-date information that affects your job, your wages, and the changing environment of the Postal Service. Only NRLCA members can access the full website. NRLCA also has a mobile app in conjunction with the website.
10. Only members of the NRLCA have access to union-provided assistance with Workers' Compensation claims.
11. Because of the union, no rural carrier can be involuntarily reassigned to another craft or job in the Postal Service. More importantly, because of this union, no employee from another craft can be assigned into the rural craft.
12. Without the union, any one of us could be subject to layoff. There would be no consideration of seniority or re-bidding the routes when an encumbered route was eliminated. If your route was gone you would be, too.
13. Without the union, any one of us could be reassigned to another craft or job anywhere in the Postal Service and displaced employees from other crafts could be reassigned as rural carriers, taking future jobs away from our own RCAs.
14. Without the union, all of us would be subject to the whim of the employer. None of us would have any protection or rights. None of us could be assured of having a job tomorrow, let alone next year. It is at times like these that we all need the union the most.
15. Only members of the NRLCA are allowed to vote on officers of the union or hold office in the union.
16. Only members of the NRLCA can become union stewards.
17. Only members of the NRLCA can vote on proposed new contracts with the USPS.

**Join Today! Simply complete this form and mail to: NC Secretary/Treasurer Vicki Gray,
424 Wapiti Drive, Spring Lake, NC 28390.**

RAFT RECRUITER NAME _____

Revised
NRLCA Form 1187

**UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE
AUTHORIZATION FOR DEDUCTION OF DUES**

RURAL CARRIER
CLASSIFICATION

☐ Regular ☐ PTF ☐ Relief

OR

(SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER)

(USPS EMPLOYEE I.D. NUMBER)

LAST NAME

FIRSTNAME

MI

MAILING ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE + 4

POSTAL INSTALLATION WHERE EMPLOYED

ZIP CODE OF INSTALLATION

INSTALLATION FINANCE NO.

SECTION A - AUTHORIZATION BY EMPLOYEE

I hereby assign to the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, from any salary or wages earned or to be earned by me as your employee (in my present or any future employment by you) such regular and periodic membership dues as the union may certify as due and owing from me, as may be established from time to time by said Union. I authorize and direct you to deduct such amounts from my pay and to remit same to said Union at such times and in such manner as may be agreed upon between you and the Union at any time while this authorization is in effect.

This assignment, authorization and direction shall be irrevocable for a period of one (1) year from the date of delivery hereof to you, and I agree and direct that this assignment, authorization and direction shall be automatically renewed, and shall be irrevocable for successive periods of one (1) year, unless written notice is given by me to you and the Union not more than twenty (20) days and not less than ten (10) days prior to the expiration of each period of one year.

This assignment is freely made pursuant to the provisions of the Postal Reorganization Act and is not contingent upon the existence of any agreement between you and my Union.

Contributions or gifts (including dues) to the NRLCA are not tax deductible as charitable contributions. However, they may be tax deductible under other provisions of the Internal Revenue Code.

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

DATE

PHONE

EMAIL ADDRESS

SECTION B - FOR USE BY STATE ASSOCIATION

R - NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION

SIGNATURE OF ACCEPTING UNION OFFICIAL

DATE

I hereby certify that the dues of this organization for the above named member, for the applicable designation, are currently established at \$_____ per pay period.

Vicki L Gray

NC RLCA SECRETARY

LOC#	State NC
Date	Remit#

SECTION C - FOR USE BY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Date of Delivery to Employer (For National Office use)

ANNIVERSARY DATE TO BE USED
AT USPS PERSONNEL OFFICE

Send to: NCRLCA Sec/Treas
Vicki Gray
424 Wapiti Drive
Spring Lake NC 28390

Rural Carriers Reach Milestones with the USPS



Greensboro District Manager Russ Garner (left) congratulates Ed Holloway (right) at East Durham on 50 years of service.

50 Years of Service!

Ed Holloway of the East Durham station was honored for achieving 50 years of federal service.

Greensboro District Manager Russ Garner stated, "This is an incredible accomplishment." He also noted that during his own career, Mr. Holloway is only the third employee he has recognized with 50 years of service.

