



Volume 40 Issue 3 Circulation 5000 Edited in Spring Lake NC November December 2023

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

## **Open Season November 13–December 11**

During the annual Open Season, eligible employees can enroll, change plans or plan options, change enrollment type, or cancel their enrollment in the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Program or in the Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). Employees can also re-enroll or newly enroll in the Federal Flexible Spending Account (FSAFEDS) Program

The 2023 Open Season (for the 2024 Plan Year) begins on Monday, November 13, 2023, and runs through Monday, December 11, 2023.

We know that this is very busy time of year for rural carriers so please do your research and make your changes early. You do not want to wait and perhaps miss the deadline. That deadline is 11:59 PM Eastern Time on Monday December 11th.

We want to remind you to also compare coverage within your plan. This year, with the Rural Carrier Benefit Plan (RCBP), the Self Plus Family has a lower cost to the member than the Self Plus One plan. RCBP members in Self Plus One are highly recommended to change to the Self Plus Family plan for lower premiums.

Please read pages 9 & 10 in this issue for more info and check the National website at [www.NRLCA.org](http://www.NRLCA.org) current updates.

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Pay  
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Durham/Orange	12	Caswell/ Rockingham	14	Peach Belt	5
Sandhills	20	Central Carolina	16	Randolph/Montgomery/ Davidson	42
Sea Level	23	Mecklenburg	38	Roanoke/Beaufort/Hyde/Pitt	44
Wake	24	Rutherford/Polk/Henderson/ Transylvania	47	Union	54
Tri-County/N Wayne	25				

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

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**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](http://www.NCRLCA.org)  
for all the latest news.

This month the password will be I\_@mUR\_S@nt@  
The password will be changed to the above on November 30, 2023.

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

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*Happy Holidays to All*

*From Your State Board*





**President**  
*Audrey Solomon*

## End Of The Year

Hello everyone. First, I would like to THANK ALL VETERANS. Wow, it is hard to believe that it is the end of the year. As we look back on 2023, there are good and not so good memories.

After two mini mail surveys, some routes gained, however; some still didn't change very much. It seems we are on the right track, however; it is still a work in progress. We are going to have to keep informed about the changes because the postal service has only given management the right to train carriers. KEEP INFORMED AND KEEP YOUR INTEGRITY

Thank you, Stewards, (DR's, ADR's (full/part), Area, and Local) for standing strong even through all this new uncharted territory. I know information is changing each day.

As you read this, we have held our last state meeting. I hope you were able to join us at Shell Island and get as many of your questions and concerns answered.

As we have become witness to in the news, SOLIDARITY within Unions makes changes happen. Nothing changes overnight but at least we have a voice. We cannot strike like other unions, but we can

stand together to make change.

Remember all leave over sixty-five days (520 hours) if not used by January 12, 2024, will be forfeited. Please keep this in mind. See page fourteen in the October issue of National Magazine.

Open Season for Health benefits will run from November 13 to December 11, 2023. RCAs and ARCs please remember you now have access for Dental and Vision.

We would like to THANK Edith and Harold Knight for allowing us into their home. Harold, it was a pleasure and an honor to present you with your fifty-year pin/award and the North Carolina Hall of Fame award. We truly THANK YOU for your dedication and service to this association.

It is now the season for family. I would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year. Enjoy your family and friends during this time.

The next meeting will be the South Atlantic Conference in Atlanta, Jan 27-29 at Sonesta Atlanta Airport North. Members from the National Office will be in attendance and available for questions and answers.

On a final note, I ask each of you to be safe and beware of your surroundings. SAFETY FIRST



# Commitment

Committed to finish.

As an adolescent, I was not really big on sports, but one day while in Health and PE, the teacher instructed us to go around the track for the entire 45 minutes of class. Some ran, most walked, most of the girls talked and giggled as girls do as we pass the time away. But one day, during class Mr. Hastings, that was his name, instructed us to run around the track just to see how fast we could go. We had no idea that was his way of building his track team. And after seeing my form and my stamina, Mr. Hasting and I had a conversation about me joining the track team at J.M. Smith Junior High School. I entertained it for a little while. I said sure why not?

I committed myself to waking up at 5:30 and running around the block every morning just to build strength and endurance. This commitment awarded me the opportunity to compete in the 440 relay, the 400 meters, and the 880 relay.



This was my newfound love. And because of my commitment to Track and Field, I became a huge fan of the Summer Olympics, especially Track and Field.

I tried to watch all the races whether it was the marathon or sprint. Seeing athletes who have trained for years race in front of a worldwide audience and are known as the best in the world.

One of the most memorable moments in Olympic history was in the 1992 Barcelona games.

Derek Redmond, a British athlete was set to run the 400-meter semi-finals. Everyone was set in their block, then the gun was fired, and the runners took off. About halfway, Derek tore his hamstring, but he was determined to finish the race.

Not knowing the severity of his injury, he shrugged everyone trying to help him because he would be

## Chaplain's Message

*Pamela Stanley*  
Chaplain



disqualified from the relay. The pain became too great. Someone came running up behind him and when Derek saw that it was his father, he began to cry and lean on his dad as he continued to limp in his lane. His father jogged holding up his son through the finish line.

Derek finished last and was disqualified because his father helped him, but he finished the race.

No one remembers who won that day, but everyone remembers Derek Redmond and his father finishing the race together. Persevering through pain, anguish, disappointment, and heartbreak.

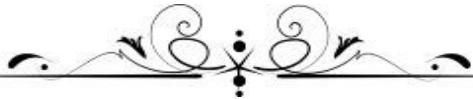
Derek's father had been running alongside his son for years. He supported him emotionally, spiritually, physically, and as with most parents financially. He saw the love and commitment Derek had for the sport and he was committed to his son because he loved him.

Commitment goes beyond love. You can love something or someone but your commitment to it/ them can fluctuate between 0 to 100%.

Commitment is the perpetual action that follows the promise to do; it is to "do."

***"I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got."***

***Paul***



## Obituaries

Mary Robeson, 68, of Catawba, passed away on September 11, 2023, at her home after an extended illness.

Mary was born on July 6, 1955, in Hampton, Virginia, to the late Laurance Bernard August Jr. and Carolyn Jones August. Mary was a mail carrier for the USPS and was of the Baptist faith.

Those left to cherish her memory include her husband, Gordon Robeson; two sisters, Kim Downing and Diane August.

## NCRLCA Dues for 2022-2023

Regular, PTF...Cash.....	\$814.00
1187...Bi-Weekly.....	\$31.31
Retired.....Cash.....	\$115.00
1187R...Monthly.....	\$9.58
73, RCA, RCR, ARC.....Cash	\$273.00
1187.....Bi-Weekly.....	\$10.50

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.



### Safety

Brian Hamlett  
Executive Committeeman

## Be Safe During the Holiday Season

We are in the middle of another holiday season and safety should be your number one priority. Long days, heavy parcel loads, and RCA shortages have made the past several holiday seasons particularly difficult. This year is much the same, so it's important that you take steps to keep yourself safe. When delivering after dark (or early morning) keep some safety tips in mind.

- Have your amber light flashing
- Wear your badge and use other methods to identify yourself.
- Blow your horn. This can notify the customer as well as alerting dogs that may pose a risk
- Use a flashlight or headlamp to help identify tripping hazards

- If you use lights in your vehicle to read mail, make sure it does not hinder your driving.

These are just a few tips that can help you when delivering during our most stressful season. If Management is trying to push you to unsafe actions to make the numbers, contact your steward. Your safety is the most important thing.

Hazards associated with winter weather include exposure to cold temperatures and wet, icy, or snow covered sidewalks and streets. Adverse weather conditions in winter lead to more vehicle collisions — according to reports from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the months of November, December, and January consistently show at least 25 percent more traffic fatalities than the other months of the year. For those working outdoors, injuries from winter weather conditions include slip-and-fall accidents and stress from exposure to cold temperatures and difficult conditions. During winter, the secret to preventing injuries and staying safe is preparation for and awareness of potential dangers. Dress appropriately for cold weather by wearing three light layers:

(Continued on page 7)

*(Continued from page 6) Holiday Safety*

1. An inner layer for wicking moisture away from your body.
2. A middle layer to insulate you from the cold.
3. An outer layer that repels wind, snow, and rain that you can remove, as needed.

