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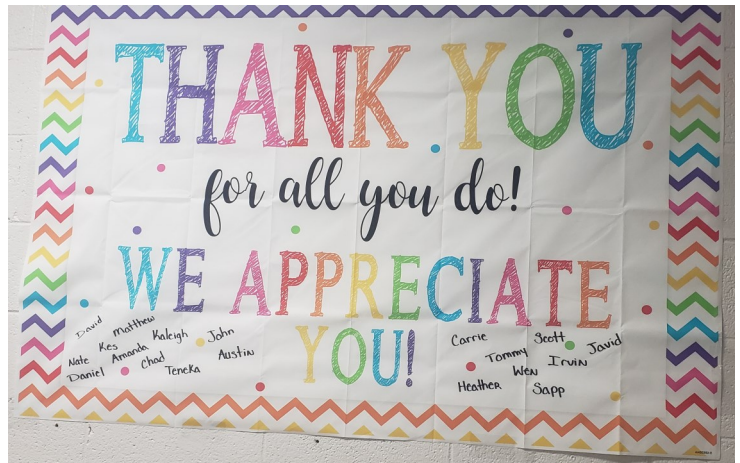
Official News Publication of the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers' Association

Inside This Issue

State Convention Info

SAC Report

RCA Appreciation Photos



Sign from the Hickory Post Office.



Mocksville Post Office RCAs. Left to right: Danielle Thomas, Jill Watkins, Sam Dixon, Tammy Hinrichs, Greg Houston, Misty Hill, Scott Hill, and Layla Smith. Not pictured are Josh Atkins and Kelly Dieterich.

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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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Smoky Mountain	11	Foothills	10	Southeastern	8
Yadkin River	26	Guilford	30	Cleveland/Gaston/Lincoln	29
Six County	28	McDowell/Mt Mitchell/ Buncombe/Madison	36	Johnston/N Harnett	34
Watauga/Avery	57	Piedmont	50	Tidewater	52

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Table of Contents

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 Gr8Wo1F2*24

The password will be
changed to the above on
March 30, 2024.

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

Cover Photo

Spring in North Carolina
Butterfly on Cherry
Blossoms

By Debbie Bennett

Auto-Home Owners Insurance	29
Auxiliary News	38
Calendar	39
Chaplain's Message	5
COLA	10
Convention Information	15-22
District Representatives & Area Stewards	33-34
Dues Rates	35
Emergency Hotline Number	3
Grievance Form Example	35-36
Junior Auxiliary Release Form	37
Legislative News	23
NCRLCA Website & Password	3
Obituaries	6
Officer Assignments	2
PAC	24-25
President's Message	4
RCA Corner	30-32
RCHBP	9-10
Retirement	7-8
Rural Carrier Moments	27-28
SAC Report	11-13
Safety	6
Secretary/Treasurer Message	14
Webmaster	26





President
Audrey Solomon

CHANGES ARE COMIN'

Hello everyone. I hope this third mini survey went a little smoother. By the time you read this article, you will have already heard about the upcoming changes. The South Atlantic Conference was filled with information about these upcoming events.

March 5 will start contract negotiations.

April will start route adjustments which will be approximately 887 routes in NC. Routes 57.36 (48K) and above will adjust first. Remember you have the right to make suggestions on the adjustment. Suggestions should be in writing and signed by both parties. Remember routes will (more than likely) and can adjust to a 43K. EXCEPTION: if you are performing all duties under evaluation, your route will not be immediately adjusted. (See your Steward for more information)

April all State Presidents will be traveling to Washington D.C. for the annual Legislative Seminar. Buy back bill (HR 5995 Federal Retirement Act) needs your help. Please write, email, or call your representative to get this bill moving. Go to the NRLCA website (Legislative Updates) or the NCRLCA website (PAC Legislative) to see a form letter and personalize it. You will also find the letters for HR 3721, USPS Shipping Equity Act and HR 82,

Social Security Fairness Act. WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Summer 2024 will bring in more SD&C's (currently there are seven in the Atlantic Area).

- * Same day/next day deliveries from SD&C's.
- * New Vehicles should start deploying.
- * Rural Route Optimization will begin. Using the updated software and technology the Postal Service can now determine the most sustainable, cost-effective, and timely routes in each office.

Now to move on, if you are waiting for a pay adjustment, I am sorry to inform you that the timeline has increased. It can take anywhere from four to eight pay periods for Regular carriers and eight to twelve pay periods for RCAs.

We would like to congratulate our National Auxiliary (especially our NC Auxiliary) on their 100th Anniversary. THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO

It is now time for District Meetings. Please ensure you secure a Board Member and a Steward for your meeting. Do not send out dates and times without confirmation that the Board Member and Steward will be in attendance.

The State Convention will be at Great Wolf Lodge, Concord, NC, June 17-19. More information to be announced. DO NOT FORGET that to be a paid delegate you must be an elected delegate from your district and send in the delegate registration form by the deadline.

Stay informed and be ready for all the upcoming changes.

District Meetings

District Meetings for the election of local officers and State Delegates are fast approaching. Meetings must be held prior to May 7th this year. Please check the state website www.NCRLCA.org events calendar for the date, place and time for your local meeting.

Members that are not be able to attend the local district meeting, who wish to be delegates to the State Convention or wish to run for district office, must let the Secretary of their district know ahead of their meeting date. This should be done in writing and the Secretary will add them to the nominations list to be voted on at the meeting.

Never Give Up

I always wonder....why so many people give up on their hopes, dreams, and goals so easily. Why don't more people persevere?

It's a question I ask because I see it so frequently. Friends, coworkers and even people I meet on a day-to-day basis openly admit to just giving up.

One may wonder why so many choose to go the easy route and give up?

I try to live my life the opposite. One of my biggest fears is dying with regret. The regret of not knowing what I could have accomplished, but I didn't because I was scared or didn't work hard enough. I gave up when the going got tough.

Whether it was a fitness goal to lose weight or eat healthier, I always see it through. If there was a business venture, work, or other challenges in life; I always try to see them through.

Do you know giving up is easy but finishing a goal is hard?

Ross Perot says "most people give up whenever they are about to achieve success but they quit on the one yard line".

I would like to share with you a few stories of people who did not give up on their dreams or aspirations.

Jack Canfield is the creator of the *Chicken Soup For The Soul* book series. Jack and his co-author Mark Victor Hansen pitched the original *Chicken Soup For The Soul* to over 130 different publishers. None of them were interested and said "no one wants to read 100 inspirational stories". After 100+ pitches, their agent dropped them as well. But they were determined to get the book published. Luckily they never gave up and continued to persevere until their book was picked up by a small publisher in Florida. Now there are over 250 *Chicken Soup* books and over 500 million copies sold worldwide!

