



North Carolina Rural Carrier

Happy New Year

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

Volume 36

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District Representative Sally Corriher & Assistant District Representative Bryan Hudgins Retire

Mid Carolinas District Representative Sally Corriher and Greensboro Assistant District Representative Bryan Hudgins have retired from the USPS. We want to thank them for their many years of service to our union.

Our new Mid Carolinas District Representative is Bethany Small. Congratulations Bethany!

See page 17 For all new steward appointments .



Inside This Issue

How to File
A Grievance

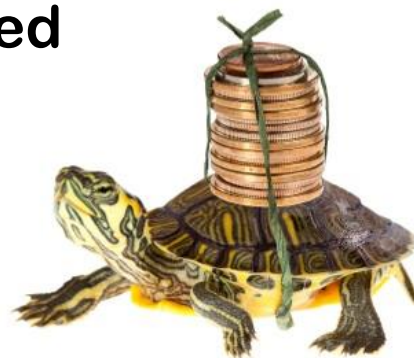
SAC Info

State Delegate
Pre-Registration

Survivors Benefits

Payment of Retroactive Salary Increases Delayed

The NRLCA has been notified by USPS that all of the retroactive salary increases included in the 2018-2021 National Agreement will be delayed and are now to be included in the paychecks for PP 06-2020 (March 20, 2020).



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Alleghany/Ashe	4	Brushy Mountain	3	Albemarle	2
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Roanoke Chowan	7	Alamance	1	Tri-County	25
Burke/Caldwell/Catawba	9	Cumberland/Hoke	20	Five County/Person	28
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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 **HNyrlca2020**

The password will be changed to the above on January 31, 2020.

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

Welcome 2020



Congratulations!!

We have made an amazing holiday season possible for so many families with our parcel deliveries. Some of the time previously spent going to the mall or other places to shop have been replaced with online ordering. And while we are making those special deliveries our customers can spend their time doing something else.

While I was out delivering mail one day, I had a young fellow come out of his house so excited to see me. He said that he hadn't seen me in a long time because he had been busy. He said that the packages I had for them were probably Christmas gifts. Then he proceeded to tell me all about the new puppy they had gotten and how much trouble this new puppy was always in.

We all have that personal connection with some of our customers. Everything from a simple, Hello to a quick conversation. This makes us special to them and them to us.

I walked into my office the other morning and overheard a carrier say, "DIGNITY AND RESPECT". I didn't hear the rest of the conversation as I got to work but this got me thinking about what that means; and does it mean the same to everyone.

When I got home that day, I decided to do a little research. The dictionary gave one definition for dignity as *'the quality or state of being worthy, honored or esteemed'*.

Donna Hicks Ph.D. (*Psychology Today*) describes it as our inherent value and worth as human beings. She says dignity is something everyone is born with.

Martin Luther King said of dignity, *"One's dignity may be assaulted, vandalized, cruelly mocked, but it can never be taken away unless it is surrendered."*

What about respect? The dictionary gives one definition as *'due regard for the feelings, wishes, rights, or traditions of others'*.

Charlie Kuhn states that "Respect acknowledges the behavior while dignity teaches the importance of civility and humanity."

For more information see *Psychology Today*, *Family Education*, [*The National Caregivers Library*](#).

"*Talking with Trees*" (for kids) along with numerous other resources and blogs available in the library and online.

I've had questions by some district members regarding their required involvement if a Booster meeting is held in their District. The Constitution says they may be asked to assist but it is not required, nor does it specify a specific duty. I have included that information as it reads in our Constitution.

Constitution of the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers Association

Article VI

Section 7. Booster Meetings.

- A. The Executive Board shall establish a Fall Booster meeting. This meeting will occur between October 1 and November 15 each year. The site for the Fall Booster meeting will be selected by the Executive Board. The annual meeting place for the Fall Booster will be selected by the Executive Board. No more than two consecutive years in one location and divide the state in 3 locations; Mountains, Central and Coastal.

The Executive Board will assume all responsibilities of the Fall Booster, including, but not limited to, selecting the site(s), hotel, date of Fall Booster, and all committees. The District in which the Fall Booster is held may be asked to assist. The State Convention delegates will select the site of the meeting by ballot, if multiple sites are presented.



New Bern RCAs prepare for Sunday parcel delivery during the Christmas rush.



Chaplain's Message

*Jesse Ray Farmer Jr.,
Chaplain*

Winterproof Your Heart

Psalm 3:3 “But you, Lord, are a shield around me, my glory, the one who lifts my head high.”

Every winter as the first signs of frost appear, I begin preparing my home for the winter. We place old socks and insulation around the outdoor faucets and put extra pine straw around the borders.

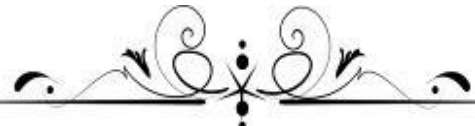
I know the days on the mail route will be rough ahead with frozen windshields and cold fingers sorting the mail. However, there are some who may face the bitterness of winter far worse than me in my heated mail jeep. Some people battle the cold reality of the recent loss of loved ones, financial hardships, or failing health. Depression can often set in during these times, and we can have a difficult time finding joy.

One of the most famous books of the Bible centered around overcoming hardships is Job. After having Satan attack his family, his health and his home, Job asked God many questions. He was faced with lack of support from family and friends who attempted to have him doubt his faith.

In Job 11:18 he proclaimed, “*And you will feel secure, because there is hope; you will look around and take your rest in security*”. He had found his hope in God. When you are faced with what seems like an impossible situation and the bitterness of winter has enclosed around you, remember you can look to God's Word for encouragement. The warmth of His love and joy can be accessed at all times.

Prayer: Dear God, please thaw my heart of bitterness and sadness and fill me with your joy and hope that you promised to provide. Amen

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.



Obituaries

James Cromwell Cole, 87, passed away Thursday, November 7, 2019, at CarePartners Solace Center.

Mr. Cole was a lifelong resident of Leicester and was a son of the late Chester Arlington and Jimmie Mae Hall Cole. He was preceded in death by the love of his life, Nancy Louise Smith Cole, who died in February of this year, and by sisters, Clara Dean Smathers and Joyce Cole Melton.

Crom served with the US Navy in Japan for four years during the Korean War. He was retired after 34 years as a rural letter carrier with the US Postal Service and he was past president of the Smoky Mountain District of N.R.L.C.A. He also served as the Democrat Precinct Officer of his precinct for more than 10 years.