Also, protect your hands, neck, and face with appropriate clothing, and wear warm, waterproof shoes or boots. Prolonged exposure to cold temperatures can cause your body to lose heat, which puts you at risk for hypothermia or frostbite. Frostbite occurs when skin is exposed to extreme cold for long periods, and the skin and underlying tissue freeze. The fingers, toes, and feet are most affected, but other extremities such as the nose, ears, and cheeks can also develop frostbite. At the first sign of frostbite, get out of the cold. Unless necessary, do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes. Do not rub the frostbitten area because it will cause more damage. Warm the affected area using body heat or by immersing it in warm water; avoid using a heating pad, heat lamp, or the heat of a stove, fireplace, or radiator for warming because direct heat can burn damaged tissue. Drink warm beverages to replace lost fluids. In case of severe frostbite, seek medical attention. Snowy and icy conditions increase the likelihood of slips, trips, and falls, which result in pain, injury, and lost productivity. Proper footwear with good tread is essential to walk safely on slippery surfaces. Prevent slips, trips, and falls with the following tips:

- Wear grippers (ice cleats).
- Walk with care and take short steps.
- Finger mail only when it is safe to do so.
- Take extra precautions when entering and exiting your vehicle.
- Use handrails on steps.

Wait for vehicles to stop completely on snow- or ice-covered roadways before crossing the street.

We are an essential part of the communities we serve and as such we are expected to perform in all kinds of conditions. Whether driving your own vehicle or a Postal owned vehicle, it's up to you to make sure it is up to the task that conditions demand. Wet and icy road surfaces, longer periods of darkness, and poor visibility from snow, rain, and fog create driving hazards during the winter months. Prepare for driving in harsh weather with the following tips:

- Maintain your vehicle and tune up the engine for winter.
- Notify Management when a Postal owned vehicle doesn't meet Notice 76 standards.
- Keep good treads on your tires.
- Make sure your lights function properly.
- Add anti-freeze and windshield wiper fluid, if necessary.
- Replace worn wipers.
- Clear ice and snow from windows, headlights, and the hood and roof of your car before starting out and repeat as needed.

Keep an emergency kit in your car with the following supplies:

- Cat litter or sand.
- An ice scraper or snow brush.
- A small shovel.
- Extra clothes and blankets.
- Non-perishable food.

I hope you all stay safe this peak season and I want to wish you all Happy Holidays and a prosperous New Year.

# Saving For Your Retirement

One of the surest ways to reach a financially comfortable retirement is to prepare ahead by saving through your employer's savings plan. Some retirement experts estimate that you'll need 10 times your final year's salary to maintain your lifestyle in retirement--which may last 20 to 30 years.

That may sound daunting. But the following key steps can help you get there:

- Save early, as compound interest works in your favor the younger you are.
- Save as much as you can. Even \$20 a check is better than not saving at all.
- Increase your contributions when you can, such as after you receive a contractual raise or COLA.
- Always be sure to receive the full amount of employer matching contributions.

## Finding money to invest

Life's current financial demands can make it difficult to save. But sometimes little things add up. For instance, dining out less frequently or renting videos instead of going to a movie could save you \$10, \$20 or more a week. Try instead of a soft drink or adult beverage, order water one time when you go out to a restaurant. You'll be surprised how this could add to your long-term savings.

One of the easiest ways to save is through automatic deductions from your paycheck to your savings plan. This takes away the temptation to spend the money, and chances are that you won't even notice it after a while.

Whether you are putting cash in envelopes, your own investment account or Thrift Savings Plan, please start something towards your retirement now. The longer you wait, the fewer years it will have to grow.

My own personal experience watching an investment grow happened when I quit smoking in 2007, I saw how much I was spending on cigarettes and needed to find a good use for those funds. It was

## Retirement

*Jay Schreiber*  
*Executive Committeeman*



also prior to having career status and access to Thrift Savings Plan, so I opened a ROTH IRA depositing \$75 every two weeks. It didn't hurt my budget since I was already spending the money. After 4 years I stopped the deposits to focus on buying a house. The ROTH account balance didn't seem like much, but was better than it going up in smoke. Jump forward 12 years later and it has grown over 400% without any more deposits.

*"Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago."*

Warren Buffett

## Reminder

**Membership in the NRLCA terminates upon retirement.**

**Retirees must reenroll to remain a member of the union.**

**Please complete PS Form 1187 R to remain a member.**





## Rural Carrier Health Benefit Plan

*Tracy Greer*  
Executive Committeeman

### It's Time For Open Season

Open season is among us, and it is time to review and make changes to your insurance. This will be the time to look at Dental and Vision Insurance as well and make any changes to your current plan.

If you have the Rural Carrier Benefit Plan (RCBP), congratulations, as you have the one of best insurance plans on the market. If you don't, I strongly recommend giving it a look.

Open season will open on November 13th, 2023 and will close on December 11th, 2023.

The RCBP is the only plan that offers 100% cancer coverage, that's right, 100% coverage. No copays and no deductibles! This will allow you to focus on getting better instead of stressing over Doctor and Hospital bills.

The plan saw very minor increases and the self-option only increased 1 cent. There are numerous enhancements to the plan for 2024:

1. Enhanced infertility Coverage
2. Enhanced the Healthy Maternity Program
3. Restructured Wellness Incentives Program
4. Added LabCorp as another option for Biometric Screening
5. Enhanced Gender affirming care coverage

As you can see, Aetna and the RCBP are working very hard to provide a plan that meets our needs at an affordable rate. There are many other benefits to this plan, and you can see those in their entirety at [www.RCBPHealth.com](http://www.RCBPHealth.com).

Some highlights of the RCBP are the following:

- ▶ Low in network calendar year deductibles
- ▶ Low in network copayments including \$0 for Telehealth, Teledoc, and lab work through Quest and LabCorp
- ▶ Low prescription drug copayments
- ▶ 100% Cancer coverage
- ▶ 24 Hour Nurse Advice Line
- ▶ Health Coaches
- ▶ Wellness Incentives

There are many resources and programs available at no cost with the RCBP and at a great price point in terms of premium when compared to other plans.

*(Continued on page 10)*

### Premiums for the Rural Carrier Benefit Plan

The amount shown under "Your Share" is the maximum amount you will pay.

Enrollment Type	Enrollment Code	Premium Rate			
		Biweekly		Monthly	
		Government Share	Your Share	Government Share	Your Share
High Option Self Only	381	271.43	130.99	588.10	283.81
High Option Self Plus One	382	586.50	251.57	1270.75	545.07
High Option Self & Family	383	646.18	234.11	1400.06	507.24

To review plan rates for all FEHB health plans please go to [www.opm.gov/FEHBpremiums](http://www.opm.gov/FEHBpremiums)

*(Continued from page 9) RCBP*

You can view plans, compare rates and benefits at [www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/plan-information/compare-plans/](http://www.opm.gov/healthcare-insurance/healthcare/plan-information/compare-plans/).

If you have any questions please contact me via phone or email at [NCRLCAhealth@gmail.com](mailto:NCRLCAhealth@gmail.com). I am more than happy to guide you through the process.

I also have good news for RCAs and ARCs! The USPS has made the same Dental and Vision Insurance that career carriers can purchase available to RCAs and ARCs.

You can enroll for these benefits during Open Season. While Health and Dental Insurance are not my area of expertise, these are great plans with great rates. Please take advantage of this opportunity to further enhance your level of healthcare.

On a personal note, I hope you stay safe and healthy through peak season. Get plenty of rest, eat well, and stay hydrated. We will be working very hard and putting in long hours through the Holidays.

I would like to wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving and from my home to yours, Merry Christmas.

## **45th Annual South Atlantic Conference Sonesta Atlanta Airport North 1325 Virginia Ave, Atlanta, GA January 27-29, 2024**

The 45th annual meeting of the South Atlantic Conference (SAC) will be held January 27-29, 2024 at the Sonesta Atlanta Airport North at 1325 Virginia Avenue in Atlanta, Georgia. A special event room block rate of \$101.00 (plus tax) is available with complimentary parking. Reference event code "012324SATL" when placing your reservation! The cut-off date for reservations is January 10, 2024, to be eligible for the group rate. The reservations number is 1-800-766-3782.

If you need information, know that this seminar is information central. We strive to give you the best and latest information available in a concise and informational manner. We invite speakers that are the most informed on both craft and management matters.