Holloway said, "It is a blessing to do what I do every day.", adding, "I enjoy it so much it does not even feel like work."

Congratulations!

30 Years of Service!

On September 20, 2019 Acting Postmaster Angel Jones presented rural carrier J.P. Harris with an award for 30 years of service with the USPS.

J.P. works at the Tokay branch of the Fayetteville office and was recognized in front of her fellow rural carriers and other co-workers.



J.P. Harris (left) receives 30 Year Service Award from Acting Postmaster Angel Jones (right) in Fayetteville.

North Carolina District Representatives

Mid-Carolinas

Sally Corriher
PO Box 460
China Grove, NC 28023-0460
704-855-2629
Sally.Corriher@nrlca.org

Greensboro

Jeff Essick
PO Box 12001
Winston Salem, NC 27117-2001
336-618-5095
Jeff.Essick@nrlca.org

Assistant District Representatives

Mid-Carolinas

Bethany Small
PO Box 11001
Southport, NC 28461-1001
910-477-2429
Bethany.Small@nrlca.org

Greensboro

Bryan W. Hudgins
PO Box 26
Eure, NC 27935-0021
252-357-2406
Bryan.Hudgins@nrlca.org

Eddie Moss
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Gaffney, SC 29342-1271
864-504-1712
Eddie.Moss@nrlca.org

Gail Naillon
PO Box 12
Roxboro, NC 27573
336-455-3973
gail.naillon@nrlca.org

Kelly Kenny Futch
PO Box 146
Holly Ridge NC 28445
(910) -818- 4843
Kelly.Futch@nrlca.org

Daniel Caudle
PO Box 309
Pfafftown, NC 27040-0309
336-580-0089
Daniel.Caudle2@nrlca.org

Area Stewards

Mid-Carolinas

Brenda Prevatte
910-738-8424
Ralph Fernandez
321-278-9479
Chris Derrick
704-641-7269

Greensboro

Kim Atwell
757-871-1505
Scott Deal
(828) 234-5593
Andrew "Drew" Prichard
(919) 749-6333





Mid-Carolinas

Assistant District Representative

Eddie Moss

Leave Requests ~ PS Form 3971

We are all aware that, for carriers to be granted leave, annual or sick, a P.S. Form 3971 must be submitted. The proper submission of this form is crucial in the way our leave request is approved or denied. It is important that we, as carriers, fill out the P.S. Form 3971 as completely as possible.

One of the first things should be the box for “*Date Submitted*”. This establishes when we are first making the request for leave. “*No. of Hours Requested*” lets management know how long the leave we are requesting will be. Next, we should always fill out the box that entitled “*Time of Call or Request*”; this will establish what time it was submitted and will help if there are multiple submissions for the same time period. “*From: Date / Thru: Date*” sets the parameters for the time we are requesting leave. “*Type of Absence*” is another box that we as carriers should fill out. This establishes the type of leave that we are requesting.

Getting management to sign the P.S. Form 3971 under “*Signature of Person Recording Absence and Date*” and “*Signature of Supervisor and Date Notified*” helps the carrier to know how long they have, to expect a response from management for their leave request. While there is no contractual language on how long management has, to respond it is accepted that management should respond to a P.S. Form 3971 request in three to five days, unless it is an emergency. Management should fill in the box “*Approved*” or “*Disapproved*”. If the request is disapproved then management is required to provide a reason for the denial. The ELM 512.421 states that the P.S. Form 3971 should be submitted in duplicate. We as carriers should always make sure that we are submitting our P.S. Form 3971 in duplicate so management will have a copy to return to us.

Remember that Article 10.2 says rural carriers should be granted annual leave in accordance with their personal wishes, provided a leave replacement is available. Our leave request can be denied when there

is no leave replacement available. ***If your request is denied you should file a grievance if you feel it was improperly denied.***

Sick Leave requests are also handled by the submission of P.S. Form 3971. If you are requesting sick leave, there are three boxes on the back of the P.S. Form 3971 that are important to fill out. The first is “*Reason I was incapacitated for duty during this absence:*”. It has seven boxes and whichever one is appropriate for your request should be checked. The second box “*Reason I was/will be unavailable for duty during this absence:*”. This box has six choices for the carrier to choose from.