Mr. Cole was a member of Cedar Hill Free Will Baptist Church where he served as Sunday school teacher and music director.

Surviving are three daughters, Cynthia Cole Todd (Nathan), Mavis Cole Braswell and Beth Cole Smith; a son, Rex Cole (Jackie); grandchildren, Logan, Brody, Rachel, Nolan, Luke, Sean and Jacob; eight great-grandchildren; a brother, Jerry Cole (Joann); a sister-in-law, Frankie Davis (Clyde), and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mary Ruth (Sisk) Deaton of Raeford passed away on Thursday, September 19, 2019 at the age of 76. Mary was born in McDowell County on January 17, 1943 to the late Will and Nora McGalliard Sisk.

She attended Nebo High School in Marion, NC and won the typist award for the school for both her junior and senior year. These skills she would later utilize in her career at John Wesley College in Greensboro as Secretary to the Dean of Admissions as well as secretary and treasurer for multiple churches during her lifetime.

While her husband was ministering a church in Union Grove, Mary obtained her Cosmetology Diploma and then began her own business and maintained Mary's Beauty Shop until she and her family moved to Raeford in 1978. Mary was known for many years as a teacher's assistant at the Hoke County High School Extended Day Program while also being instrumental in the founding of the Living Faith Ministries Church

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on Hwy 211 in Raeford.

Mary was a Rural Letter Carrier with the United States Postal Service from 1987 until 2007. In retirement, she enjoyed traveling with her husband and cherished spending time with her children and her grandsons.

She was preceded in death by her brother, Thomas Sisk and her sister, Lois Sisk.

She is survived by her husband of 57 years, Reverend Tex Deaton; her daughter, Karen Tapp and husband Terry; her son, David Deaton and wife Katerina of White Plains, NY; two grandsons, Matthew Deaton and Joshua Tapp; one niece and one nephew.



Safety
Scott Deaf

Get Ready For Winter

Happy New Year and Congratulations on surviving another record-breaking “Peak Season”. This seems to be the trend over the last few years, “...with visions of parcels dancing in our heads...” Some of those parcels actually contained sugar plums. We truly **deliver** the season. Thank you all, not only for your service this past holiday season, but also for doing it safely! With volumes like we are processing, it is easy to become fatigued or lose focus. This is exactly what we must guard against.

Winter brings some very trying elements we must deal with. It’s that time to get the POV winterized and ready for the route(s) ahead. With the cooler temperatures, it’s always a good time to check your tire inflation and tread depth. Don’t forget about your spare. If you use snow tires or studded tires have those ready at a moment’s notice.

LLV drivers, your cables should be available at your request. It’s hard to predict the weather anymore so it’s best to be prepared. Yak Trax, or the “studded tires for your shoes” should be in your office. Make sure you know where to find your size so if you have to dismount in the wintry weather you will have them. As always, we deliver, but we must deliver safely. If the weather turns unexpectedly and the conditions become too dangerous then getting yourself to

safety is the next delivery you should make.

I wanted to touch on the left-hand turns and to remind everyone to pay particular attention while turning left. Most other drivers simply can not wait to pass the letter carrier in front of them. A lot of our trouble on the street comes from vehicles behind us trying to pass, so staying alert is a must. We have had carriers cited for turning into a vehicle on the left that had the right-of-way and had already pulled out with the intent to pass in a passing zone. If the vehicle has already pulled out to pass, let them go regardless of the right-of-way. It is their right-of-way if they are in a passing zone and we have stopped or impeded traffic.

Our slips, trips, and falls or industrial accidents always have a chance to occur whether we are in the office or dealing with the conditions and weather on the street. All we can do is focus on the task at hand.

With all the walking we do on a daily basis, the possibility of an accident greatly increases. If we are involved in any type of accident, we more than likely will receive discipline of some form from the Postal Service. Never let this deter you from doing your job and reporting all incidents/accidents as soon as possible. If you receive discipline, speak with your assigned steward to address the matter.

I hope this new decade brings great things for us as rural carriers. Take the time to be safe as we grind through Winter remembering Spring is right around the corner. I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming Spring meetings.

As always, be safe, wear your seat belt, and thank you for the service you provide!

NCRLCA Dues for 2019-2020

Effective PP 02/2020 (January 24, 2020)

Regular, PTF...Cash.....	\$739.00
1187...Bi-Weekly.....	\$28.42
Retired.....Cash.....	\$111.00
1187R...Monthly.....	\$9.25
73, RCA, RCR, ARC.....Cash.....	\$246.00
1187.....Bi-Weekly.....	\$9.46

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



Planning Your Survivors Benefits

As we look toward retirement we think about how we're going to meet our needs and if we will be able to continue a quality of life we'd like to enjoy after many years of working. One important factor we also have to consider is our survivors. How will they go on financially when we die? Here are some questions that you may want to consider as you think about your retirement game plan.

How do I plan to provide benefits to my survivors after my death?

Your personnel officer will review the election opportunities to provide benefits after your death to your husband or wife, ex-spouse, or another person you designate as having an insurable interest in your continuing life. If you do not provide for a monthly benefit after your death, your survivor will not be able to continue coverage under the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program. The advisor will also cover the requirements that each survivor must meet to qualify. When making an election to provide a benefit after your death, you must obtain your spouse's written consent to provide less than the maximum benefit allowed. To designate an insurable interest, you must have a physical examination at your own expense. Your local personnel service center is the best place to begin. They can provide personalized assistance and they have your employment records.

As a retiree what kind of benefits are available to my survivor?

The types of benefits payable are current spouse survivor annuities, former spouse annuities voluntarily elected or awarded by court order in divorces granted on/after May 7, 1985; or a one-time lump sum benefit. Under FERS, a basic employee death benefit may be payable to the surviving widow or widower of an employee who dies while employed.

How does my survivor apply for benefits?

The appropriate application for Death Benefits under the CSRS or FERS must be filed with an original signature to the Office of Personnel Management. Your survivor should attach a certified copy of the

death certificate, a copy of your marriage certificate, birth certificates of eligible children along with a certified copy of any divorce decree, and property settlement agreement that occurred on or after May 7, 1985. Applications may be obtained online at opm.gov/retire or by contacting the Retirement Information Office at 1-888-767-6738.