Registration will be open from 10 a.m. Saturday through Monday's session. Seminars will begin Saturday afternoon and continue throughout the weekend. There will be a Worship Service Sunday morning, followed by the opening session. The anticipated agenda includes representation from Atlanta Postal Credit Union, National General Insurance, Rural Carrier Benefit Plan, NRLCA legislative staff, Legal Counsel, NRLCA Auxiliary, and Provident Guild. NRLCA President Don Maston will address the conference and members of the National Board will be available for a Q & A.

There will be seminars on Constitution and Resolutions, retirement, TSP, a seminar for RCAs, and more. Monday's session will begin at 8:30 a.m. with remarks from USPS managers and one of your NROs followed by a Q & A session panel with USPS management and members of our National Board. The conference will adjourn no later than 12:00 p.m.

Prepare for your job by having the latest information you could possibly need. Attend SAC and be in the know!

--Phil Upchurch, 2023-2024 SAC President



**Legislative Representative**

*Van Heath*

# “Buy Back” Is Back!

On Thursday, October 19th, Derek Kilmer (D-WA) submitted H.R. 5995 into the record of the 118th Congress. The bill does not have an official title at this time. Its purpose is “To amend title 5, United States Code, to provide that civilian service in a temporary position after December 31, 1988, may be creditable service under the Federal Employees Retirement System, and for other purposes.”

That defines what we have been looking for in a bill to get credit for RCA time worked since 1988. Now you know as much as I do. The actual text of the bill will be released in the near future. We will have to wait on that for a little while.

Our biggest task is to write and or call our members of Congress and ask that they co-sponsor this bill, H.R. 5995.

The original co-sponsors were Representative Derek Kilmer (D-WA), Gerald Connolly (D-VA), David Valadao (R-CA), and Don Bacon (R-NE). This week we have had three more members sign on as cosponsors, they are Joaquin Castro (D-TX), Greg Casar (D-TX) and Henry Cuellar (D-TX).

We have fourteen members of Congress from North Carolina. We are not going to get all fourteen members to cosponsor this bill; but I would like for all of us to work together to see just how many of them we can get to sign on and support this effort to finally get what we deserve; credit for time worked.

“The National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association (NRLCA) would like to thank Congressmen Derek Kilmer, David Valadao, Don Bacon, and Gerry Connolly for introducing the bipartisan Federal Retirement Fairness Act,” said Don Maston, President, NRLCA. “The NRLCA fully supports the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, which will give rural letter carriers the opportunity to buy back credit

for service, something we have been advocating for a very long time. This bill ensures that rural letter carriers, and other federal employees, who began their employment as non-career workers and did not have the ability to make retirement contributions, are granted the opportunity to make catch-up retirement contributions so all of their time is accurately reflected as creditable service when they retire.”

There are letters on the NRLCA.org website and the NCRLCA.org website. These letters just need to have your name and address added to them. A few more words from you will always add to the impact.

On the NRLCA.org website, once you have logged in, click on the “Legislative” link. Then click on the “Legislative Updates” link in the box on the right side of the page. The Congressional Record page will open. At the bottom of the paragraph talking about H.R. 5995 is a link to the form letter to send to Congress.

There are links to other forms letters on that page that I hope you will consider sending to your Representative as well.

One last thing, please donate to your PAC. It gives us access to members of Congress that we might otherwise not have. Conversations lead to action.

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



**PAC CHAIR**  
*Brenda Gibbs*

# Sustaining Donors Have Another Chance at \$200 Drawing

By the time you read this article our Fall Booster will be over and we will all be looking forward to the Holidays and making plans for SAC.

The sustaining donor winner will be announced on our website.

It is very important for us to support our rural carrier union and PAC by being actively involved in both. I have listed all of our Representatives and Senators on the website along with their contact information. You can call or write their local office and let them know what legislation you support and why. HR 82/S 597 is the Social Security Fairness Act. HR 3721 is the USPS Shipping Equity Act.

Celeste and I are looking forward to an amazing new PAC year. We are continuing the sustaining donor contest. We will be awarding another \$200 to the winner at our State Convention. There are four ways to sign up. You can attach a voided check to

the form below, or if you do not use checks just include your bank routing number and your checking account number. You can also sign up online through Postal Ease and have it as a payroll allotment or you can call Postal Ease and sign up that way. You choose how much you can afford.

We have tons of new prizes for 2024. Don't miss any of the meetings as you could be the BIG WINNER. See you at SAC, your district meeting and the State Convention!!

**Please send PAC donations to:**

**NCRLCA PAC  
Brenda Gibbs  
5877 Turner Smith Road  
Browns Summit, NC 27214**

## ***BECOME A SUSTAINING DONOR***

**Use this form for automatic PAC payments from your checking account.**



**I hereby authorize my bank to deduct from my checking account the monthly sum of: (circle one)**

**\$50                      \$25                      \$15                      \$10                      Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_**

**Employee ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_**

**State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please attach a voided check or include Bank Routing number along with your account number.**

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

# Signing up for PAC Withholding from your Paycheck

Active carriers may elect to use one of their three payroll allotments to donate every two weeks. You must sign up for withholding exclusively through PostalEASE.

Have readily available your **8-digit Employee ID Number** (on your paycheck stub) and your **4-digit USPS PIN or password**. If you don't have your USPS PIN you will need to call PostalEASE at: 877-477-3273. Press #1 for PostalEASE. When prompted, enter your employee identification number. When prompted for your pin, pause, and then press #2. Your PIN will be mailed to your address on the next business day.

## Steps for signing up Online:

1. Add your Employee I.D. number to the end of the 9-digit NRLCA-PAC Account (**163055555**) to create your PostalEASE account number.
2. Now you are ready to log into: **liteblue.usps.gov**.
3. Enter your employee I.D. number and password, then click "log on."
4. Click on "PostalEASE."
5. Click on "I Agree."
6. Enter your Employee I.D. and password again and log in.
7. Click on "Allotments/Payroll NTB."
8. Click on "Continue."
9. Click on "Allotments."
10. Enter the following Financial Institution routing number: **051400549**
11. Enter your NRLCA account number, followed by your Employee I.D.#:**163055555** \_\_\_\_\_, (No hyphens, No breaks, 17 digits total).
12. Enter account type as "Checking."
13. Enter the amount you want to be taken out **every two [2] weeks** — not the amount you want to give yearly.
14. Click on "Validate."
15. Click on "Submit."
16. Click on "print page" to see and print your confirmation number for your records.

## Steps for signing up by Phone:

1. Dial 1-**877-477-3273 (1-877-4PS-EASE)**.
2. Press "1" for PostalEASE.
3. When prompted, enter your Employee ID Number.
4. When prompted, enter your USPS Pin Number.
5. When prompted, choose option #2 to select Payroll Allotments.
6. When prompted, choose option #1 to select type of Allotment. When prompted, press "2" to continue.
  1. When prompted, press "3" to continue to 'ADD' the allotment.
  2. When prompted, add routing number: **051400549**.
  3. When prompted, add the NRLCA-PAC account # followed by your Employee ID Number. It should look like: **163055555** \_\_\_\_\_. No hyphens, no spaces, 17 digits total. If correct, Press "1."
  4. When prompted, press "1" for checking.
  5. When prompted for the dollar amount of the allotment, enter the amount of your choice to be deducted bi-weekly (**per pay period**) using the \$ \_\_ 00 format. Press "1" if correct.
  6. When prompted, press "1" to process.
  7. Record the confirmation number given for your records and note the date the first allotment will take place. Press "1" to repeat, or press "9" to hang up.



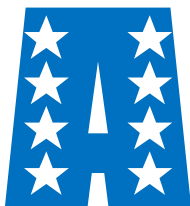
## Auto-Home Insurance

*Carlton Crutchfield*

When shopping for auto insurance to cover work vehicles, here are a few key factors to consider:

1. As you are using your vehicles for business purposes, it is important to obtain a policy that offers coverage specifically tailored for vehicles used for business activities.
2. Determine the specific coverage options you need for your work vehicles. This may include liability coverage, collision coverage, comprehensive coverage, uninsured/underinsured motorist coverage, and any additional coverage specific to your business needs.
3. Research and compare quotes from multiple insurance providers that specialize or have experience working with businesses in your industry.
4. Consider the appropriate policy limits for your work vehicles. This refers to the maximum amount your insurance provider will pay for a covered claim. Ensure that the policy limits are sufficient to protect your vehicle in the event of an accident or damage.
5. Determine the deductible amount you are comfortable with. The deductible is the amount you will have to pay out of pocket before your insurance coverage kicks in. A higher deductible typically results in lower premium costs, but it is important to choose a deductible that you can afford in the event of a claim.
6. Inquire about any available discounts or opportunities to bundle your auto insurance with other insurance policies you may need. This can help you save on premiums.
7. Carefully review the terms and conditions of each insurance policy you are considering. Compare coverage, limits, deductibles, and premiums to make an informed decision.
8. If you are unsure about the specific insurance needs for your work vehicles, consider consulting with an insurance agent who specializes in your specific auto insurance needs. They can provide guidance and help you find the best coverage. With that being said, give National General a call today at 1-888-325-7727 for your free quote and receive your \$10 e-gift card!!