Then there is the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), Colonel Sanders. He didn't start KFC until he was 60 years old, after receiving his first Social Security check. That is when most people are taught to hang it up, cross off the bucket list and fall asleep watching TV every day. Colonel Sanders worked from age 60 to 73 to master his technique and grow his business. This often came at the expense of sleeping in his car! It was hard work but he loved doing it, and people love the food. When Sanders sold the company,

Chaplain's Message

Pamela Stanley
Chaplain



he earned \$2 million and lived out the rest of his life in comfort. Not depending on his Social security check.

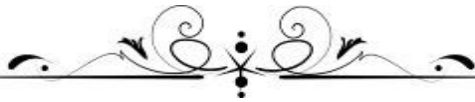
Another story. Everyone around the world knows Starbucks. It is one of the most recognizable symbols next to McDonald's, and Superman. It didn't start that easy. Without perseverance the coffee giant never would have existed. The founder of Starbucks, Howard Schultz went to over 200 banks asking for his original loan of \$242,000. Not only was he desperately trying to secure this loan, his wife was pregnant with their first child. After a year of rejection he was finally able to secure \$400,000 from a doctor and two other investors. Today Starbucks employs over 137,000 people and Mr. Shultz has a net worth of \$3 billion.

You should never give up no matter how hard it might seem.

And finally, as I stated previously, I don't want to live with regrets and I want to be the change I wish to see. I must relinquish my duties as Chaplain to embark on a new challenge within the Post Office in a management role. What a whirlwind of events and life-changing experiences I have had the pleasure of encountering as your Chaplain. Thank you for embracing me and accepting me.

In my final remarks as Chaplain I leave you with this, "The race is not given to the swift, nor to the strong, but to the one that endures to the end!"





Obituaries

Juanita T. “Nita” Jones, age 87, a resident of Washington, NC, passed away peacefully in her sleep on December 16, 2023.

Nita was born in Grenada, Mississippi, on July 10, 1936, but lived and attended school in Chicago, Illinois.

She married the love of her life, J. R. Jones, a Washington native, in 1954 and moved to Washington soon thereafter.

She was a faithful and long-time member of Second Baptist Church where she served for 40 years as Church Treasurer.

She served as State and National President of the Rural Letter Carriers Auxiliary and traveled to every

State in the Union.

She was deeply loved by her children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews and had many life-long friends in Washington and in the many places she visited. She was preceded in death by her parents, Joe and Nellie Taylor, her beloved husband J.R. who died in 1998 and her son Edgar who was a senior at East Carolina University.

Nita had seven siblings including her deceased brothers Houston Taylor (Estelle), J.R. Taylor (Evelyn), Homer Taylor (Kathleen), Gwin Taylor and her sister Mildred Bermudez (Ray).

She was “Aunt Nita” to 37 nieces and nephews and more than a dozen grand nieces and nephews.

She is survived by her sister Mary Taylor Smith and husband Sherwood, and her children Julia Hicks (Mike), Ron Jones (Lisa), Greg Jones (Amy), and four grandchildren, Matthew Jones, Ellen Caldwell (Zach), Emily Jones and Grayson Jones who all lovingly called her “Granny.”



Safety

*Brian Hamlett
Executive Committeeman*

It’s The Law (I think?)

I heard of an accident recently that involved a carrier turning left and being hit by a passing motorist. It happened in a No Passing Zone which made the driver making the pass at fault. But had it been in a passing zone, it would have been the fault of the carrier.

Sometimes we act in the way we think the law is when in fact the law states something a bit different. With the time we spend moving in traffic we must always be on guard. After all, we are professional drivers.

As for the passing incident I alluded to earlier, it is covered under NC General Statute 20-150. Here is an excerpt from that statute:

(e) The driver of a vehicle shall not overtake and pass another on any portion of the highway which is marked by signs, markers or markings placed by the Department of Transportation stating or clearly indicating that passing should not be attempted. The

prohibition in this section shall not apply when the overtaking and passing is done in accordance with ALL of the following:

(1) The slower moving vehicle to be passed is a bicycle or a moped.

(2) The slower moving vehicle is proceeding in the same direction as the faster moving vehicle.

(3) The driver of the faster moving vehicle either

(I) provides a minimum of four feet between the faster moving vehicle and the slower moving vehicle or

(ii) completely enters the left lane of the highway.

(4) The operator of the slower moving vehicle is not

(I) making a left turn or

(ii) signaling in accordance with G.S. 20-154 that he or she intends to make a left turn.

(5) The driver of the faster moving vehicle complies with all other applicable requirements set forth in this section.

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6 *The Law*)

I know we all have people zoom by us every day, passing zone or not, but that appears to be against the above statute. Does that mean we should spin tires from every mailbox in a “No Passing” zone? Of course not. We are professional drivers and regardless of the activity we have going on in our delivery vehicles we have to make sure that when we are driving that is all we are doing. We should not be fingering the mail, sorting parcels, making scanner entries, or anything else while we drive.

This is highlighting just one of the many laws that we must adhere to every day. North Carolina G.S. Chapter 20 (Motor Vehicles) contains many of the relevant statutes related to driving, license privileges, the DMV, etc. You can read and search the General Statutes yourself at ncleg.gov and click on the Bills & Laws tab. As the saying goes, “Ignorance of the law excuses not.”

I cannot stress enough the importance of safe and defensive driving. In January of this year we lost David Troutman, a rural carrier in Kansas in an on-the-job vehicle accident. He had served his state Association as their past president and I, although never having a personal interaction with him, had seen him on the convention floor at National Convention.

I do not know the details of David's accident. I am just pointing out that accidents can happen to any one of us. Accidents are not exclusive to new and inexperienced carriers. Complacency and inattention can cause any one of us to be involved in a crash. You owe it to your family and friends to do everything YOU can to make it home safely.

Retirement

Jay Schreiber
Executive Committeeman



How Long Will It Take?