What is a full survivor benefit?

If you retire under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), the maximum survivor benefit payable is 55 percent of your unreduced annual benefit. If you retire under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), the maximum survivor benefit payable is 50 percent of your unreduced annual benefit.

Can my family continue their health insurance benefit if I die?

If you were enrolled in a self and family plan at the time of your death AND a monthly survivor benefit is payable, your spouse and eligible dependents can continue your health insurance. If a monthly benefit is not payable, your spouse and eligible family members will have a one-time opportunity to enroll in private health coverage with the carrier.

When will survivor benefits to my spouse end?

Monthly payments to a surviving spouse generally continue for life unless your spouse remarries before age 55. If your spouse was married to you for at least 30 years, he or she can continue receiving benefits when there is a remarriage before age 55 occurring after January 1, 1995.

What is an insurable interest survivor benefit election?

If you are in good health and you retire for reasons other than disability, you may elect to provide a survivor annuity to someone with an insurable interest. You can elect to provide an insurable interest benefit and the maximum benefit for a spouse or an ex-spouse. Spousal consent is not required. However, if you are married and elect an insurable interest benefit for your spouse, spousal consent is required. If you elect an insurable interest benefit, you are responsible for arranging for and paying the cost of any medical examination required to show you are in good health. A report of the medical examination should be included with your retirement application. You can elect to provide an insurable interest annuity only for someone who has an insurable interest in

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

you. "Insurable interest" is an insurance term which applies to someone who would reasonably expect to derive financial benefit from your continued life. For survivor benefit election purposes, an insurable interest is presumed to exist if you name as beneficiary of the insurable interest, any of the following individuals:

- a spouse;
- a blood or adopted relative closer than first cousins;
- an ex-spouse;
- a person to whom you are engaged to be married; or
- a person with whom you are living in a relationship that would constitute a common-law marriage in a jurisdiction that recognizes common-law marriages.

If the person named is not one of the above, you should submit affidavits with your retirement application from one or more people with knowledge of the individual's insurable interest. The affidavits should state:

- the relationship between you;
- the extent to which the person named is dependent on you;
- the reasons why the person named might reasonably expect to derive financial benefit from your continued life.

The reduction to provide an insurable interest benefit computation list can be found online.

The insurable interest automatically ends if the insurable interest dies, if you marry the insurable interest and elect to provide a spousal benefit, or if the named person is your spouse and you change your election to provide a spousal survivor benefit

I have divorced. Is my former husband or wife entitled to a survivor annuity?

The survivor benefit you elected at retirement is no longer payable. A monthly survivor benefit would be payable to your former spouse after death if one is provided by court order or your new election. The following conditions must exist for your former spouse to receive a benefit:

- You were married to your former spouse for at least nine months;
- You performed at least 18 months of creditable civilian service;
- Your former spouse to whom you were married less than 30 years has not remarried before age 55.

Your annuity may be reduced if your former spouse was awarded a survivor annuity by a qualifying court order. If you retired on or after May 7, 1985, we will honor the terms of a court order that requires you to provide a survivor annuity for an eligible former spouse for a marriage dissolved on or after May 7, 1985. If you are divorced after retirement from a spouse to whom you were married at retirement, we will honor the court order to the extent that your annuity was reduced at retirement. If you did not elect a survivor annuity for that person at retirement, your annuity will not be reduced. If you retired before May 7, 1985, we will honor the terms of a qualifying court order that requires you to provide a survivor annuity for an eligible former spouse in connection with a marriage that was dissolved on or after May 7, 1985, but only if you were married to that person at retirement and elected to provide a survivor annuity at that time or you were married to that person at retirement and elected to provide a survivor annuity before May 7, 1985.

How do I comply with a court ordered survivor benefit for my former husband or wife?

A divorce, legal separation, or annulment court order may require that an employee or a retiree provide a survivor annuity for a former spouse. We will pay based on the court order after a death-in-service or after the death of an annuitant. If the benefit will be based on a court order, employees and retirees [or their former spouses] need to send us a court-certified copy of the court order. Send this to:

U. S. Office of Personnel Management Retirement
Services Program
Court-Order Benefits Branch
Post Office Box 17
Washington, DC 20044-0017

If you are still working for the Federal Government, you should also provide a copy of the court order to your personnel or human resources office. All court orders involving garnishments or allotments of your payments from us must be sent to the address given above.



RCHBP

Elaine Althoff

MAKING CHANGES OUTSIDE OF OPEN SEASON

Now that Open Season has come to an end and you chose to stay in your current plan, or you changed your plan for the coming year. Now that you got that out of the way now what? Let's take a look at what changes you can make outside of Open Season should that issues rise.

Outside of Open Season, you are allowed to make changes or cancel coverage only in connection with certain events called *Qualifying Life Events (QLEs)*.

Since Qualifying Life Events (QLEs) are not the same for all programs, make sure to refer to the applicable guidelines available through the links below.

The most common Qualifying Life Events that permit enrollment or a change in enrollment are:

1. A change in family status, such as:

- Marriage
- Birth or adoption of a child
- Acquisition of a foster child
- Legal separation
- Divorce
- Death of a spouse or dependent

Keep in mind you may need to satisfy program requirements before you are allowed to make a change. You also may be required to provide documentation of the QLE (a marriage certificate, or foster child certification).

2. A change in your employment status:

- You are reemployed after a break in service of more than 3 days
- You return to pay status after your coverage terminated during leave without pay status or because you were in leave without pay status for more than 365 days.
- Your pay increases enough for premiums to be withheld
- You are restored to a civilian position after serving in the uniformed services
- You change from a temporary appointment to an appointment that entitles you to a Government contribution
- You change to or from part-time career employment

3. You or a family member lose FEHB or other

coverage:

- Under another FEHB enrollment because the covering enrollment was terminated, canceled, or changed to Self Only
- When enrolled in a prepaid health maintenance organization (HMO) and you or a covered family member move or change worksite outside of the HMO's enrollment area
- Under another federally sponsored health benefits program
- Under Medicaid or similar State-sponsored program for the needy
- Under CHAMPVA, TRICARE, or TRICARE-for Life
- When you had previously suspended your FEHB coverage to participate in one of these programs
- When your membership in the employee organization sponsoring the FEHB plan terminates
- Under a non-Federal health plan

When one of these events occurs, you may:

- Enroll
- Increase your enrollment
- Switch your designated family member under a Self Plus One enrollment when the current designated family member experiences certain QLEs
- Change your enrollment to another FEHB plan or option
- Decrease your enrollment*
- Cancel your enrollment**

*A decrease of Self Only may be made only if the QLE causes the enrollee to be the last eligible family member under the FEHB enrollment. A decrease to Self Plus One may be made only if the QLE leaves only one eligible family member covered in addition to the enrollee.