REMEMBER to regularly review your auto insurance coverage to ensure it remains adequate for your specific needs.



**ARMED FORCES  
VETERAN'S CLUB**



The Armed Forces Veteran's Club wants to say **THANK YOU** to all our rural carrier Veterans this Veteran's Day. Thank you for your service.

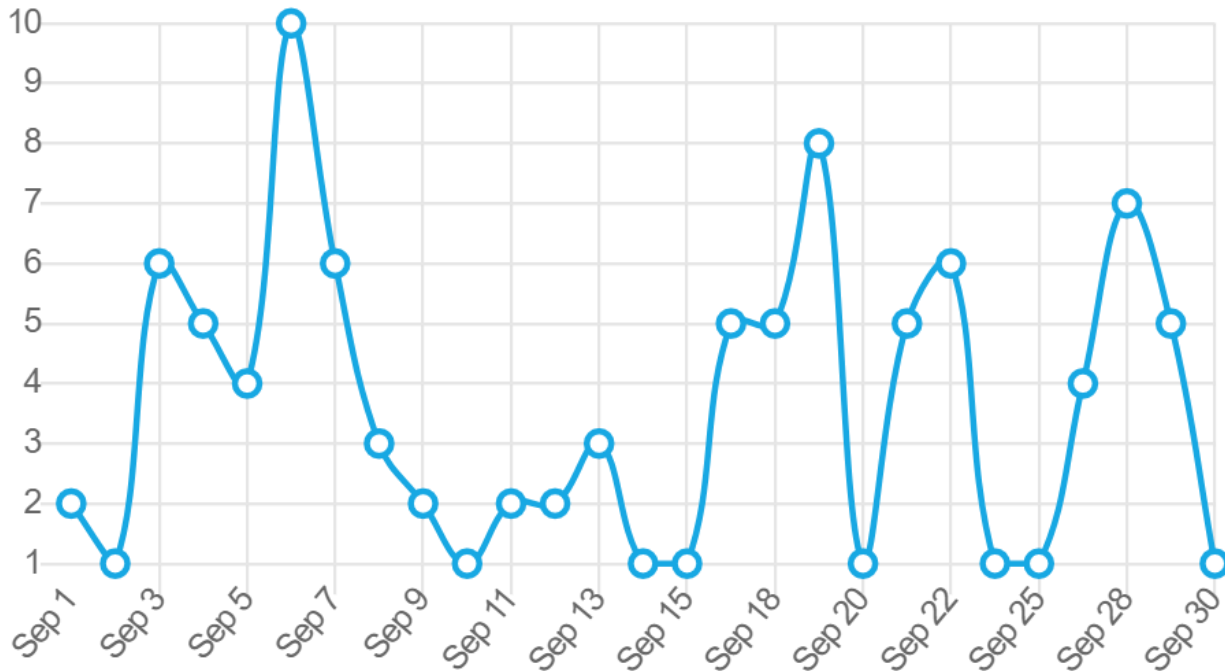
We also would like to wish everyone a wonderful holiday season.

Stay safe & enjoy your friends and family!

REMINDER: Membership is open to not only veterans but to anyone supporting the organization. Dues are \$10. If you would like to become a member of the AFVC please send your \$10 for this year's dues to Mike Shue at 325 Ed Weavers Road, Salisbury, NC 28146-8570.

# September Was Eventful!

Webmaster  
*Renee Johnson*



**SESSIONS 169 UP 72%**

**USERS 125 UP 52%**

**PAGEVIEWS 1599 UP 305%**

These are your stats for September 2023, which was quite busy.

In addition to the Mini-Mail Survey Notices, Payroll Check Errors, Direct Deposit Issues, and how to make sure you received compensation, Fall Booster and SAC announcements, several district meetings, and an EMA increase, I posted links to the new Pre-Career Insurance Benefits, Medicare Integration, and the MOU allowing Regular Rural Carriers to Volunteer to give assistance to other routes and make Amazon deliveries on their non-scheduled days. Whew! These posts were in addition to the normally scheduled posts, such as notifying you that the latest Newsletter is available online and listing the new Congressional Addresses.

Going forward, your NC State Board and Webmaster will continue to bring you the most up-to-date information, timely notification of events, and the news you can use to support your career.

In the meantime, as a reminder, should you need one, you can download a [Grievance form 8191 here](#) which is at the bottom of the Steward Operations page.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

# Rural Carrier Moments

## Harold Knight Receives Hall of Fame Award and Fifty Year Member Award

North Carolina President Audrey Solomon traveled to the home of Harold and Edith Knight to present Harold with two special Awards. The first award was the North Carolina Hall of Fame Award.

Mr. Knight is a former North Carolina Secretary-Treasurer. He served from 1988 to 2004 in this position, even after he had retired from delivering the mail.

After leaving the Secretary-Treasurers office Harold continued serving North Carolina as a Provident Guild Rep. and also as a NARFE Rep.

Harold also worked closely with former National Secretary-Treasurer Clifford Dailing. He encouraged the implementation of computers and was instrumental in developing a universal system for all the state secretaries across the country to use. The second award was for



50 years as a member of the NRLCA. Harold became a member of our union in September of 1973.

Thank you for your years of service Harold!

President Solomon presents Harold Knight with his 50 Year Award.



Harold Knight, center, with friends Owen Moore, left and Ellen Reavis, right joined President Solomon in congratulating Harold on his new awards.



# Rural Carrier Moments

## Carrier Michael Benson Recognized for Multi-Million Dollar Rural Reach Lead

North Carolina member Michael Benson, received a Certificate of Excellence from the Clayton Post Office in October.

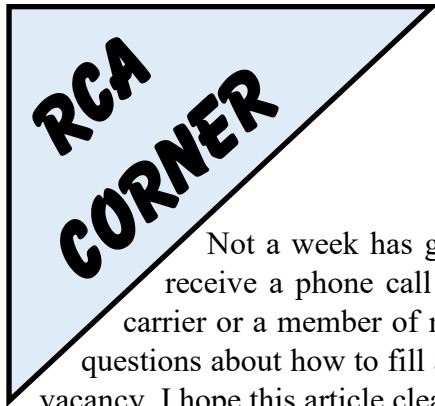
Michael's Rural Reach lead (on Route 21) brought in almost \$2.6 million dollars in new revenue for the USPS!

Michael started his career as a RCA in Zebulon in Nov 2011. He transferred to Clayton in June 2013. He became a regular on Route 21 in 2018.

Congratulations Mike!



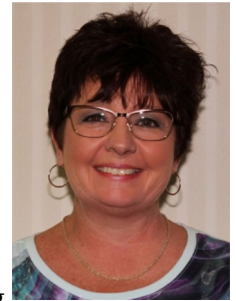
Clayton Stewards James Cartwright and Tammy Carroll pose for a picture during Steward Appreciation week.



# FILLING A LEAVE REPLACEMENT VACANCY

**Assistant District Representative**

*Gail Naillon*



Not a week has gone by that I don't receive a phone call from either a rural carrier or a member of management having questions about how to fill a leave replacement vacancy. I hope this article clears up the confusion and the myth that "I can write a letter and request to be on a hold down."

Article 30.2.E of the National Agreement addresses what management should be doing when an RCA is needed. There are several different situations that can cause a vacancy in the leave replacement ranks. Everyone's favorite should be when the senior RCA makes regular! Vacancies also occur when RCAs resign, get terminated, converts to a PTF position, etc. Unfortunately, in many offices nothing happens expeditiously, or the wrong things happen. Below is the correct way the situation should be handled when a vacancy occurs.

First, if an office has PTF rural carrier's then the leave replacement position can be added to one of the PTF strings. Remember a PTF string can consist of 2 to 5 K routes.