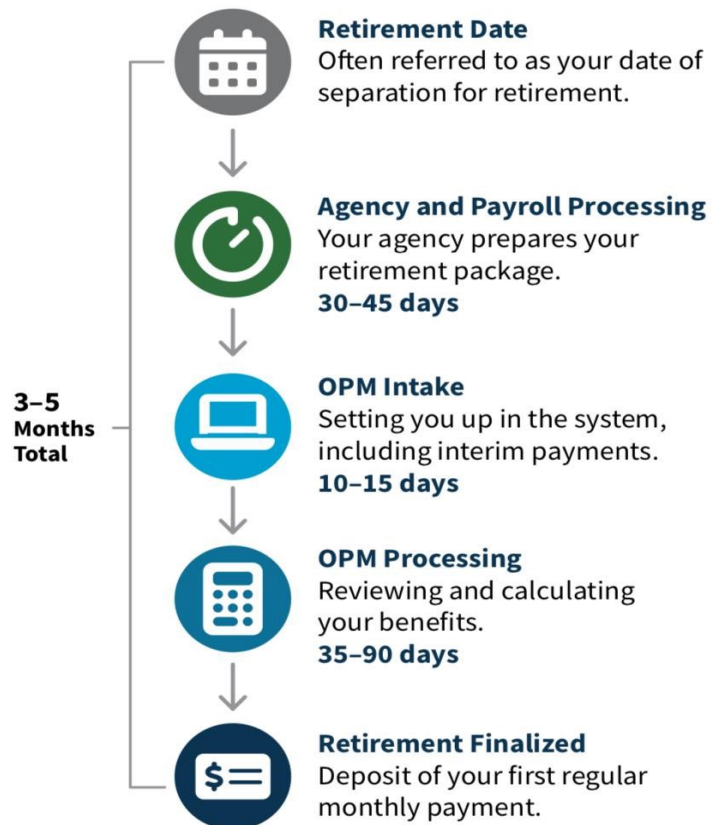
I have been taking phone calls about retirement for the past two years and more often than not, carriers don't realize how long the process will be from the last day on the rolls until your retirement is finalized. This chart shows how long OPM takes to process claims once they receive your retirement application.

Example - Someone decides their last day with the post office will be 12/28/23 so they are retired on

(Continued on page 8)

Process at a Glance

Below are current estimates **as of January 2024**.



(Continued from page 7) How Long Will It Take?

12/29/23. The next pay dates are 1/5/24 and 1/19/24. Depending on how far ahead retirement paperwork was mailed in to HRSSC in the process, it must be sent to Eagan for readiness for last pay to be processed.

Once your final postal pay is completed, generally the retirement paperwork then goes on a register to Office of Personnel Management (OPM) around the pay-date.

So no one's paperwork can ever leave USPS until after they get paid their final pay (including the lump sum of annual leave). This is one reason it may feel longer for the carriers waiting to bid on the vacant route. Even if the newly retired carrier is no longer on the route, it is not officially vacant until the carriers actual retirement date.

In this example, February is the first month that anything starts to come from OPM, do not start counting the months until February. After OPM receives your packet, 2 – 5 months is an average time it takes them to complete your final retirement.

Things that make that take longer is temporary time, RCA or military, that someone is eligible to do a deposit for and has never done it, anyone that was on OWCP at the time they were retiring and of course divorce stuff. Then things can drag out the process longer.

End of December and

REMINDER

Membership in the NRLCA terminates upon retirement.

Retirees must reenroll to remain a member of the union.

You must keep your membership if you have the Rural Carrier's Benefit Plan Health Insurance.

Please complete PS Form 1187 R to remain a member.

January are more popular times carriers want out, so many more cases hit OPM than other months during the year. That has an impact if you notice the higher average processing time on the chart below.

If someone sends in their paperwork to HRSSC and then something is wrong and it comes back to them, it will significantly delay the process. Something as simple as not making a choice for survivor benefits, missing a signature or any other little issues.

Every case can be different. Please be prepared for longer rather than hoping for a best case scenario.

Month	Claims Received	Claims Processed	Inventory (Steady state goal is 13,000)	Monthly Average Processing Time in Days	FYTD Average Processing Time in Days
Oct-22	6,423	7,838	25,227	89	89
Nov-22	6,064	7,442	23,849	92	91
Dec-22	5,490	7,743	21,596	85	89
Jan-23	12,404	9,142	24,858	93	90
Feb-23	9,562	10,920	23,500	65	84
Mar-23	8,354	8,929	22,925	69	81
Apr-23	8,298	10,839	20,384	70	79
May-23	6,096	8,355	18,125	71	78
Jun-23	4,854	6,609	16,370	74	78
Jul-23	7,261	6,584	17,047	85	78
Aug-23	7,383	6,467	17,963	74	78
Sep-23	6,768	8,879	15,852	70	77
Oct-23	6,924	6,098	16,678	73	73
*Nov-23	5,207	6,059	15,826	66	69
Dec-23					
Jan-24					
Feb-24					

Disability determinations are included in the pending number after approval. Average Processing Time in Days represents the number of days starting when OPM receives the retirement application through final adjudication.

*Initial retirement cases produced in less than 60 days, on average took 39 days to complete; whereas cases that were produced in more than 60 days, on average, took 119 days to complete.



Rural Carrier Health Benefit Plan

Tracy Greer
Executive Committeeman

Spring Is Allergy Season

Spring is here and that means blooming flowers, new foliage, insect bites, and Bee Stings. It is a beautiful time of year unless you are an allergy sufferer. Be prepared by visiting your doctor, utilizing the free telehealth services by visiting Teladoc.com/Aetna or call **1-855-835-2362**, or visit a CVS minute clinic, all these are offered by the Rural Carrier Benefit Plan.

Seasonal allergy signs and symptoms can flare up when there's a lot of pollen in the air. These steps can help you reduce your exposure:

- Check your local TV or radio station, your local newspaper, or the internet for pollen forecasts and current pollen levels.
- If high pollen counts are forecasted, start taking allergy medications before your symptoms start.
- Close doors and windows at night if possible or any other time when pollen counts are high.
- Avoid outdoor activity in the early morning when pollen counts are highest.

Several types of nonprescription medications can help ease allergy symptoms. They include:

- Oral antihistamines
- Corticosteroid nasal sprays
- Cromolyn sodium nasal spray
- Oral decongestants

Although most bug bites are harmless, some can spread dangerous diseases like Zika virus, dengue, Lyme disease, and malaria. Particularly if you're visiting areas with known insect-borne diseases, it's

important to take steps to reduce your risk. If you are allergic to bees always keep your EpiPen with you!!

To help prevent bug bites, use the following tips:

- Use insect repellent.
- Wear appropriate clothing.
- Check mailboxes for bugs and bees.
- Watch your steps, some bees and insects build nests in the ground.

To treat bug bites and stings at home dermatologists recommend the following tips:

1. For painful bites or bee stings, take an over-the-counter painkiller, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Always follow the directions on the label and use the correct dose.
2. For bites that itch, apply an ice pack or an over-the-counter anti-itch cream, such as hydrocortisone. Another option is to take an over-the-counter oral antihistamine.
3. To reduce swelling, apply an ice pack to the bite.

Pay attention to outbreaks. Check the CDC Travel Health Notices website and heed travel warnings and recommendations.