**A cancellation may be made only if the enrollee can show that as a result of the QLE, he or she and all eligible family members now have other health insurance coverage.

For FEHB, USPS Health Benefits Plan, and FEGLI call HR Shared Service Center at 1-877-477-3273, option 5, Benefits; or TTY 1-866-260-7507

For FEDVIP call FEDVIP at 1 877 888 3337 or TTY 1-877-899-5680 or go to www.benefeds.com

For FSA call FSA FEDS at 1-877-372-3337 or TTY 1-866-353-8058 or go to www.fsafeds.com

Secretary/Treasurer

Vicki Gray



State Convention Pre-registration

Appearing below is Article VI, Section 4 from the Constitution of the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers' Association. This language was adopted at the 2019 State Convention in Raleigh.

This is the procedure put in place for our members to be compensated (paid) for attending the state convention as delegates.

Members must also be **elected** to serve as delegates at the local meeting; as per Article IV. This complies with labor laws which require that delegates must be elected by a direct vote of the membership.

Mail the completely filled out and signed preregistration form to me. Please print clearly as an illegible registration may cause it to be deemed unacceptable.

You must pre-register to be eligible to receive payment as a delegate.

Forms may be copied and will also be available on the website www.NCRLCA.org.

ARTICLE VI, Section 4

State Delegate Compensation

- A. State delegates shall be compensated up to \$100.00 per each completed business session day of attendance at the State Convention for expenses.
- B. The state shall set aside a total amount equal to the rate of .00017% of a 40 hour, Step C, Table 1 regular rural carrier's yearly pay for each member on the rolls on June 30, to be used to pay state delegates. (proviso first deposit will be July 2019)
- C. These funds shall be held in an interest-bearing account.
- D. The maximum amount to be paid out per year will be \$60,000.
- E. Any state delegate to the State Convention who is being compensated for the State Convention by State or National funds shall not receive state delegate pay.
- F. All state delegate checks will be mailed by July 31.
- G. All state delegates must pre-register by submitting the registration form that will be printed in the convention issue of the state newspaper and on the North Carolina website.
- H. Verification of attendance will be the responsibility of the local President or the local Delegate-at-large.
- I. Disputes will be settled by the State Board.

PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

NORTH CAROLINA STATE DELEGATE

Please print clearly.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

I submit my name as a candidate for delegate to the 2020 North Carolina State Convention.
I understand that I must also be duly elected as a delegate in my local district elections.

Signature of Member: _____

Clip and mail to: NC RLCA Secretary Treasurer
Vicki Gray
424 Wapiti Drive
Spring Lake, NC 28390



Auto-Home Insurance

Tracy Greer



Are You Driving Your Personal Vehicle On Your Route?

Call Now! 1-888-325-7727

If so, you need to call immediately so we can make sure you have the right coverage. You are eligible for substantial discounts on your home, RV, motorcycle and more, just for being an NRLCA member. For doing so you will receive a \$10.00 gift card.

Mention code R/RP for your exclusive NRLCA insurance savings and benefits!

Second, after receiving your quote email me your information at NCAutoInsRep@gmail.com and you will be entered into a drawing for \$100.00 at the State convention in June.

I want to take a brief moment and share some facts with you about insurance and how the NRLCA insurance marketplace can make sure you are properly in-

sured.

- 1) For those who already have auto insurance, *Consumer Reports* suggests doing a rate check every two or three years.
- 2) Car insurance companies consider the uncovered to be higher risk than those who diligently keep their policies in force.
- 3) Let someone drive your car, and your insurance will pay if you have an accident.
- 4) Personal insurance does NOT cover using your vehicle for business!!
- 5) Increasing your deductible from \$200 to \$500 could reduce your collision and comprehensive coverage cost by 15 to 30 percent.

Most insurance companies do not understand how to insure our route vehicles accurately and most try to write commercial policies to insure them. This is not needed and National General Insurance understands the Tort Claims act process and uses that act to keep our rates low and get the rural carrier the coverage they need.

I look forward to seeing each of you at the spring district meetings and my door is always open. You may call, text or email me at any time. I wish each of you a safe and Happy New Year!!!

Rural Carrier Jessie Ray Farmer Jr. Receives Million Mile Award

The prestigious Million Mile Award for 30+ years of accident free driving was presented to rural carrier Jessie Ray Farmer, Jr.

The Million Mile Award is considered the gold standard and highest honor for professional safe driving performance. Reaching this unique milestone requires 30+ years of service on the road and an unwavering attention to safety. To put this remarkable accomplishment in perspective, you would have to travel around the earth 40 times to cover one million miles.

Postmaster Cindy Creech of the La Grange Post Office. recognized Jessie Ray in front of his fellow co-workers in December.

Several other carriers were also recognized with safe driving awards for driving accident free. They were Brandon Foss, Sue Price, Samantha Anderson Quinn, Judi Lee, Tim Roberts, Ashleigh Coombs, Kelly Bradley, McKeever Smith, Tammy Wiggins, William Hardy, Swayze Greenup, Shannon Moore & Michael Casteen.



Jessie Ray Farmer, Jr. with his Million Mile Award

Jessie Ray and William Hardy were both given special jackets for their 30+ years of accident free service.

Congratulations to all!

Legislative Representative

Van Heath

Am I Beating A Dead Horse?



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 September-October 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, Print and mail to your District Office.

The contact information for all NC members of Congress was printed in that issue also. Addresses are also available on the National Website and on your Members’ Congressional website.

If you are not comfortable on a computer, asks 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 do not get this passed in this congress, we most probably will 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 the rest of you, 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.

Since my last article, six new members of Congress have signed on to our bill as cosponsors. None of them are from North Carolina.

This is a bipartisan bill, so write to your member whether they are a Democrat or a Republican.

Until this bill is a lot closer to passing, we will not know the exact details; but this can seriously increase your monthly annuity if you spent much time as an RCA before you made regular.