Second, if your office does not have PTF rural carriers, the primary assignment that is vacant must be offered by seniority to every qualified leave

replacement in that office, including RMPO's, stations and branches. Let's use Durham, NC as an example. Durham has 5 stations and branches and when the Rt. 5 RCA becomes regular the Postmaster, or his designee should approach every RCA in all 5 stations by seniority and offer the primary leave position of Rt. 5. Once the Postmaster or designee reaches an RCA that says yes to Rt.5, the process for filling the relief position for Rt. 5 is complete however the process starts over because the RCA who accepted Rt. 5 position just vacated his position on another route. Until this "round robin" of offering RCA positions is complete management cannot hire for a leave replacement. In a small office such as Cherokee where there are only two or three routes all of this can be accomplished in about 10 or 15 minutes. In an office with multiple stations or branches or RMPO's or even an office that has a lot of rural routes the process can take days to complete.

Third, let us assume that no RCA in Durham wanted the leave replacement position on Rt. 5 and management chose not to assign Rt.5 to a PTF rural carrier. Management can now hire off the hiring list to fill this vacancy.

Last of all, we will assume that management would not or could not hire Rt.5. Let's assume that six months have passed and the regular carrier on Rt. 5 must have a surgical procedure that will leave them at home and out of work for more than 30 calendar days and possibly up to a year. Article 30.2.E in the National Contract

*(Continued on page 22)*

## Open Season

RCAs & ARCs can now enroll in the Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) in addition to Health Insurance.

Enroll during Open Season, from November 13 until December 11. To enroll, go to [www.benefeds.com](http://www.benefeds.com) or call 1-877-888-FEDS.

Please consider taking advantage of this opportunity to further enhance your level of healthcare.

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## North Carolina District Representative

*Bethany Small*

# Christmas Pay

It's hard to believe that another Peak Season is upon us, but it is! This editions article we will discuss the Christmas Overtime procedures and how you might be affected by them.

There are 2 types of overtime in the Rural Craft: FLSA overtime and Christmas Overtime. FLSA overtime is applicable throughout the year when more than 12 hours is worked in a day and when more than 56 hours are worked in a week.

You might be wondering 'how is Christmas overtime different?' Let's go over the basics.

Per Article 9.2.K of the National Agreement 'the Christmas period begins on the first Saturday of December and terminates as specified in the Employer's Christmas Postal Bulletin.'

As an RCA with a Designation Code of 74, 78 or a PTF with a Designation code of 76, not much will change in terms of how you will be paid. An RCA or a PTF will be paid the evaluation for each route worked during a week provided their total weekly work hours do not exceed 40 hours. If your total work hours for the week exceed 40 hours, then you are compensated straight pay for all hours up to 40, and then time and half (overtime) for all hours worked after 40.

An RCA with a Designation code of 79 (assigned to an auxiliary route), is paid for **actual hours** worked during the Christmas Overtime period. Any work hours in excess of 40 are paid at the overtime rate.

A Regular Carrier (Designation Code 71, FLSA Code B) can earn Christmas Overtime under two circumstances:

1. Christmas Assistance – This is assistance provided

by the regular carrier on his or her relief day. All hours worked as assistance to the relief carrier on the relief day are entered into the 'Xmas Assist Work Hours' block in timekeeping. Examples of Christmas Assistance are:

- a) A regular carrier comes in on his or her relief day and helps the replacement carrier case the route.
- b) A regular carrier comes in on his or her relief day and carries part of his or her regular route.
- c) A replacement carrier carries part of a regular route due to heavy Christmas volume.

The following **are not** examples of Christmas Assistance:

- a) A regular comes in on his or her relief day and cases and carries his or her regular route.
- b) A regular carrier works 2 hours beyond the daily evaluation of his or her regular route.
- c) A regular carrier performs any work while assigned to an H or M route.

Remember that Regular Carriers can only perform Christmas

Assistance on their relief day, therefore only Regulars on J and K routes are eligible for Christmas Assistance Overtime.

2. Hours worked in excess of the route's evaluation - This is based on the total actual work hours for **the week**, not on individual days.

For example, if your route is a 45K with daily evaluation of 9 hours, overtime would be paid for all weekly hours over 45. In this instance, the daily work hours are not considered, but rather the cumulative total at the end of the week. A regular Carrier will not have compensation taken away if their weekly work hours are less than the routes evaluation.

Other differences include how we are paid for work on a relief day and how and when we use our X-Days.

*During the Christmas Overtime period, since the Regular is being paid actual time and they are on the clock from the moment they sign in until the moment they sign out, there is **no additional compensation** for a second trip.*

*(Continued on page 21)*  
November December 2023

During the period from the beginning of the Guarantee (October 7, 2023) through the last day of the Christmas overtime period, any X-Days earned on a DACA 3 must be used in the same pay period that it was earned. If the X-Day is not taken in the same pay period that the relief day was worked, then the carrier is paid a DACA 5 and there is no X-Day earned.

Also, no banked X-Days that were earned prior to the beginning of the guarantee periods can be used from the beginning of the Guarantee through the end of the Christmas Overtime period.

Another consideration is the Second Trip. Under normal circumstances, a second trip is performed after you serve the route and is paid as 2 minutes per mile, actual mileage (daily miles over 40 on POV) and actual loading time. During the Christmas Overtime period, since the Regular is being paid actual time and they are on the clock from the moment they sign in until the moment they sign out, there is **no additional compensation** for a second trip.

This doesn't mean that you won't be doing second trips, it means that you are already on the clock for the second trips so the actual 'second trip' compensation

*(Continued on page 22)*

## **Multifactor Authentication Now Required for Self-Service Profile**

To protect against rising cyberthreats, the Postal Service is now requiring employees to use multifactor authentication to access the Self-Service Profile portal.

Multifactor authentication, or MFA, is an identity verification method in which users provide two or more confirmation factors to gain access to an online account. It is frequently used by banks and other institutions dealing with sensitive personal information.

Employees who have already set up MFA on LiteBlue can sign in to LiteBlue as well as their self-service profile (SSP) using the same MFA. They will be asked to set up a security question after signing in.

Employees who have not set up MFA will receive a notification by mail in the coming weeks with instructions on how to do so.

New employees should follow the instructions in their USPS welcome letter or email to set up MFA.

Employees can use the SSP portal to update their password for accessing human resources online applications, add or change an email address, add or edit MFA preferences, and add or edit security questions.

Employees can update their PIN for interactive voice response transactions by using the Self-service PIN Reset application, which can be found on LiteBlue under the Employee Apps heading.

More information and support materials can be found by clicking on Multifactor Authentication on the LiteBlue sign-in page.

**REMINDER! You must have MFA set up to be able to bid on routes and access other functions on LiteBlue.**

**If you have not set up Multifactor Authentication, you will not be able to bid on any route!** The union has had multiple issues with carriers waiting until a route is open for bid to attempt to log in or use a PIN number that is from the initial hire date.

**You cannot get a new PIN number in time to bid if you wait until the last minute.**

Please take the necessary steps to get this set up if you have not already done so.

factors are not applicable.

The Christmas Period is very chaotic and stressful for all postal employees. While I understand that we need to get the mail delivered, please remember that you are responsible for your safety. Please do everything with intention and keep your safety and the safety of those around you in mind at all times.

Fatigue is a major contributor to workplace accidents and the conditions during this time of year increase the likeliness that we will be distracted or unable to pay attention to our surroundings like you usually would.

Do your best to eat healthy meals, get as much sleep as you can and drink lots of water.

We are understaffed and I know that many carriers out there feel like they must speed up to get everything done. Please remember your physical limitations!

Be safe and until next year, I wish you all a very happy and safe holiday season! May the new year bring health and happiness to you and your family.

Be safe!

states that management must again offer the position to every RCA in the office, in order of the longest period of continuous service in the office without regard to classification.

If leave replacement positions are not being properly offered in your office your first step is to make management aware of what the contract states and if they do not rectify the problem, then you need to contact the steward assigned to your office. This violation is no different than any of the other violations, you have 14 calendar days to initiate your grievance if management fails to honor our contract.

Don't be fooled when a manager tells you that you aren't entitled to a hold down or to switch your primary route on the matrix because your fellow RCA has given them a handwritten letter requesting to change routes. That is a misconception of our contract and we all need to be aware of the correct way!

It's your right and you need to fight for it!