If you experience any serious symptoms after a bug bite, such as a rash, fever, or body aches, see your doctor or a board-certified dermatologist immediately. Make sure you tell the doctor about your recent bite so that they can examine you for a transmitted disease.

When to seek emergency care

Call 911 or your local medical emergency number if you or someone is having a serious reaction that suggests anaphylaxis, even if it's just one or two signs or symptoms:

- Trouble breathing
- Swelling of the lips, face, eyelids or throat
- Dizziness, fainting or unconsciousness.
- A weak and rapid pulse
- Hives

(Continued on page 10)

Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Effective March 9, 2024

Pursuant to the release of the January 2024 Consumer Price Index - Urban Wage and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), and in accordance with Article 9.1.E, the sixth and final COLA adjustment of the 2021-2024 National Agreement will result in a \$353.00 increase for eligible rural carriers. This COLA adjustment will be effective March 9, 2024 (PP 2024-07). All COLA adjustments are based on a 40-hour evaluation with proportional application to those route evaluations over 40 hours. The increase should appear in paychecks dated **March 29, 2024**.

In accordance with Article 9.1.E.3, full COLA adjustments will apply to Table One and the new Step 15 of Table Two. COLA adjustments to Steps 1 through 14 of Table Two will be adjusted proportionally to each step's percentage of Step 15. This will serve to bring Table Two schedule (Step 15) employees to the same pay level as Table One (Step 12) employees, thereby eliminating the pay differential between Table Two and Table One employees at the top step and for the rest of their careers.

NOTE: All leave replacement employees will receive an additional 1% salary adjustment annually in lieu of COLA adjustments.

Updated pay schedules will be posted on our website when available and will also be included in a future edition of *The National Rural Letter Carrier* magazine.

(Continued from page 9) *Allergy Season*

- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.

Take these actions immediately while waiting for medical help:

- Ask whether the injured person is carrying an epinephrine autoinjector (EpiPen, Auvi-Q, others).
- Ask whether you should help inject the medication. This is usually done by pressing the autoinjector against the thigh and holding it in place for several seconds.
- Loosen tight clothing and cover the person with a blanket.
- **Don't** offer anything to drink.
- If needed, position the person to prevent choking on vomit.

Feel free to contact me at any time with questions about the Rural Carrier Benefit Plan or the implementation of the Postal Reform Act.





45th Annual South Atlantic Conference Round Up

Vice President

Elaine Althoff

SAC began with Saturday Seminars.

- Constitution and Resolutions 101, with National Officers Nicky Phillips, Kirby Ricketts, and John Adams. Bring your ideas to your Spring meeting to be voted on by your district. If passed they will move up to the State to be voted on or considered, then up to the National Convention. *See my article March/April 2023 North Carolina Rural Carrier pages 17 & 18.*
- OWCP Seminar with Devin Cassidy. What is new is most everything is online now. He can pull up your case files a lot faster, there are still a few hiccups in the system but they are working through them. If you need help navigating call Devin Cassidy's office.

SAC President, Phil Upchurch, Georgia opened the 45th Annual South Atlantic Conference (SAC) on Sunday, January 28th.

Julie Houston, National President, NRLCA Auxiliary spoke on the project this year which is A

Program of Patriotism. They are selling items such as challenge coins, pins, dog collars, and hats to raise money for the project. Contact Sue Kelly to buy items. Also, Mrs. Houston spoke on this being their 100th Anniversary.

Blake Graham President, of Atlanta Postal Credit Union, spoke briefly.

Linda Foran, Plan Director, Auto and Homeowners Insurance, National General, had a booth set up and spoke on the Federal Tort Claims, get a quote, and get your gift card. For phone number and code *see Auto Rep Article.*

Lynne Paler, Director of Health Insurance Programs. Watch your mail for a postcard in early February announcing the open season for voluntary benefits, scheduled from March 1 through April 15, 2024, *see Health Insurance Article.*

Jean-Marc Favreau, Legal Counsel announced a

(Continued on page 12)



2024 SAC Officers, Left to right: Janeen Montgomery–FL, Dennis Conley–NC, Cassandra Francis–SC, Thomas Keys–TN, Michael Smith–MS, Ryan Clark–KY, Connie O'Brien–AL, Glynda Wurtz–GA, William Braddick–FL, and Tracy Greer–NC

(Continued from page 11) SAC

new member to the firm, Debra Bogaslaw, On March 5th contract negotiations will begin. Mr. Favreau spoke on the Labor Movement (Writers Strike, UPS, United Auto Workers) and gains in Unions. Wage increases, RCA hire, and retention, inability to hire, the Step 4 Grievance on Postal Service's Failure to Pay Rural Carriers Correctly Back payments/non-payments, Amazon parcels, Long-standing "unusual conditions" of cutting the over-burned routes. *Article 9*

Paul Swartz, NRLCA Director of Governmental Affairs gave us some important dates to remember. April 1st, 2024, annuitants who did not sign up for Part B at the age of 65 can enroll **penalty-free**. This is a six-month period. Individuals who qualify for the SEP will receive a separate notification before April 1, 2024, as required by the PSRA. Annuitant and their family members who are entitled to Medicare Part A must enroll in Medicare Part B to be eligible to continue PSHB coverage. Current annuitants will not be required to enroll in Medicare Part B if they choose to stay out. Some limited exceptions will apply. Medicare integration will go into effect in January 2025. Here are some links where you can get more information: Log into **opm.gov** click on the **Insurance** tab then **Postal Service Health Benefits Plan** or you can log on to LiteBlue. Retirees can stay informed by logging in Online at <https://www.keepingposted.org> or text 39369. Click the tabs and they will send you all kinds of information such as benefits, retirement, etc.

Mr. Swartz also spoke about what's going on, on the Hill. HR 5995. "Federal Retirement Fairness Act (FRFA) better known as the BUY BACK legislation. This would provide rural letter carriers who served as relief employees after December 31, 1988 the opportunity to buy back credit for service. The FRFA impacts not only rural letter carriers but other federal employees as well, who began their employment as non-career workers and did not have the ability to make retirement contributions.

HR 3721, "USPS Shipping Equity Act" would provide the United States Postal Service the authority to mail alcoholic beverages. Currently has 17 cosponsors. This is estimated to be 180 million dollars in new revenue. UPS & Fed EX deliver it, why can't we? This does not supersede any Law where a Dry County is, that county will not get this service.

HR 82, "Social Security Fairness Act of 2023" eliminates both the WEP and GPO. It went to the Ways and Means Committee, we're waiting on a



North Carolina SAC first time attendees Angela Morrow and Nathan Warren

hearing, but Social Security is looking at the financial impact this would have.