Below is the official summary of the bill:

Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 2478)

This bill modifies the federal civilian service that is creditable service under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

Specifically, it expands the non deduction service that may be creditable under FERS. Non deduction service is federal service where an employee's pay is not subject to retirement deductions (e.g., service under a temporary appointment).

Currently, non deduction service performed before January 1, 1989, is creditable under FERS so long as a deposit is made into the retirement fund to cover the period of non deduction service.

This bill allows non deduction service performed on or after January 1, 1989, to be creditable under FERS so long as a deposit is made into the retirement fund.

Please get those letters in the mail.



PAC CHAIR

Robert Gurganus

New Year New Opportunities

Hello everyone! It's your pal Porkchop here. I'd like to start off by wishing every one of my union brothers and sisters a happy and prosperous new year.

The new year presents many opportunities and challenges for our association, and your PAC contributions will help bring our agenda before the lawmakers who craft the policies that affect our jobs both today and in the future.

There are so many bills before congress now that are important to our union. Who wouldn't love to have the opportunity to buy back our sub time and

be able to retire earlier? Our PAC contributions get us access to the people who can make that happen.

One of three easiest ways to contribute to PAC is through payroll deduction. If each of us would give just \$10 or more a pay period to PAC our union would be a force to be reckoned with on Capitol Hill. Being able to free the USPS from the draconian restraints placed on it by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006 would go a long way towards guaranteeing a stable future for our employer and our union. I urge you to consider being a sustaining donor and helping our association move our agenda forward.

I'll be attending the South Atlantic Conference in Atlanta in January and I hope to see many of you there! I think this conference is unrivaled for information and access to our national officers, and if you've never attended I urge you to go. If you are able to attend please stop by the PAC table and say hello. I look forward to seeing you!

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

South Atlantic Conference

SAC Board Member

Derek Harpe

January 25th-27th , 2020

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. Group code is SAC. 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!

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!

What is the Provident Guild?

I begin my article this issue with a question... just what is the Provident Guild?

Simply, it is a non-profit fraternal organization created in 1931 by rural carriers for our members and auxiliary members. Any rural carrier union member and their spouse can join if you are under the age of fifty six. It provides your survivor an amount of **ready cash** after death.

If you have any questions, please call me. An application for membership is included here. Please consider joining. Thank you.

Provident Guild Representative

Dale Sain



PLEASE FILL IN WITH TYPEWRITER OR PRINT LEGIBLY WITH INK ALL QUESTIONS MUST BE ANSWERED

DEATH BENEFIT DEPARTMENT, National Rural Letter Carriers' Association and its Auxiliary

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Date _____

CIRCLE CLASS DESIRED:

\$10 \$15 \$20
\$30 \$40 \$50

For Class: _____

+ Entrance Fee \$2.00

*Amount Enclosed: _____

Mail to:
Diane Cox
4780 Stony Creek Road
Urbana, OH 43078-9454.

ACTION OF
ADMISSION BOARD
Not to be filled by
Applicant

* Those who submit applications during July, August or September need to pay a full year's dues plus the entrance fee. October, November or December submissions need to pay 75% of a full year's dues plus the entrance fee. January, February or March submissions need to pay 50% of a full year's dues plus the entrance fee. April, May or June submissions must pay the entrance fee plus 25% of a full year's dues plus the upcoming full year's dues.

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Married ☐ Single ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed

1. Name _____
First Middle Last Phone Number

2. A. Home Address _____
Street County

City State Zip Code

B. If Mailing address is different from residence - Please List: _____
City State Zip Code

3. Date of Birth _____
Month Day Year Age Weight Ft In Height

4. Occupation: ☐ Regular Carrier ☐ Substitute Carrier ☐ Retired Carrier ☐ Wife/Husband of Carrier
☐ Widow/Widower of Carrier ☐ Wife/Husband of Sub. Carrier ☐ Wife/Husband of Ret. Carrier

5. Have you ever been a member of the Provident Guild? _____ Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Is your wife (or Husband) a member of the Provident Guild? _____ Yes ☐ No ☐

8. 1st Beneficiary _____
(Name) (Address) Phone Number

2nd Beneficiary _____
(Name) (Address) Phone Number

7. "I agree to the method for distribution of benefits as shall be Provided by the Organic Law as of the date of my death."

9. I hereby declare that I have carefully read each and all of the above questions and answers, and that my answers are true.

(Signature of Applicant)

Recommended By: Guild Representative

Revised 2008

Time to Get Ready for District Meetings

Happy New Year! 2020 is here, we've survived the peak season, and planning ahead for our district meetings. Many of those who aren't involved in the preparations for these meetings would be surprised at the amount of time and effort our officers—both the district and the state—put into making these get-togethers as informative as possible. We all want the largest possible turnouts after investing so much energy and this is where the website can help.

For all the district secretary-treasurers, be sure to use the Webmaster label provided in your packet of information that you'll receive from Vicki Gray to

Webmaster

Renee Johnson



send an invitation to me.

As soon as I receive it, I'll add it to the website events column and calendar. If you want it added before the letter is received, send me an email with all the pertinent information. Be sure to include the street address of your meeting location. Many districts have multiple locations of popular chains, or even local cafes with other branches.

If you wish to highlight a specific detail, i.e. first-timers' meals provided, or a special guest speaker, let me know this is information important to the posting. I will be sure to include it.

I hope 2020 is a successful, happy, healthy, and prosperous year for each of you, and that every district meeting is well-attended.



Cody Copeland receives a scholarship check from Auxiliary Secretary Treasurer Sue Kelly at the 2019

Additional pictures from the Fall Booster are posted on the website.

Raft Correction!

National Board Ends RAFT Payment Program

It was previously reported here that recruiter's would be receiving RAFT incentive payments for their recruitment of new members directly from the National Office. I apologize for this misinformation.

It has come to my attention that the National Board has decided to end the RAFT incentive payments program.

There will be no payments to recruiters for any new members that joined after July 1, 2019.

Thank you for your understanding. I do hope you will continue to encourage our fellow carriers and new RCAs and ARCs to join our union.

Vicki Gray Secretary/Treasurer

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Greensboro

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TBA
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TBA

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Kim Atwell
TBA
Scott Deal
TBA

Area Stewards

Mid-Carolinas

Chris Derrick
704-641-7269
Cliff Workman
TBA

Greensboro

Richard Schoonmaker
(607) 765-5741
Kara Winebarger
(910) 583-8836
Bryan W. Hudgins
TBA

*TBA-To be announced

New Steward info will be added to the website at www.NCRLCA.org as soon as available (expected by the end of January) and published in the next newsletter.