## **Honoring All Veterans on Veterans Day**

***We thank you for your service and sacrifices. We are forever grateful!***

# Steward Annual Reports

## North Carolina District

### **Bethany K. Small** **District Representative**

This end of year report covers my Union activity from June 18, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

I have served as the North Carolina District Representative for the duration of this period. At the printing of this report, we have 6 Full-Time ADRs, 2 Part-Time ADRs, 18 Area Stewards and 101 Local Stewards for a total of 127 Stewards in the North Carolina District.

Over the last 12 months, we have conducted 4 New Local Steward Training Sessions and 16 Enhancement Trainings for existing Stewards. We held 4 ADR/Area Steward Training Zooms and met for District Leadership Training on 2 occasions. As our team has grown, we added Cliff Workman to our Full-Time staff, and we added 12 Area Stewards. We also saw the departure of Bonnie Arsenault, Renee Johnson, and Brenda Prevatte from our ADR ranks – we wish you all a very happy retirement!

I drove 15,478 miles in this period with 6,603 being in my POV and 8,875 in a rental vehicle. I rented a vehicle on 14 occasions and stayed overnight for 33 nights. During this period, I also travelled to 7 locations across the state to hold in-person RRECS Mini-Mail Survey trainings and held 4 RRECS Mini-Mail Survey training Zoom meetings and 2 district-wide Scanner Refresher training Zooms. I attended 6 EAS RRECS training sessions in Greensboro, Rocky Mount and Fayetteville during January and February 2022.

During the last 12 months I have attended 2 Investigative Interviews, processed 7 Step 1 grievances (4 contractual, 1

Emergency Placement, 1 Letter of Warning and 1 7-Day Suspension) and 36 Step 2 Grievances (5 Discipline including 2 Emergency Placements, 1 Notice of Removal, 1 14-Day Suspension, 1 Letter of Warning 31 Individual Contract). During this period, I also processed 21 Step 3 appeals.

I attended the NC state convention in June 2022 in Cherokee, and I attended 5 district meetings throughout the state over the course of the year. I had the pleasure of serving on the Constitution Committee for the National Convention in August of 2022. I attended a DR seminar in Kansas City, MO in October

2022 and a NC State Board meeting and the Fall Booster in November 2022. I met with HR to review Academy facilitators and training in October 2022, and the full-time ADRs joined me to meet with our new District Manager in December of 2022. I attended the South Atlantic Conference in Atlanta in January 2023. I also attended the 2023 NC State Convention planning meeting in Cherokee in March 2023 and I attended the 2023 NC State Convention in June of 2023.

I would like to thank our National Board for their confidence in me as the District Rep of the North Carolina District. I would like to thank the North Carolina state board for their support as well. I would like to thank our new Executive Committeeman, John Adams who has been a wonderful leader for the Atlantic Area and who continues to be a voice for the Rural Craft. I would like to thank Terry Miner, our Step 3 Representative, who has shown me such kindness and patience over the years. I want to thank every member of the NC Steward system - there is nothing easy about being a steward and I am incredibly proud of the team that we are building together! I also want to thank past National Officer and NC native Dennis Conley, who over the years has mentored and encouraged me. I am forever grateful for the opportunity to have worked with him and I wish him nothing but the best in retirement!

Thank you to my amazing husband Matthew, for his never-ending patience, love, and support.

And lastly, thank you to the Rural Carriers in the great state of North Carolina. You show up every day for your customers through everything that this last year has thrown at you. It is an honor to work for you and the rural craft.

Sincerely,  
Bethany Small

### **Jeff Essick** **Assistant District Representative**

This report includes my activities as Assistant District Representative for the NC District from June 18, 2022, through June 30, 2023.

During the past year, I attended the 2022 and the

*(Continued on page 24)*

*(Continued from page 23)* **Annual Reports**

2023 NC State Convention in Cherokee. I met telephonically and in person with local management on several occasions for Labor-Management Meetings and grievance hearings. Several Labor-Management meetings were held in-person, via Zoom and telephonically to discuss issues with District Management.

I was present in person and via telephone at 23 PDIs. Attendance has been a continuing issue since the pandemic. Discipline for attendance has been on the increase, as well. The declining number of available carriers has caused a major problem especially where our Leave Replacements are being worked/overworked and scheduled seven days a week.

I traveled a total of 8,301 miles on union business and required 10 nights of lodging. A total of 30 grievances at Step 1 and 180 at Step 2 were heard during this period. Twenty-four grievances were appealed to Step 3. As Assistant District Representative, I heard all Step 2 grievances for the entire NC District. I also attended Steward trainings in Goldsboro, Raleigh and Asheboro during the past year, including a couple of MMS RRECS Trainings in Greensboro, Burlington and Raleigh. I also attended several local district meetings.

As of June 30, 2023, Fifty-nine Step 2 Appeal grievances are pending, with some being heard awaiting a written decision and the remainder will be heard as soon as they can be scheduled. Ever since the two Districts were combined, and now with the Mini Mail Survey (MMS) Disputes taking so much time, District Labor Relations hasn't had enough representatives to properly schedule timely Step 2 hearings. Total grievances for the year are 269 including sixty-eight discipline, 168 contractual and 33 class action.

While adjudicating discipline grievances, especially at Step 2, I must mention the trend I've noticed within the past year of rural carriers forgetting how to conduct themselves, especially while at work. It is sad to see our carriers letting their emotions override their intelligence. Please go to work as scheduled, do your job correctly and make every effort to get along with others. Please don't bring your personal issues to work.

I wish to thank God first for everything. I must also thank my wife, LeAnne. I am very fortunate to have her continuing support and her willingness to sacrifice our time together to allow me to perform my duties. I would not be able to do this job without her loyalty and assistance. She is my constant companion and my attitude coach.

I wish to thank all those who have taken on the task of being a steward. I appreciate their hard work and dedication which allowed me to fulfill my obligation as Assistant District Representative. As always, it has been an honor and a privilege to serve this association and to be a part of such a vital function of the NRLCA.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeff Essick

**Kelly Kenny Futch**  
**Assistant District Representative**

The following is my end of the year report for work period June 8, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

The first RRECS evaluations are known! Some carriers received an evaluation that was a true reflection of their workload. Other carriers were shocked with the loss in their evaluation. A very few carriers maintained with only one hour loss or gain. I was one of the very few. My route gained one hour. Thank you to the multiple RCAs that carried Route 7 in Holly Ridge this year. Your diligence in proper scanning is much appreciated.

During the last 12 months, I have participated in 118 PDIs. The majority of the PDIs were on attendance. I processed 61 contractual grievances, 11 discipline and 9 class actions. I had 10 contractual sustained at step 1, 29 settled and 18 moved to step 2. I had 4 emergency placements, 2 7-day suspensions, 1 14-day and 3 removals. 10 of the discipline grievances were moved to step 2.

I traveled 8,325 miles in my POV and I rented a car on 2 occasions. I carpool with Bethany Small as often as I can. I had 17 overnights. I attended 2 District meetings. I participated in 4 new local steward training classes and 8 steward enhancement trainings. I attended the State conventions in Cherokee, National in Orlando, Fall Booster in Charlotte, and SAC in Atlanta. I participated in 6 mini mail survey classes for the carriers, and I sat in 4 EAS mini mail survey classes.

In March, I was invited to be a part in a Job Fair held in Wilmington at NC Works Career Center. Wilmington was hiring PTF rural carriers off the street! This is an extremely rare opportunity for someone to begin working for USPS in a career position. I was responsible for explaining the PTF position and benefits. We had over 40 applicants test for 10 positions. It was an exciting opportunity for

*(Continued on page 25)*



me. USPS considered the day a success.

I would like to thank the NC RLCA and the NRLCA for allowing me this privilege another year. And what a year it has been! RRECS or trainwreck either way we say it, it has been a learning experience for all of us. For the carriers that lost, please continue to work on giving yourself every scan you are due. Remember this is a mail count every day and you are the counter. For the carriers that gained, good for you! We waited for years to get these standards correct and you have been waiting a few years to see the increase in the evaluation.

Bethany, thank you for your unwavering dedication to the craft. To all my teammates, thank you for always helping me when I send out an SOS. To the 284 and 285 rural carriers, you work hard every day. We know this has been a difficult year. I am proud of you and I thank you for allowing me to be a part of your work life.