We need you to call/write your Senators and congressional representatives. You can find form letters on the National site that you can edit to make personal. Contact your PAC or Legislative person if you need help with this.

Ted Borgstadt of Trestle Tree talked about 'health coaches'. He told stories from health coaches who can help with your needs on diabetes, weight management, and more.

Calvin Stevens of NARFE, NARFE is celebrating 102 years this year, For more information checkout NARFE.org.

President Don Maston talked about the upcoming contract negotiations. The route adjustments will start with routes that are the most overburdened. The Postmaster General invited the worker's family to go into S&DC to tour them. Updated Academy Training should be launched soon. RRECS- if you are not mapping routes- YOU MUST START, make sure the Safety Service Talks are entered in REMMS. Still finding the Radar Reports are still not 100%.

Scott Raymond, USPS Atlantic Area Vice President of Retail & Delivery Operations. North

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12) SAC

Carolina is the biggest District in the Atlantic Area; With the biggest growth. We delivered 3.1 million more parcels this year. He spoke on Delivering for America, the new Service Transfer Centers (STC), a lot more will be insourced, RPDC Delivery center and Transfer hubs Atlantic Area has 7 of the units, 31 active S&DC. There are 662 Rural Routes in them, and 300 spoke offices that still have retail but the carriers have moved out. A bit closer to home, the Asheville S&DC projected date is June 2024.

Derek Strissel, Central Area Manager Operation Integration, spoke on RRECs Enhancement, the training in October 2023 that managers were to do, and many did not. He gave the date for the next Mail survey as February 24, 2024, to March 8, 2024, #3, March 15 All Mini Mail Survey entries must be reviewed and finalized, April 6 is the effective date of RRECS Evaluation 3. He also spoke on the overburdened routes. PO 603, (every carrier has one at the case if not, your manager can order a copy) Please give your input in writing.

We ended SAC with a Q&A session and the swearing-in of the New SAC Board.

Be a part- North Carolina has 887 overburdened routes. I cannot stress those to carriers of overburdened routes enough. * Per Article 9 & Article 30.1.J. Carrier's Rights in Route Adjustments- The regular rural carrier assigned to the route shall be notified in advance of any route adjustments and afforded the opportunity to submit comments in writing. The comments will be considered as a factor when such adjustments are under consideration and before any decision is made. Substantial route adjustment must be approved at a level higher than the installation and, if requested in writing, will be reviewed at the district level, except for adjustments to avoid actual work hours in excess of 2,080 during the guarantee period. Please submit comments in writing before the adjustments take place and before any decision is made.

BE A PART I cannot stress that enough. If you don't understand or know your rights. Contact your Steward to get the information you need to make the best decision. Go to your Spring meetings and ask the questions.

BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION

*NRLCA, Contract Article 9, Article 30.1.J. . Carriers' Rights in Route Adjustments-



RCA appreciation week party held on Saturday February 3rd at the Carrboro Post Office.

From left to right: Teresa Kinder, Kerri Leiting, Derrick Dove, Dyana Vander Wall, Siheen Watts, Mourad Hammouma and Claude Moffitt.

Want To Make A Difference? Get Involved

Secretary/Treasurer

Vicki Gray



I want to encourage everyone to attend your local district meeting and perhaps even consider becoming a Local Officer. Submit those great ideas of yours as resolutions at your local meeting. Make a difference!

Our State Convention will be here before you know it. But first we must have our local Spring District Meetings. Local meetings will take place in March and April and a few will be in May. You should receive your invitation in the mail but I want to encourage you to check out the website also. All meeting dates will be posted as soon as they are scheduled.

The Spring District Meeting is important because it's where you elect the officers for your district and your delegates to the State Convention.

Every district must have a President, Vice President & Secretary-Treasurer in order to remain an active, viable unit. Some of our local districts are having trouble with recruiting members to run for office. I want to remind you that if you cannot maintain those three important offices than your district is in danger of being merged with another. That could mean that you would have to travel even further to attend a local meeting.

Your local meeting is also where you submit your Resolutions and Constitution changes. Resolutions are how we can make changes to our contract.

Don't forget to preregister to be a paid delegate to the State Convention. You **MUST** be elected as a delegate from your district and preregister to be paid.

Also, **REMINDER**, the Auxiliary would like you to please preregister your children/grandchildren for the Junior Auxiliary. They need to know the ages of the children and how many will be attending to aid in making the plans for their outings. They also need your child's T-shirt size so they can get them ordered. Please register them as soon as possible. The form for that is in this issue.

Bring the kids with you. Great Wolf Lodge was chosen by the board with the kids in mind. They will have a great time and are taken care of while you are in the meeting. Great Wolf has certified lifeguards on duty at the waterpark at all times.

The room rate for Great Wolf is \$129.99 plus tax per night. We are limited to only 100 rooms. So make sure you make those reservations early. Reservation info is on the back page.

Our PAC fund raiser will have a Luau theme this year. Get those Muumuus & Hawaiian Aloha shirts packed and join us for a great time!

I will have more details regarding the State Convention in our next issue.

I am hoping everyone stays safe & healthy!

I'm looking forward to seeing you soon..



At Concord Main Post office the regular carriers honored their subs with a party!

Official Convention News

National Convention

National Delegate Election by Secret Ballot

This year the National Convention will be held in Reno, Nevada from August 27-30, 2024.

A secret ballot election for the delegates of the North Carolina RLCA to the 2024 NRLCA National Convention will be conducted by mail.

The deadline for delegate nominations this year is April 29, 2024.

Anything received after that date will be returned to the sender as post office box closed.

Ballots will be mailed to members between May 17 and May 23, 2024.

Any eligible member who does not receive a ballot or whom spoils a ballot may request a new ballot by contacting the Election Committee Chairperson, Debra Bennett at 910-436-6487. If you request and return another ballot, only the replacement ballot will be counted.

Counting of the National Delegate ballots will take place on Saturday June 15, 2024 beginning at 10:00 AM at Great Wolf Lodge in Concord, NC.

Any candidate or designee may observe the ballot tabulation.

Included here are the rules for delegate nomination from the *NRLCA constitution*, Article VI.

Section 2. Delegates

A. Eligibility

2. Only Bargaining Unit Members and Retired Members in good standing may be nominated, elected or seated as delegates. Such “good standing” status shall be the sole prerequisite for determining eligibility or entitlement to service as a delegate or to any payment or benefit, except that a state may establish reasonable rules to ensure attendance at the Convention.

3. A member who accepts or acts **at any time in any capacity** normally performed by a manager from the end of one Convention to the end of the next

Convention shall be ineligible to be nominated or serve as delegate.