Mid-Carolinas District Representative

Bethany Small

Let's Have A Safe New Year!



We made it through another Holiday Season! I hope everyone had a joyful end of the year, albeit very busy.

And with the New Year, comes some changes to the Steward system in the Mid-Carolinas District.

District Representative Sally Corriher has retired. We would all like to wish Sally a wonderful retirement as she has worked hard for the carriers of this district and has more than earned this new chapter in her life. You will be missed Sally!!

We will have Brenda Prevatte, Ralph Fernandez and Jeanette Dwyer joining Eddie Moss and Kelly Futch as Assistant District Representatives.

We also have Cliff Workman joining Chris Derrick as an Area Steward.

We are always looking to add to our team, could you be the next Steward in your office? I am very proud of the many talented Stewards that we have here in Mid-Carolinas and I am looking forward to working with each of them.

Now that the holidays are over, it's time to get back to normal. While we look forward to the spring as time to recuperate from the rush of peak season, we must maintain our diligence with safety. With parcel volume increasing during all months of the year, opportunities for injury also increase. Whether we are in the office or on the street, rural carriers always need to

stay alert! Not only for safety issues that we create or contribute to, but also to those safety issues created by those around us to which we may be oblivious.

Safety is our job. We are responsible for doing our jobs safely. We all want to go home in the same condition that we reported to work.

It is imperative that you always stay engaged and be aware of your surroundings, whether you are delivering in your vehicle or you are on foot. Inattention is a primary cause of accidents, and unfortunately, it's one of the few causes that we have complete control over.

2019 saw an overall decrease in accidents and I am hopeful that we continue this trend in the new year. Other things that we have total control over include our clothing and footwear, maintenance of our (POV) vehicle, sleep and self-care habits and placement of mail and parcels in and around our cases and work areas.

We need to make choices that reflect safety as our first priority and we need to be able to answer for those choices.

I am personally asking each of you to set yourself up for safety. I am asking that you be conscious of how you do your job, from how you prepare for each duty to how you execute those duties. I am asking you to assess your work habits and make changes if you are not doing everything in the safest manner possible.

What seemed safe a few years ago may have since been determined to be unsafe. You may see a situation in your office that threatens the safety of a fellow employee. If this is the case, speak up! You might be saving someone's health or even life. If you are unsure, speak to a manager or reach out to a Steward.

We are in this together and we must look out for each other!

We need to make choices that reflect safety as our first priority and we need to be able to answer for those choices.



Our North Carolina Stewards answer questions for the audience at the Fall Booster.

Greensboro

District Representative

Jeff Essick



New National Steward System (NSS) Appointments

I pray that each of you had a Merry Christmas and my hope for you is to have a prosperous New Year.

Recently, the NRLCA National Board made the upcoming appointments to the steward system in the Greensboro District. I hope you will join me in congratulating each of them. The appointees are:

District Representative

Jeff Essick, (336) 618-5095

Full-Time Assistant District Representatives

Daniel Caudle, (336) 580-0089

Gail Naillon, (336) 455-3973

Part-Time Assistant District Representatives

Kimberly Atwell # To be announced (TBA)

Scott Deal, # TBA

Area Stewards

Richard Schoonmaker, (607) 765-5741

Kara Winebarger, (910) 583-8836

Bryan Hudgins, # TBA

Congratulations to Bryan Hudgins on his retirement from the USPS on January 3, 2020. Bryan has agreed to remain as an Area Steward for a period while we transition. Please note, these new positions are contingent upon final certification from the National Office.

Please check the upcoming NCRLCA Newsletter and the NCRLCA Website for additional contact information and territory assignments as they become available.

Let's talk Safety and Accident Reporting

Unfortunately, many rural carriers have had accidents recently. I think there are several reasons for these occurrences. Some of them are: management's lack of hiring and retaining a sufficient number of leave replacements, fluctuating volumes of parcels and mail (especially parcels), management pushing carriers to meet unreal deadlines, working longer hours than usual, fatigue, exhaustion, inability to remain focused due to so many expectations from management who want each of us to do more for less and just dealing with the stress of everyday life.

Please take the time to do your job properly and most of all, SAFELY.

Now, for the accident victims, those of which are being forced to go to the Greensboro District office to be "talked to" by a group of upper management that doesn't know or want to admit just how difficult our jobs are, I must let each of you know this union does not endorse their actions nor the berating, bullying, harassing and just downright disrespectful behavior that some carriers have been exposed to recently. This group is attempting to stop accidents from occurring by threatening termination, shaming and bullying carriers into a state of sheer panic. How SAFE is that?

I must address the subject for those of you who may be subjected to these visits in the future. If you are unfortunate enough to have to go before this "firing squad", my advice is to listen to what they have to say, recognize why accidents are such a serious matter and if at ANY MOMENT during this visit you feel as if the "talk" could possibly lead to discipline, invoke your Weingarten Rights. Tell them: ***"If this discussion in any way can lead to my being disciplined; terminated; or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative or steward be present at this meeting. Without representation present, I choose not to participate in this discussion. I will cooperate, but I will not answer any questions until such time as a representative is present."***

The ADRs and I have received several statements from carriers who have been before this group at the District and the content and demeanor put towards them has been unbelievable.

Accident victims are already having to deal with the issue of having the accident in the first place. Now it appears upper management wants to use these meetings to threaten and or terminate carriers, make an example of them and get the word out so that accidents will not be reported.

The Handbook ***EL 814 Safety, Health and Environment*** states in part, under Section 814 Employee Rights and Responsibilities, Section 814.2 Responsibilities: Part f. ***"Reporting to their supervisors immediately any accident or injury in which they are involved, regardless of the extent of injury or damage."*** This means you are responsible for reporting all accidents, period. And, you should not have to fear for your job for reporting an accident, either.

Related to discipline, please read Article 16 and 30.2.M of our National Agreement (EL 902). If you ever do receive any form of discipline you should contact your steward or representative and file a timely grievance (within 14 days of receiving the discipline).

If you have any questions or concerns please contact one of the ADRs or myself.

How To File a Grievance:

(See Example PS Form 8191 on next page)

Fill out the sections with red dots (# 1 – 4, except 3b & 3c).