Respectfully,  
Kelly Kenny Futch

**Gail L. Naillon**  
**Assistant District Representative**

This end-of-year report covers my Union activity from June 18, 2022 thru June 30, 2023.

During the last year I sat in on 117 Pre Disciplinary Interviews. I processed 240 Grievances. 239 of my grievances were adjudicated at Step 1 and 1 was appealed to Step 2. There was 30 Disciplinary Grievances which consisted of 22 Letter's of Warning, 2 Seven Day Suspensions, 5 Fourteen Day Suspensions, 1 Notice of Removal. I had 207 Contractual grievances and 3 Class Action grievances

I attended both the 2022 and 2023 NC State Conventions in Cherokee and was a delegate both years. I attended the National Convention in Orlando, Florida where I was a delegate.

I attended 8 Labor/Management meetings. I assisted in 2 Job Fairs.

I attended 5 Steward Enhancement Trainings. I taught 4 local steward training classes.

I attended one meeting with the District manager. I attended 11 District Meetings

I traveled to San Antonio, TX for RRECS training.

I attended 11 Joint RREC's Trainings with management.

I had 21 nights of overnight lodging. I drove my personal vehicle 15,845 miles and I had 2 car rentals where I drove 450 miles.

I would like to thank the NC State Board along with the NRLCA National Board for their continuous support over the last year.

I want to thank Bethany for her never-ending positive words that encourage myself along with the other stewards to keep us motivated to do this job to the best of our abilities.

I want to give a special thanks to John Adams for always answering my calls and assisting me with his knowledge.

The biggest thanks goes out to all of the rural carriers in NC for their patience and understanding with all of the changes that have taken place this past year when dealing with RREC's. You guys are the true heroes of the postal service. Your hard work doesn't go unnoticed, and you are the reason that the Rural Craft is the best craft that the United States Postal Service has ever known!

Last but certainly not least, I want to thank my husband, Scott for his never-ending patience, love and support that he gives me daily that keeps me going.

Gail Naillon

**Ralph Fernandez**  
**Assistant District Representative**

This is my annual report from 18 June 2022 – 30 June 2023. During this time, I drove 10545 miles in my own vehicle, I drove 1127 miles in a rental for Union business. I had 9 overnight lodgings.

I attended 7 district meetings this year, the National Convention in Orlando, Florida, the State Convention in Cherokee, and I attended Steward Enhancement Training, the Mini Mail Survey Training via zoom and in person.

I assisted/conducted Local Steward Certification Trainings in North Carolina in August, November, and June of this year. I did Local Steward Enhancement Trainings in Charlotte, Burlington, Rocky Mount, and Fayetteville as well.

I attended 116 Pre-Disciplinary Interviews/ Investigative Interviews with carriers. I filed 15 Class Actions, appealing 2 of them settling/sustaining the other 13. I had 47 Individual Contract grievances all of which were settled or sustained. I had 28 Disciplinary Grievances which include 7 Notice of Removals. I appealed 1 which was settled at step 2 the remaining 6 were settled or sustained. I had 6 14 Day Suspension

(Continued on page 26)

Grievances all of which were settled with reductions. I had 3 7 Day Suspension Grievances all of which were settled with reductions. I had 6 Letter of Warning Grievances, which have all been settled with reductions. I had 7 Emergency Placement grievances all were settled rescinding the letter and returning the carriers back to work 2 of which had to be appealed to Step 2 and 1 of those were appealed to Step 3 for settlement. In total I had 90 Grievances.

I would like to thank my fellow Stewards; Local, Area, and ADRs for being apart of the team and helping to get issues resolved. I would like to thank Bethany Small for the opportunity to work as part of the team here in North Carolina. I hope we continue to do good things here.

Ralph Fernandez

## **Eddie D. Moss**

### **Assistant District Representative**

This end of year report covers my National Steward System duties for the National Rural Letter Carriers Association from June 18, 2022, through June 30, 2022. The duties and responsibilities for the Assistant District Representative (ADR) are clearly defined by the National Board. It has been my honor and privilege to serve as an ADR for the North Carolina District. The North Carolina steward system is a very strong team working for all rural carriers throughout the State. This team has been assembled by our District Representative, Bethany Small. I would like to personally thank her for the job she has done assembling this team and the leadership she has provided to each of us. We now have six full time ADRs, three part time ADRs, eighteen Area-Stewards, and numerous new local stewards.

This reporting period, I have attended numerous RRECS in-person trainings. I attended SAC, the NC State Convention and the National Convention. I have conducted local steward trainings and also steward enhancement trainings throughout the state. I attended all District Meetings that I were assigned to me.

During this reporting period, my case load consisted of Pre-Disciplinary Interviews (PDIs), Step 1 Grievances, and Step 2 Appeals. I traveled 5,967 miles in my POV and 18,453 in rental cars. I attended 98 PDIs and processed 280 grievances. Of the 280 grievances, 255 were contractual, 16 were discipline, and 9 were class action.

I want to thank the National Rural Letter Carriers National Board for the confidence they have shown in

me and look forward to the opportunity to work with and serve the rural carriers in the North Carolina District.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Carol, for always putting up with the phone. She has finally retired and says she plans to travel with me and meet the carriers of North Carolina.

It is my honor to serve the rural carriers of the great state of North Carolina.

Eddie Moss

## **Cliff Workman**

### **Assistant District Representative**

This year has been a whirlwind with RRECS being implemented and trying to keep the carriers up to date as much as possible on everything. This year has seen a ton of grievances, PDI's and disputes. I can honestly say it has been the busiest I have been as a union steward. Although this was only my first full time year, so I do not have anything to compare it to. LOL.

This year I have had a total of 252 Investigative interviews that led to discipline. 42 of those PDI's led to discipline that was grieved. I have had a total of 9 class action grievances and a total of 372 contractual grievances. Bringing the total to 423. About 140 of those were RRECS grievances that were deferred to the dispute process.

Tempers have flared and carriers have cried along with myself this past year with RRECS. I will continue to fight for our carriers and love the job I have been elected to do. I hope to continue the good work that is done here in North Carolina and fight for the carriers.

I would like to thank my wife Angie for the love and support she has shown me. Working sometimes until midnight on occasion has not a happy wife made. She has supported me in this endeavor, and I love her more for it. We personally have decided to remodel our home to place it on the market. On the weekends you can find me either relaxing some or working on the remodel.

I want to thank the National Board, the North Carolina State Board, the District Representative, Bethany Small and the other North Carolina Assistant District Representatives for their support and having the faith in me to represent our carriers.

Here is to a new year filled with love and support and representing the state of North Carolina.

Cliff Workman

## Tabitha Benfield

### Part Time Assistant District Rep

This end of the year report covers my union activity from June 18, 2022 through June 30, 2023. I serve as a part time Assistant District Representative for the North Carolina District.

I am the regular carrier for RR1 in Salisbury. I still run my route several days a week and handle a lot of union business before and after running the route. Not to mention, a ton of phone calls.

I currently am responsible for 9 offices. During the past year I have sat in on 156 Investigative interviews and have handled 237 grievances. 8 of those have been class actions, 35 individual discipline and 172 contractual. I have 13 open grievances that I am meeting on soon.

I am so thankful to the NRLCA Board and Bethany Small for allowing me to hold this position and put their confidence in me. I love being able to make a difference and try my best to keep myself educated on all union affairs. I strive to be an example to our members.

It is an honor to be able to represent the rural carriers within the North Carolina District and do my best to make sure the National contract is upheld.

Thank You

Tabitha Benfield

## Nathen J. Darden

### Part Time ADR

This end-of-year report covers my union activities as a part time assistant district representative in the North Carolina District from June 18th 2022 through June 30th 2023.

During the past year I have processed 54 grievances. Of the 54 Grievances, 16 were disciplinary, and 34 were contractual. 6 of those grievances were appealed to step 2, with 3 being resolved at step 3.

I would like to thank the North Carolina RLCA State Board, the Executive Committeemen, and the NRLCA National Board for all they do for us. Thank you DR Bethany Small for your leadership. A big thank you to ADR Jeff Essick and ADR Gail Naillon for all your help this year.

Finally, to all the Rural Carriers of North Carolina. Every year has its ups and downs, and this one was not easy in my opinion. One thing stays the same though, you continue to deliver for us all. Thank you!