The final box deals with “*FMLA*” and should be utilized if you are using FMLA. Remember, in order to use FMLA, you should have an approved case number or have the paperwork submitted and be waiting on a response whether it will be approved or not. If you have any questions about your leave you can always contact your District Representative or Assistant District Representative.

“Rural carriers should be granted annual leave in accordance with their personal wishes, provided a leave replacement is available.”

Leave Requests for RCAs

Rural carrier associates with designation code 72, code 74 and code 79 also are employees who are in a leave earning status. These employees are also entitled to submit a PS Form 3971 when requesting leave.

For those rural carrier associates that are not in a leave earning status the method for requesting leave is addressed in the EL-902 under Article 9.2.C.5.j (1-3). It states: Without recourse to Article 8.5, the employer may allow a regular carrier to work on his or her relief day in order to grant the leave replacement scheduled to serve the regular's route the day off, provided:

- 1) The leave replacement has submitted a written request (PS Form 3971) to be non-scheduled or to have leave on the regular's relief day;
- 2) The regular rural carrier **has signed the request** (PS Form 3971), thereby indicating agreement; and
- 3) The regular rural carrier and the employer have agreed that compensation for working the relief day will be an X day to be immediately scheduled by mutual agreement.

If you have any questions about the use of leave, don't hesitate to call your local steward, your Assistant District Representative or District Representative.



Greensboro Assistant District Representative

Danny Caudle

THE CHRISTMAS OVERTIME PERIOD

WHEN DOES IT BEGIN?

The Christmas period begins on Saturday December 7th, and ends on Friday, December 27th. During the Christmas period, regular rural carriers are eligible for two (2) types of overtime:

1. FLSA overtime
2. Christmas overtime

FLSA overtime is paid to regular carriers at all times of the year for work hours that exceed 12 hours per day, or 56 hours in one (1) work week.

Christmas overtime is paid to regular carriers under two circumstances:

1. Christmas Assistance – assistance provided by

the regular carrier on their relief day. These work hours are entered in the “Xmas Assist” box on the PS Form 1314.

2. Hours a regular carrier works in excess of the route’s evaluation are paid at the overtime rate. This is based on the total actual work hours for the week, rather than each day. (NOTE: Paid leave taken is credited as work performed for the purpose of determining work hours).

REMEMBER:

- If a carrier has an “X” day balance prior to the beginning of the new guarantee period (October 12), the balance will not be available for use until the Christmas period ends.
- If a carrier works their relief day during this time and is entitled to a future “X” day, it must be taken during the same pay period.
- Rural timekeeping will not allow a DACA 3 or R to be entered without a corresponding DACA X.

• WHAT IS CHRISTMAS ASSISTANCE?

- Regular carriers can provide assistance **only** on their relief day while a relief carrier carries the full route.
- For replacement carriers, it applies to any assistance provided on a regular or auxiliary route during the Christmas period.
- There are no provisions for paying a regular carrier to work on Sunday, an actual holiday, or on any route other than their assigned route.
- Christmas assistance is reported in the “Xmas Assist Work Hours” box of the PS Form 1314 (for regular carriers) and the PS Form 1314A (for replacement carriers).

If a regular carrier is required to work their designated Christmas holiday, they would receive 1 ½ times the daily rate of pay in addition to the holiday leave pay.

NOTE: This daily rate does not apply to any other designated holiday (only Christmas).

RURAL CARRIER ASSOCIATES:

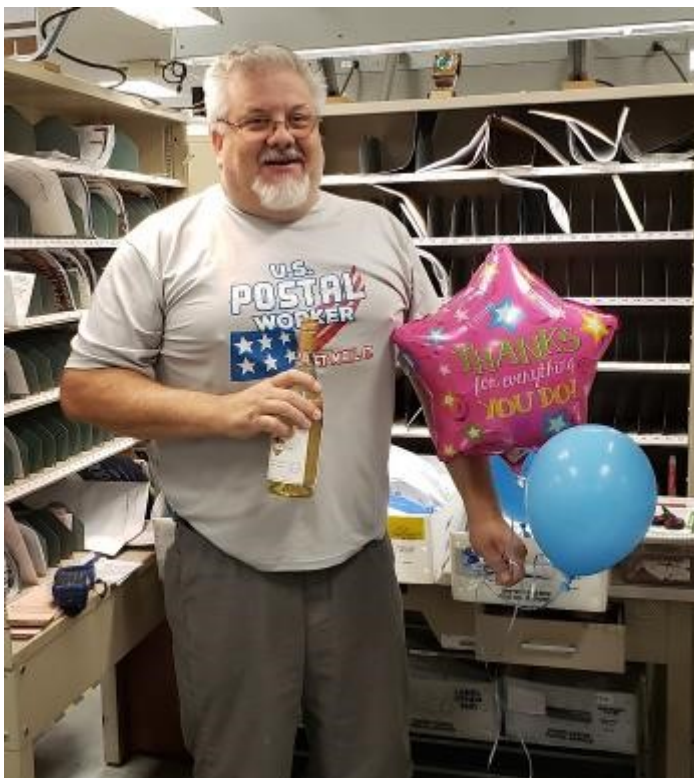
RCAs are entitled to FLSA overtime when they have worked in excess of 40 hours in one work week. RCAs serving any auxiliary route are compensated at the hourly wage for actual work hours and are not paid the evaluated hours during this period.

REMEMBER:

Christmas overtime is not an entitlement. Management has the option to limit or not allow any overtime.

HOWEVER:

Your contractual rights do not change simply be-
(Continued on page 25)



Clayton Rural Carriers show their Steward, Robert McArthur some love during Steward Appreciation week in October.

(Continued from page 24)

cause management is controlling work hours. It is the position of the NRLCA that reporting times should not be changed on a daily or weekly basis. Rural carriers should receive reasonable advanced notice when the schedule is to be changed.

If rural carriers feel pressured or forced to work in a manner that places them in an unsafe situation, they should request a PS Form 1767. Complete the form and return it to your supervisor. Discuss the issue with management, and if it is not resolved, contact your steward.

UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

November 3 – Daylight Savings Time ends.

November 5 – Election Day.

November 9 – Veterans Day Holiday - observed for those with relief day on Monday, November 11.

November 11 – Veterans Day - no mail delivery.

Possible parcel delivery.

November 28 – Thanksgiving Day - no mail delivery. Possible parcel delivery.

December 7 – Christmas Period Begins

December 25 – Christmas Day - no mail delivery. Possible parcel delivery.

December 27 – Last day of Christmas Period.

December 28 – “X” days earned prior to Christmas Period may now be utilized.

55 Day Annual Leave Carry Over Limit

Rural carriers are only allowed to carry over 55 days of Annual Leave from one Leave Year to the next. Employees must use any annual leave they have in excess of the 55 day carryover limit by the end of this leave year or they will forfeit their annual leave. The 2019 Leave Year ends on January 3, 2020.

If you are having issues getting annual leave requests approved, and are in danger of having to forfeit leave, please contact your District Representative. Keep all disapproved leave slips.

Take action while you still have time to avoid losing your leave!

Webmaster

Renee Johnson



How to Use the New Website

By now, I hope you’ve all found our new website: NCRLCA.org and have been successfully using it. To give everyone time to adjust to the new format, we have suspended using passwords on all pages except the Junior Auxiliary Officers page.

In the future any password-protected page will have a pop-up screen, as pictured.

It will ask you for the password when you click on the page.

You will find this password and its effective dates in the hard copy of the newsletter you receive in the mail (usually on page 3, as seen below).

For the time being, you do not need a password for any page besides the one mentioned above. There may be more pages protected as time progresses.

This period of transition is for your convenience.

We hope you are utilizing and enjoying the website.

Feel free to call me if you have any questions at (336) 984-2368, or email me at: ncrlcawebmaster@gmail.com.

Until next issue, I wish you every blessing of the holiday season.

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas!



WEBSITE

Please visit
www.NCRLCA.org for
all the latest news.

This month the password will
be **M-Xmas@25!**

The password will be changed
to the above on November 30,
2019.

At this time the password is
only needed to access the
Junior Auxiliary page.

We are working on adding
more information for you.

If there is something you
would like to see added to the
website please let any member
of the State Board know. We
welcome your ideas & feed-
back.