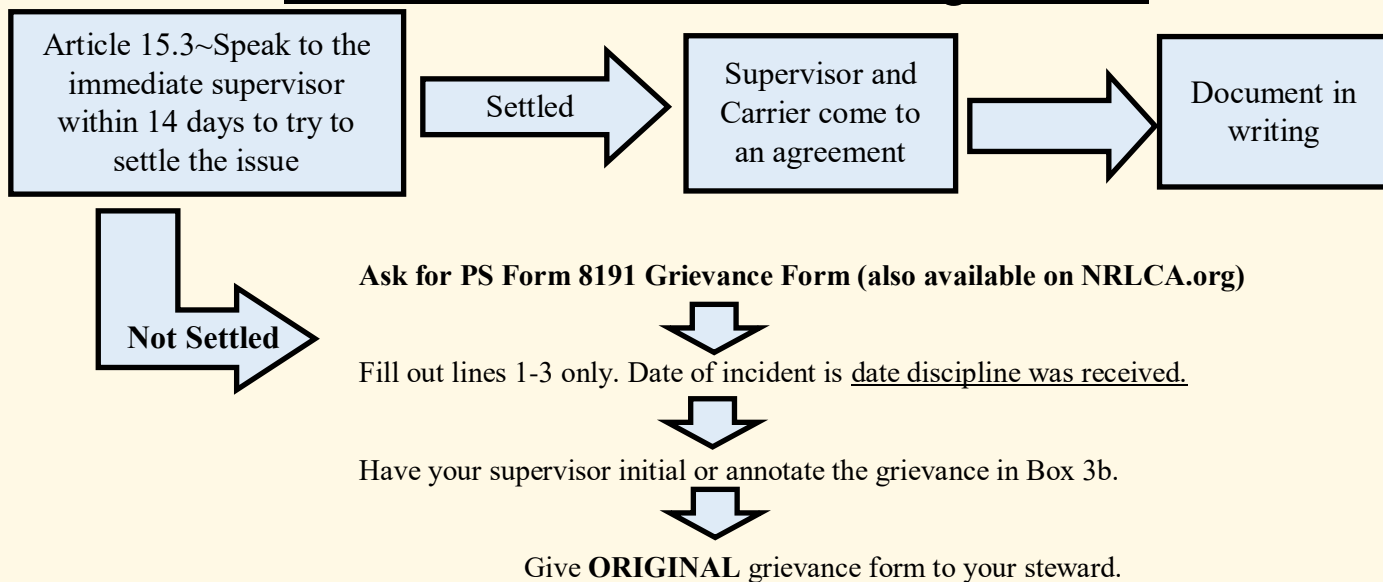
The date of incident (3a) is the date that discipline was received for a discipline grievance or the date the incident occurred in a contractual grievance.

Management fills out the sections with the blue dots (#3b & 3c) when you actually file the grievance with them.

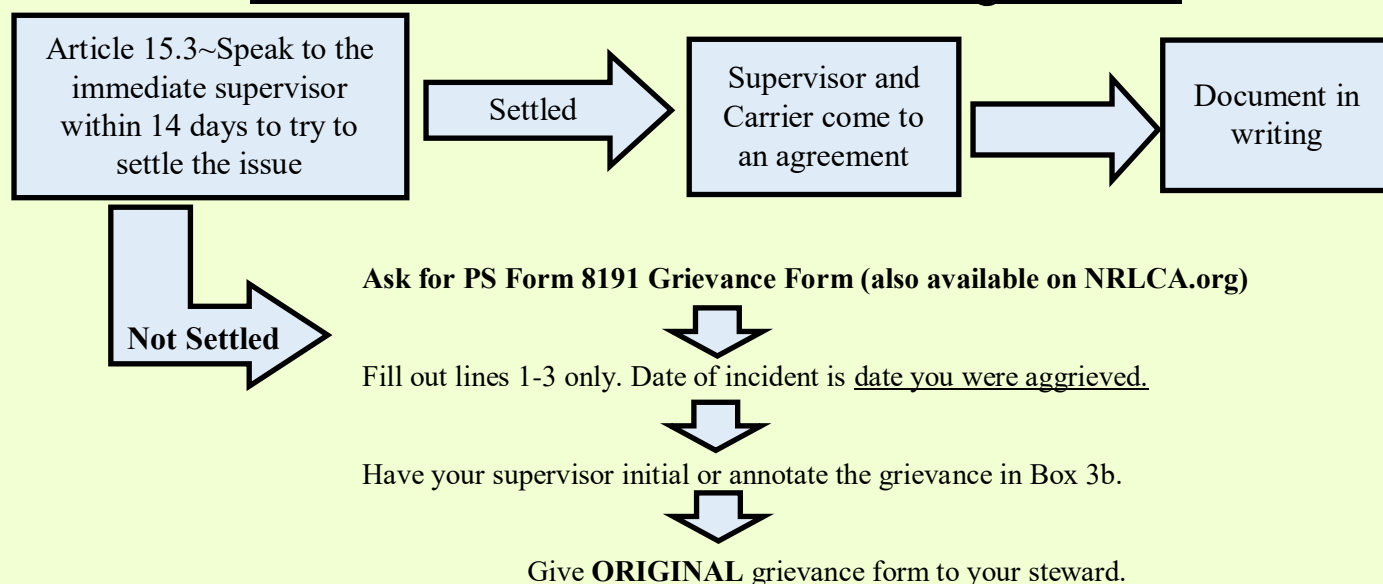
Once you have filed, let management make themselves a copy and you **MUST** get the original to the steward or representative immediately along with a signed and dated statement telling your side of the issue. The steward or representative only has 10 days from the date in 3b to setup a meeting with management.

Never hesitate to contact your steward or representative with questions if you need assistance.