B. Nomination

1. Within each state association, nominations for National Delegate shall be submitted by U.S. Mail to a pre-arranged post office box on a nominating ballot or copy. The nominating ballot shall be signed and show the name and address of the member making the nomination, and may include self-nomination. The nominating ballot and instructions shall be posted on the NRLCA website and in all published issues of *The National Rural Letter Carrier* from February – May.

2. Nominations must be received in the pre-arranged post office box at least 50 days prior to the opening of the state convention. (*This year that day is April 29, 2024.*)

State Convention

The State Convention will be held at Great Wolf Lodge at 10175 Weddington Rd, Concord, NC 28027 on June 17 thru June 19, 2024 with the business session starting on Monday June 17. Complete address and reservation information for the State Convention can be found on the back page of this issue.

Elections for the positions of President, Vice-President (one year terms), Secretary/Treasurer (two year term) and Executive Committeeman (three year term) will be conducted on Wednesday June 19, 2024.

Included below are the rules for State delegates from the *North Carolina RLCA constitution*, Article VI.

Section 3. State Delegates.

- A. All districts shall be entitled to one delegate vote for each six paid-up members or a fraction thereof.
- B. No delegate shall represent more than one district.
- C. No district shall be represented in the State

(Continued on page 16)

Official Convention News

Candidate Announcements for State Office

The state officer positions up for election are President (one year term), Vice-President (one year term) and Executive Committeeman (three year term).

To have your candidacy announcements printed in our newsletter they **must be received by April 15, 2024**. Any late submissions will not be printed.

All articles are limited to a maximum of **150 words** and will be cut off at that point. They will be printed verbatim with no editing by the editor. In other words, you are responsible for all the content of your submission.

Announcements will appear in the NCRC May/June issue.

Carriers currently serving in a management position are not eligible to run for a position in the Union.

(Continued from page 15)

Convention by proxy.

- D. The total delegates from a district (if not in full attendance) may be voted by the one or more delegates in attendance.

State Convention Preregistration

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. (Form on the next page) Please print clearly as an illegible registration may cause it to be deemed unacceptable.

You must preregister to be eligible to receive payment as a delegate.

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

Forms must be received by May 16, 2024. Please send in as early as possible.

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

(Continued on page 17)

Official Convention News

North Carolina Membership Totals

as of February 20, 2024

(Continued from page 16)

District	District Name	Members	Delegates
1	ALAMANCE	73	13
2	ALBEMARLE	101	17
3	BRUSHY MOUNTAIN	140	24
4	ALLEGHANY-ASHE	43	8
5	PEACH BELT	55	10
7	ROANOKE-CHOWAN	55	10
8	SOUTHEASTERN	269	45
9	BURKE-CALDWELL-CATAWBA	195	33
10	FOOTHILLS	129	22
11	SMOKY MOUNTAIN	132	22
12	DURHAM-ORANGE	113	19
14	CASWELL-ROCKINGHAM	68	12
16	CENTRAL CAROLINA	110	19
20	SANDHILLS	231	39
23	SEA LEVEL	232	39
24	WAKE COUNTY	458	77
25	TRI COUNTY-UPPER WAYNE	168	28
26	YADKIN RIVER	169	29
28	SIX COUNTY	157	27
29	CLEVELAND-GASTON-LINCOLN	193	33
30	GUILFORD COUNTY	161	27
34	JOHNSTON -NORTH HARNETT	117	20
36	MCDOWELL-MT MITCHELL MADISON-BUNCOMBE	169	29
38	MECKLENBERG	374	63
42	RANDOLPH-DAVIDSON MONTGOMERY	154	26
44	ROANOKE BEAUFORT-HYDE-N. PITT	156	26
47	RUTHERFORD-POLK HENDERSON-TRANSYLVANIA	112	19
50	PIEDMONT	259	44
52	TIDEWATER	303	51
54	UNION COUNTY	124	21
57	WATAUGA-AVERY	56	10
	North Carolina Total	5076	862

State or National funds shall not receive state delegate pay.

- F. All state delegate checks will be mailed by July 31 or within 30 days of the close of the State Convention if delayed
- 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. Preregistration forms must be received by the Secretary Treasurer at least 30 days prior to the opening of the State Convention. *(That day is May 16th this year.)*
- I. Verification of attendance will be the responsibility of the local President or the local Delegate-at-large.
- J. Disputes will be settled by the State Board.

Official Convention News

Mail Before May 16th!

Don't forget to mail your Junior Registration form also!

2024 PREREGISTRATION FORM NORTH CAROLINA STATE DELEGATE

Please print clearly.

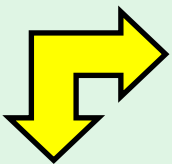
Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

I submit my name as a candidate for delegate to the 2024 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



NRLCA RESOLUTION

The following proposed Resolution change is being presented by _____ and is hereby submitted to the Resolutions Committee of the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers Association at the 2024 State Convention in Concord, NC for consideration and appropriate action.

Check Appropriate Box

Binding
 Non-Binding

Issues

Check one

- | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> AUTOMATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MAILCOUNT | <input type="checkbox"/> VEHICLE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BENEFITS | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIEF DAY | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK RULES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EMA | <input type="checkbox"/> RETIREMENT | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES | <input type="checkbox"/> SALARY | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LEAVE REPLACEMENTS | <input type="checkbox"/> TIME STANDARDS | |

The following procedures are suggested for effectively presenting Resolutions:

1. Place only one Resolution per sheet.
2. Print legible.
3. Indicate the issue this resolution concerns (above).
4. Identify any Handbooks, Manuals, or Written Documents to be amended:

By: (a) Name of Document _____

(b) Article _____ Section _____ Paragraph _____

5. Explanatory paragraphs should be headed as follows:
(If spaces below are inadequate, use additional sheets with the appropriate heading).

WHEREAS

BE IT RESOLVED

INTENT OF / REASON FOR CHANGE

Mail to Vicki Gray, 424 Wapiti Drive, Spring Lake, NC 28390
To be presented to the Resolution Committee at the 2024 State Convention

NRLCA CONSTITUTION CHANGE

The following proposed Constitution change is being presented by _____ and is hereby submitted to the Constitution Committee of the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers Association at the 2024 State Convention in Concord, NC for consideration and appropriate action.