## Procedure to File a Grievance

(See Example PS Form 8191 on next page)

You fill out the sections with red dots (# 1 – 4, except 3b & 3c). Management fills out the sections with the blue dots (#3b & 3c) when **you** actually file (discuss the issue) the grievance with them. (THIS DISCUSSION MUST BE WITHIN 14 DAYS FROM THE DATE IN 3a).

Once you have filed, let management make themselves a copy and you must get the original to the steward or representative immediately. The steward or representative **only has 10 days** from the date in 3b to setup a meeting with management.

Include a signed and dated statement telling your side of the issue. This statement is for the steward only. Management will not see your statement.

Never hesitate to call your steward or representative with questions if you need assistance. Never put your entire statement in #4 on the grievance form (PS Form 8191). Just state the issue in the form of a single question. Then, provide the steward with a statement explaining your side of the issue.

**NOTE:** Just filling out a grievance (PS Form 8191) and sending it to the steward or representative is NOT filing a grievance. You must discuss the issue with management at the time you are filing the grievance and follow the proper procedure.

**Management must fill out sections 3b & 3c.**



# USPS-NRLCA Joint Step 1 Grievance Form

1a. Grievant's Name (Last, first, middle initial) ● Your Name		1b. Grievant's EIN (Employee Id Number) ● Your EIN #
1c. Grievant's Title, Designation Code, and Route No. ● REGULAR, PTF, RCA or ARC, 71,74,76, 78,79 or 70-5 Your route #		1d. Telephone No. (include area code) ● Your Number for Steward to call if needed
1e. Grievant's Mailing Address ● Your COMPLETE address		
2a. Post Office ●	2b. Branch/Station ●	2c. Telephone No. (include area code) ● POST OFFICE Number
3a. Date of Incident Date discipline received or contract violation occurred ●	3b. Date of Step 1 Discussion with (Filing date) Supervisor's Initials ●	3c. Was Grievance Timely? (Explain) ● YES Supervisor's Initials
4. Issue (Complaint)		

ONE LINE in the form of a question.

● Example: "Was there just cause for the Letter of Warning?" or "Did management violate the contract when ...?"

Include your Statement on a separate piece of paper to be given to your Steward. This is not seen by Management.

5. Contract Provisions (Articles at issue)

**DO NOT WRITE ANYTHING IN #5 OR BELOW.**

**THESE WILL BE FILLED OUT BY THE STEWARD AND MANAGEMENT AT THE STEP ONE MEETING**

6. Full, Detailed Statement of Undisputed Facts (Attachments, as necessary)

# DO NOT WRITE IN

7. Management's Full, Detailed Statement of Disputed Facts (Attachments, as necessary)

# THESE SECTIONS!

8. Management Contentions

# (Sections 5-14)

9. Union's Full, Detailed Statement of Disputed Facts (Attachments, as necessary)

# FOR STEWARD

10. Union Contentions

# USE ONLY!

11. Remedy Sought by the Union

**YOU HAVE ONLY 14 DAYS TO FILE A GRIEVANCE.**

*Blank Grievance forms (PS Form 8191) can be found on both the National and North Carolina websites or obtained from your Postmaster, Supervisor or Steward.*

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.

# Junior Auxiliary News

By  
Easton Smith -  
Secretary/Treasurer

Congratulations to our own Anakin Hamlett, 1st Vice President of the 2023-2024 National Junior Auxiliary Board. We thank you so much for your leadership and guidance at our meetings and our fun activities.

I would encourage all Juniors to attend the conventions and get involved with the Program of Patriotism for 2023-2024 by getting involved with the Junior contest.

I, Easton Smith was the only entry in 2023, so “I got the money!” “You can, too!”

All essays and posters must be on, or attached to, a **letter**-sized manilla folder.

There is no requirement as to how many sides of the folder you use, but you must be able to fold the folder.

Each entry must have the following information legibly written on the back of the folder:

Name and address

Date of birth, age as of 8/1/24

Name of parent or grandparent

State in which dues are paid

Entries with incomplete or incorrect information will be disqualified.

All entries will be judged on originality, neatness, grammar, and spelling.

Categories are:

AGE 6-7: Design a Poster-How police officers and firefighters help us.

AGE 8-9: Design a Poster-How service dogs can help veterans and first responders.

AGE 10-11: Design a Poster-How we can support our military.

AGE 12-14: Design a Poster-What does the eagle stand for in the United States?

AGE 15-17 Essay-What does the phrase “*Never look down on anyone, unless you are helping them up*” mean to me?

AGE 18-20 Essay-How my vote can make a difference.

SPECIAL NEEDS Design a Poster-Service and Shelter Dogs

All of you Juniors have plenty of time to start on your posters or essays. I hope you will get started right away. Don’t wait until the last minute.

Keep watching for information on the fun activities that are being planned for the next year. We will be together soon to see old friends and make new ones! Enjoy the school year and the holidays!

## NORTH CAROLINA AUXILIARY OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

**ROANOKE HEATH**

25722 US Highway 64  
Jamesville, NC 27846  
252-809-9901

[Roanokeh@embarqmail.com](mailto:Roanokeh@embarqmail.com)

### VICE PRESIDENT

**PAMELA J. FARMER**

4377 5 Points Rd.  
La Grange, NC 28551  
252-566-9290

[Pjfrayparl@gmail.com](mailto:Pjfrayparl@gmail.com)

### SECRETARY/TREASURER

**SUE KELLY**

4701 Main St.  
Linden NC 28356  
910-980-0820 or 910-890-2804

[Msueky117@gmail.com](mailto:Msueky117@gmail.com)

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**LINWOOD SMITH**

1008 Dowling Road  
Raleigh, NC 27610

**MICHELE DARDEN**

12 Blue Pete Ct.  
Southern Shores, NC 27949

**L.E. WHITE**

1336 Schoolhouse Road  
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

**CHAPLAIN**

**NORMA WILLIFORD**

511 Old Goldsboro Road  
Newton Grove, NC 28366-7759  
Phone 910-594-0433

### JUNIOR OFFICERS

#### PRESIDENT

**ANAKIN HAMLETT**

7668 NC Highway 62 N  
Blanch, NC 27212-9257

#### VICE PRESIDENT

**ALLISON HOLT**

P O Box 1003  
Rural Hall, NC 27045

#### SECRETARY/TREASURER

**EASTON SMITH**

3694 Fieldstone Drive  
Wake Forest, NC 27587

**CHAPLAIN**

**KAYLEIGH CASE**

459 Bane Road  
Milks River, NC 28759

## *Fall Into the Holiday*

### Auxiliary News

*From  
Linwood Smith  
Executive Committeeman*

The busy time of the year is here. Are you ready?

Glad to see a little cooler weather as the Fall is here and the trees will soon be changing and the beauty will be beyond our imagination. Take the time to enjoy and prepare for the holidays.

We encourage everyone to support the Auxiliary Project for the 2023-2024 Program of Patriotism.

“The Hero Company” pairs shelter dogs and rescue dogs with veterans and first responders battling with PTSD at zero cost to them. Devote and support our country in a patriotic fashion to show unity among all that need help in this great nation. “Stand By Me” “Thank You Americans”

It is time to complete those applications for scholarships. National scholarships are due by March 1, 2024 and State scholarships are due June 1, 2024. Please visit the web sites for both national and state for the applications.

**SAFETY TIP** – Be careful when the leaves fall from the trees and the wet rain arrives, those steps and walkways will be slippery. Take the time to be safe and avoid that accident.


Thanks to the Association for the continuation of support for the Auxiliary and Juniors.

I hope everyone enjoys the Fall, Thanksgiving and Christmas.



*Merry Christmas*



# DECEMBER 2023

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

# JANUARY 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						
7	8	9	10	11	12	13 PP 3
14	15	16	17	18	19 Pay Day	20
						
27	PP 4					
SAC						
28	29	30	31			
SAC						

## Important Dates

November 11	Veterans Day	January 1	New Year's Day
November 12	Fall Booster	January 15	Martin Luther King Holiday
November 23	Thanksgiving	January 27-29	South Atlantic Conference (SAC)
December 25	Christmas Day		



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**424 WAPITI DR**  
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**45th Annual  
South Atlantic Conference  
January 27-29, 2024**

**Sonesta Atlanta Airport North  
1325 Virginia Ave, Atlanta, GA**

**Reservations 1-800-766-3782**

**Room rate \$101.00 (plus tax) with complimentary parking.**

**Event code 012324SATL**

**The cut-off date for reservations is January 10, 2024.**