How to file a **DISCIPLINARY** grievance



How to file a **CONTRACTUAL** grievance



Example ~ How To File a Grievance



USPS-NRLCA Joint Step 1 Grievance Form

1a. Grievant's Name (Last, first, middle initial) ● <u>Your Name</u>		1b. Grievant's EIN (Employee Id Number) ● <u>Your EIN #</u>	
1c. Grievant's Title, Designation Code, and Route No. ● <u>Regular, PTF, RCA or ARC; 71, 76, 74, 78, 79 or 70-5; & RR #</u>		1d. Telephone No. (include area code) ● <u>Your contact #</u>	
1e. Grievant's Mailing Address ● <u>Your complete address</u>			
2a. Post Office ●	2b. Branch/Station ●	2c. Telephone No. (include area code) ● <u>Post Office #</u>	
3a. Date of Incident ● <u>Date received</u>	3b. Date of Step 1 Discussion with ● (Filing date) <u>Supervisor initials</u>	3c. Was Grievance Timely? (Explain) ● <u>Yes, Supervisor initials</u>	
4. Issue (Complaint) ● <u>One line in the form of a Question.</u> <u>Example: Was there just cause for a Letter of Warning?</u>			
5. Contract Provisions (Articles at issue) <u>DO NOT write anything here or below. This will be filled out by the Steward and Management at the Step 1 meeting. Your Statement should be included on a separate piece of paper to be given only to your steward.</u>			
6. Full, Detailed Statement of Undisputed Facts (Attachments, as necessary)			
7. Management's Full, Detailed Statement of Disputed Facts (Attachments, as necessary)			
8. Management Contentions			
9. Union's Full, Detailed Statement of Disputed Facts (Attachments, as necessary)			
10. Union Contentions			
11. Remedy Sought by the Union			
12a. Disposition (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> Settled <input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn <input type="checkbox"/> Sustained <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)		12b. Date of Disposition	
13. Signature of Installation Head of Designee and Telephone No.		14. Signature of Union Step 1 Official and Telephone No.	

PS Form 8191, March 2007

NORTH CAROLINA AUXILIARY OFFICERS

PRESIDENT L.E. WHITE

1336 Schoolhouse Road
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LEWhite1951@roadrunner.com

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MIKE MOOSE 237 Northview Drive Fayetteville, NC 28303 910-322-3917

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SECRETARY/TREASURER LILY GRAY 424 Wapiti Dr Spring Lake, NC 28390

CHAPLAIN MADISON HALL 9028 Main Street Godwin, NC 28344-8387

March 1st Deadline For National Scholarships

Auxiliary News

From
Roanoke Heath

I hope everyone had a safe and wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas season. Welcome to the new North Carolina Rural Letter Carrier Auxiliary year 2020. The year holds new hopes and new challenges for our Auxiliary.

We now have to be thinking about the new 2019-2020 scholarship season. Scholarships are available at both the state and national levels. Please encourage your child or grandchild to apply for these scholarships.


North Carolina gave out 19 scholarships last year at the Fall Booster. That is a great achievement for our state. I am going to tell you about the National Scholarships that are also available. They are:

1. **Smith Family Scholarship:** a \$1,000 scholarship that is awarded to a high school graduate or a student pursuing higher education. Applicants must be a child or grandchild of a rural carrier. This is a judged scholarship.
2. **Delbert "Lucky" Clark Memorial Scholarship:** Amount of \$2,500. Applicants must be a child or grandchild of a rural carrier. It is a drawn scholarship.
3. **National General Insurance Scholarship:** Amount of \$1,000. Applicants must be a child or grandchild of a rural carrier. It is a drawn scholarship.
4. **The Past National Officer Scholarship:** Amount of \$5,000 and is awarded to the child, grandchild, great-grandchild, spouse or member of the National Rural Letter Carriers Association. The applicant must be pursuing or planning to pursue higher education. This is also a judged scholarship.
5. **The Marie V. Mutchmore Scholarship:** this \$500 scholarship will be awarded to a child of a rural letter carrier that is also an active member in the Junior Organization. This is a judged scholarship.
6. **The Clara Gardner-Burch Scholarship:** two \$500 scholarships are awarded; one to a male applicant and one to a female applicant, pursuing a post-secondary education. Applicants must be the child of a rural letter carrier. This is a judged scholarship.
7. **Ian Etheridge Scholarship:** two \$500 scholarships are awarded; one to a male applicant and one to a female applicant, pursuing a post-secondary education. Applicants must be the child of a rural letter carrier. This is also a judged scholarship.
8. **NRLCA Auxiliary Discovery Scholarship:** \$1,000 is awarded to the child or grandchild of a rural carrier. Preference is given to applicants who have participated in the Junior Organization. This is a drawn scholarship.

Each scholarship has its own form that must be completed for consideration. National application forms can be found on the NRLCA website at <https://www.nrlca.org/Content/NRLCANationalAuxiliary> Please fill out completely and read instructions carefully. Mail to the correct address as each application has a different address for submission. The National scholarship applications are due by March 1, 2020.

The North Carolina scholarship applications are available on the North Carolina website at <https://www.ncrlca.org/aux-juniors/> and are due by June 1, 2020. You can also contact any National or State Auxiliary Board member to receive the scholarship applications.

FEBURARY 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 PP-4
2	3	4	5	6	7 Pay Day	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15 PP-5
16	17  President's Day	18	19	20	21 Pay Day	22
12	24	25	26	27	28	29 PP-6

MARCH 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6 Pay Day	7
8 Day Light Savings Time Begins	9	10	11	12	13	14 PP-7
15	16	17 	18	19	20 Pay Day	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 PP-8
29	30	31				

Dates to Remember

January 1	New Year's Day	February 17	President's Day
January 20	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday	March 8	Daylight Savings Times Begins
January 25-27	South Atlantic Conference (SAC)	March 17	Saint Patrick's Day
February 1-7	RCA Appreciation Week	April 12	Easter
February 14	Valentines Day		



NCRLCA
424 WAPITI DR
SPRING LAKE NC 28390-1562

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 387
FAYETTEVILLE NC
28302

Relief Carrier Appreciation Week

February 1-8, 2020

The NCRLCA National Board has designated the week of February 1– 8, 2020 as Relief Carrier Appreciation Week.

Your North Carolina board wants to say thank you for all you do! We are encouraging all regular carriers to please take the time to show our North Carolina leave replacements that their hard work, dedication and commitment to the job does not go unnoticed. As we wrap up this monster of a holiday season (the number of parcels is not known yet but is expected to be a new record), it is an especially good time to thank them. Actually, we should appreciate them all through the year!

Please send pictures of your RCAs, ARCs and/or Office Appreciation Party to Vicki Gray (address and email are on page 2), for possible publication in the next issue of the NCRC.



Van Heath hands Mike Shue his money for membership with the North Carolina Armed Forces Veterans Club at the Fall Booster in Kitty Hawk.