The following procedures are suggested for effectively presenting Constitution changes to Committee:

- 1) Place only one Constitution per sheet.
- 2) Present in Word document format. Formatting instructions:
 - (a) Font - Times New Roman; Font Size – 11
 - (b) New Language **BOLD**; Omitted Language ~~Strike Through~~
 - (c) Article _____ Section _____ Paragraph _____

Explanatory paragraphs should be headed as follows:

(If spaces below are inadequate, use additional sheets with appropriate heading)

PRESENT LANGUAGE:

PROPOSED LANGUAGE:

INTENT OF/REASON FOR CHANGE:

Mail to Vicki Gray, 424 Wapiti Drive, Spring Lake, NC 28390
To be presented to the Constitution Committee at the 2024 State Convention

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION OF OUTSTANDING MEMBER OF THE YEAR

I. Method of Selection

1. Nomination of candidates for the award shall be made prior to the State Convention. Nominations may be made directly from the members inviting such nominations. Also, local, county or district units may select candidates for the award.

2. In either event, the name of the candidate should be submitted, with a brief resume of accomplishments, to a Selection Committee to be named by the State Board, or by any other means, which may be the prevailing policy in the State Association.

II. Eligibility for Award

1. Any MEMBER of the Association may be nominated as a candidate for the Outstanding Member of the Year Award.

2. State Association Officers should not be arbitrarily selected for the award nor should they be eliminated from consideration. Officers have been chosen to lead and serve, but it is frequently demonstrated that their services go far beyond the routine duties of the office and, thus may be worthy of selection.

III. Criteria for Selection

1. The primary consideration of the Selection Committee shall be:

- (a) The service rendered by the candidate to the Rural Letter Carriers' Association;
- (b) Attendance and participation in local, state and national meetings;
- (c) Willingness to accept responsibilities and dedication in performing those duties;
- (d) Fraternal Attitude to others of the Rural Carrier Craft.

2. The Selection Committee should also consider, as a secondary matter, other service which the candidate may have rendered, such as civic and community activities, which reflect favorably upon the Rural Letter Carrier Craft and the Postal Service.

3. Consideration shall be given for services rendered in the immediately preceding twelve-month period, but not completely limited to this period of time. New carriers

should be encouraged to seek to achieve this award.

IV. Presentation of Award

When each State Association has made its selection, the name of the candidate shall be reported to the

National Office by the State Secretary on the regular Annual Report. An appropriate award will be presented by the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association at its National Convention.

V. Other

These guidelines are not intended to be binding and a State may use any other selection procedure that is suitable for each State.

The announcement of the recipient of the award will be made at the banquet at the State Convention. The State Secretary shall report the name to the National Office and the award will be presented at the National Convention with State presentation at the Fall Booster.

This year the State Board has appointed the immediate past three recipients of the award to serve as the Selection Committee.

Please mail the name of the candidate, along with a resume to ALL members of the Selection Committee listed below, prior to the State Convention.

Steve Rogers
233 Karen Cr
Winston-Salem, NC 27105

Jesse Ray Farmer Jr.
4377 5 Points Rd
La Grange, NC 28551-8119

Mitch Reece
211 Wheel Crest Dr
Winston-Salem, NC 27127

**Nominations are being
accepted at this time
for this award.**

PAC FUND RAISER

LUAU

TUESDAY
JUNE 18, 2024

Grab your flip flops & Hawaiian shirts and join us for a LUAU themed dinner on Tuesday evening.





Legislative Representative

Van Heath

It's Springtime In Washington

Okay, what does that title mean? In May, NRLCA State Presidents and Vice-Presidents will be gathering in Washington DC to speak to our members of Congress about issues that are important to Rural Carriers. When I say Rural Carriers, I am talking about every job covered by the NRLCA.

To support our Teams going to Washington, we need to write letters and make phone calls to Washington. When President Solomon and Vice-President Althoff sit down with a member of Congress or a member of their staff to talk about a specific bill, the Member or their Staff Member can say, "Oh yes, we have received a number of letters from Rural Carriers in our District about that bill," it really helps to make our point as to whether we want the bill passed or defeated. It really does have influence.

Remember, we have sample letters on most bills available on both the National and State websites. Please take advantage of these sample letters and send Washington a letter.

HR 82/S 597 – Social Security Fairness Act

This bill repeals provisions that reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who receive other benefits, such as a pension from a state or local government.

Since we last spoke this bill has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee. This is the normal path a bill takes. We have not picked up any more cosponsors from NC. We have the same six that I told you about last time. There are overall 308 cosponsor, 203 Democrats, 105 Republicans.

In the Senate, S597 has fifty cosponsors. Neither Senator Tillis nor Budd signed onto this bill.

HR 5995 – Federal Retirement Fairness Act

This is the bill that we call "Buy Back." Not much is happening with this bill. Currently there are seventy-four cosponsors, none from our state. My previous member of Congress was a dependable sponsor of this bill. My new member of Congress, even though I

have written to him several times, has still not signed onto this especially important bill. Have you, dear reader, written or called your member on this bill? Let's lay it out plainly. This bill would affect the retirement for every RCA that plans to work to retirement. It would affect every Regular Carrier still working when it passes as well as PTFs. For those of us who are fortunate to have already retired, we should be supporting this bill for the benefit of our brothers and sisters that are still working. It is simply the right thing to do.

The pre-written letters are on both the National and the State websites. I also have a list of all the addresses of our members of both the House and the Senate. This includes the addresses for their offices in Washington DC and every office they have in our state. Often it is quicker to mail a letter to the nearest in-state office than to send a letter to Washington because of all the security mail must go through there.

Until and if this bill passes and becomes law, we will not know exactly how Buy Back will work. The actual text of the bill states: "The Director of the OPM shall notify agency Chief Human Capital Officers or other appropriate agency officials for purposes of providing notice to employees and Members who are eligible to make a deposit for service."

Letters and Phone calls.

Phone calls and Letters.

It is how we get things done in Washington.

I hope to see many of you at our Spring District Meetings and at the State Convention.

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

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Sustaining Donors Have Another Chance at Winning \$200!

PAC CHAIR
Brenda Gibbs



SAC provided us with a lot of new information and a chance to reconnect with carriers from other states. Sharing our experiences is always a bonus. Our state raised \$800.98 for PAC. The eight-state total was \$8175.35.

During our spring business meetings, we have three raffle items. One donated by our state President and one donated by the state Vice President. You can get your tickets at your district meeting. The winners will be announced at the State Convention. We also have a gift for each member who donates at least \$20.00 at their district meeting.

Celeste and I are giving you several opportunities to win prizes at the State Convention. We have two additional raffle items that will only be available at the State Convention. We have found a twist on the old 50/50 raffles that is sure to get your attention and of course, we will have our silent auction. We have a big season planned with lots of gifts and information to increase your knowledge of how our federal government and our representatives in DC affect our jobs, our pay, our benefits and our retirement.

Paul Swartz updated us at SAC on the following legislation in Congress.

H.R. 5995 The Federal Postal Coalition bill has 56 co-sponsors and would cost \$10 billion over 10 years without including postal employees and set at 1.3%.