NORTH CAROLINA AUXILIARY OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

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252-771-8180
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VICE PRESIDENT

SUSANNE REAVIS

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336-957-2004

SECRETARY/TREASURER

SUE KELLY

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Linden NC 28356
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CHAPLAIN

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511 Old Goldsboro Road
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Phone 910-594-0433

PROVIDENT GUILD

Volunteer Needed

JUNIOR SPONSOR

Volunteer Needed

JUNIOR OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

ANAKIN HAMLETT

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Blanch, NC 27212-9257

VICE PRESIDENT

TAYLOR WARD

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Tyner, NC 297804

SECRETARY/TREASURER

LILY GRAY

424 Wapiti Dr
Spring Lake, NC 28390

CHAPLAIN

MADISON HALL

9028 Main Street
Godwin, NC 28344-8387

19 Scholarships Awarded

Auxiliary News

Sue Kelly

Secretary/Treasurer

I hope that everyone is enjoying the cooler weather. I know that September and October were two of the hottest months that our state has seen in a long time for that time of the year.

It was possible this year to award 19 scholarships in the amount of \$500.00 each. This would not have been possible if not for the generous giving this year from all of you. This year the following districts gave extra to the scholarship program, Alamance, Yadkin River, French Broad, Catawba/Lincoln and Brushy Mountain. A special thank you to Love Page for the generous donation to the Prennis Page scholarship program.

It gave me great pleasure to announce the scholarship winners for the year 2019 at the opening session of the Fall Booster meeting.

The recipients were as follows:

Matthew Stanley	Alamance
Claire Wallace	Yadkin River ~ In memory of James Reavis
Taylor Moore	French Broad
Kalie Cook	Catawba/Lincoln
Caleb Wallace	Yadkin River ~ In memory of Henry Sink Sr.
Sarah Katherine Wagoner	Brushy Mountain
Jakayla Dunston	Harriet Lineberger
Rachel Weaver	Prennis Page
Ethan Randall Spencer	Charles Adams
Wade Andrew Johnson	
Cody Copeland	
Kacey Caudill	
Lane Johnson	
Bailey Smith	
Abigail Lyndsey Keel	
Jordan Moore	
Alexandria Scott	
Jacquelyn Hope Keel	
Mason Britt	

The 2019-20 North Carolina scholarship applications are available at this time. **North Carolina scholarships must be postmarked by June 1, 2020.** If you need copies of the scholarship applications give one of the **Auxiliary board members** a call and they will be able to assist you.

This year the following districts gave extra to the Junior program so that they could continue to have fun times at the State Convention, Roanoke, French Broad, Catawba/Lincoln, Five County and Rockingham County. Also thanks to Peach Belt, Rockingham County and Five County for the extra support to the Auxiliary.

As we go through the Thanksgiving and Christmas season be safe and keep warm.

May all of your days be filled with joy, laughter and love.

DECEMBER 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 <i>PP-26</i>
Open Enrollment Period ~ Ends on 12/9						
8	9	10	11	12	13 <i>Pay Day</i>	14
Open Enrollment ends on 12/9						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 <i>PP-1</i>
22	23	24	25 <i>Christmas Day</i>	26	27 <i>Pay Day</i>	28
29	30	31				

JANUARY 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 <i>New Year's Day</i>	2	3	4 <i>PP-2</i>
5	6	7	8	9	10 <i>Pay Day</i>	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 <i>PP-3</i>
19	20 <i>Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday</i>	21	22	23	24 <i>Pay Day</i>	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Dates to Remember

November 3	Fall Booster	January 1	New Year's Day
November 11	Veterans Day	January 20	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
November 28	Thanksgiving Holiday	January 25-27	South Atlantic Conference (SAC)
December 24	Christmas Eve		
December 25	Christmas Holiday		



NCRLCA
424 WAPITI DR
SPRING LAKE NC 28390-1562

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SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE

January 25-27, 2020



Crowne Plaza Hotel
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Atlanta, Georgia
Phone 888-233-9527

Rooms are \$98.00 +tax
group rate code SAC
72 hour cancelation policy

RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE BY JANUARY 8, 2020

*Wishing Everyone
a Safe
and Happy
Holiday Season!*

From your State Board