H.R. 3721 The United States Postal Service Equity Act has 17 co-sponsors and is worth \$180 billion per year in income for the Postal Service.

H.R. 82 The Social Security Fairness Act has 304 co-sponsors and would repeal WEP (windfall elimination) and GPO (government pension offset).


You can download the letters from the NRLCA website to mail to your representative. Celeste and I will bring some of these to the district meetings.

If you signed up to become a sustaining donor during the National Convention, there were some issues causing some withdrawals to be overlooked. This should be corrected by the end of the month.

See you soon!!

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.

Local Meetings Will Be Posted On The Website

Webmaster
Renee Johnson



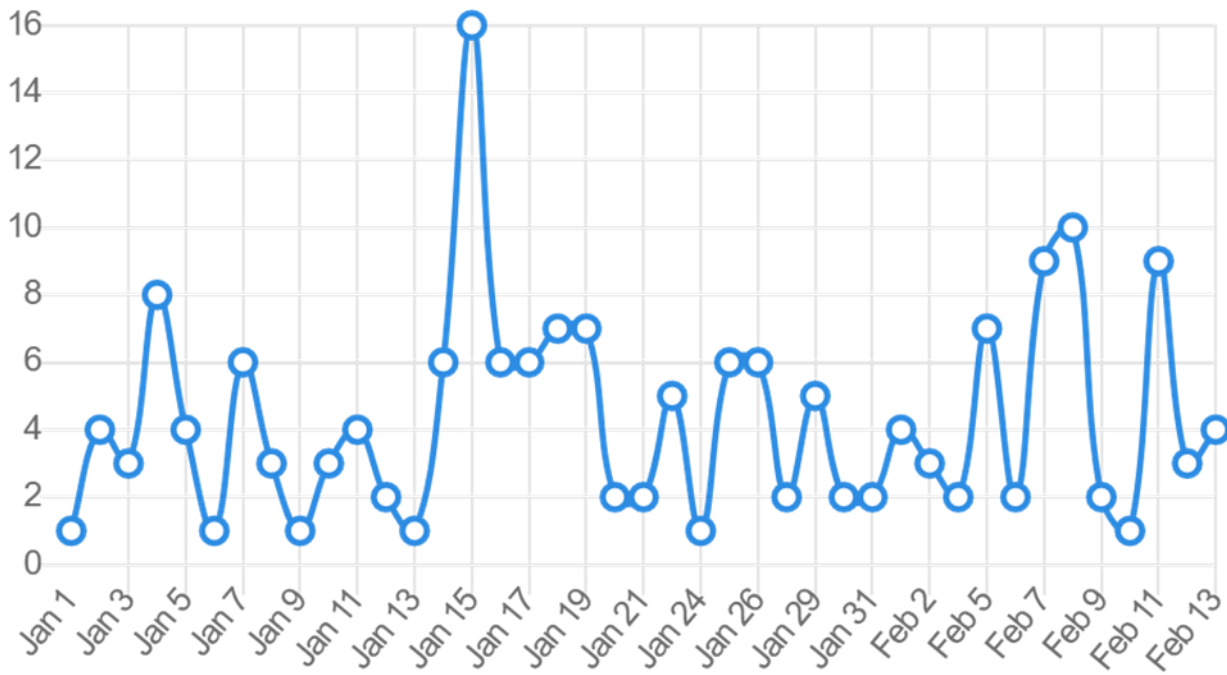
The chart below represents 2024 activity through February 13, 2024. Between the eleventh and seventeenth of January, a spike coincided with District Representative Bethany Small’s announcement that Amy Russo had completed Assistant District Representative training.

But the entire period pulsed with activity. Here are some of the highlights of 2024 so far:

- PAC Drawing Winners
- Districtwide Postings
- National Auxiliary Scholarship Forms
- SAC Program
- Edit Book Maintenance
- New Postal Service Health Benefits Videos
- OPM Retirement Quick Guide
- Pictures of New SAC Officers and Retirees

We already have some Spring District Meetings on the Events Calendar and the upcoming Mini Mail Survey, so you will want to check regularly for information on your district’s next meeting and your mailbox for the paper invitation. Visit your website often. We post new and useful information as it becomes available.

January 1 through February 13, 2024



98% New Visitors
2% Returning Visitors

Rural Carrier Moments

Rural Carrier Barbara Koontz Retires!



Barbara Koontz started working at the Mocksville Post Office in 1983. January 13th she ran her route for the last time,

For 40 1/2 years she was a dedicated rural carrier. About a month before her last day she asked her customers if they would put a balloon on their mailbox on her last day. Her husband had to come empty her mail Jeep 3 times that day so she could see to deliver the mail. Clearly she was well loved by her customers!

She was a big asset to the office and will be extremely missed.

Congratulations Barbara!



Rural Carrier Moments

Clinton Office Supports Breast Cancer Awareness

Back in October, during Breast Cancer Awareness Month, local steward Michelle Wilson organized an event to collect items and donations for a local cancer center. With the support of her coworkers at the Clinton Post Office they had a very successful outcome and collected many donations.

The North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers want to thank all of you at the Clinton Post Office for your kindness and support to a very worthy cause.



Clinton Post Office workers wear pink in support of Breast Cancer Awareness during their drive for donations to a local cancer center.

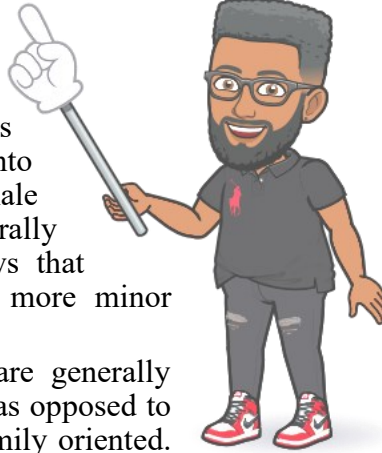


Auto-Home Insurance

Carlton Crutchfield

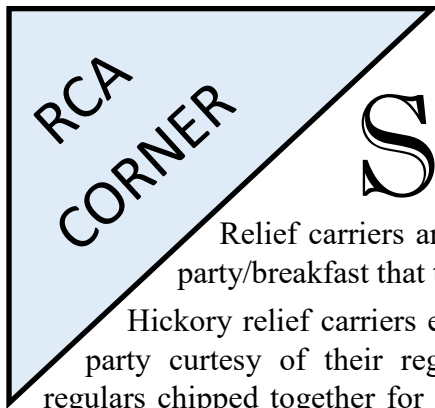
11 Things Affecting Your Car Insurance Rates

1. **Age and Gender** Statistics show that teenager and young adult males receive more citations and get into more accidents than their female counterparts. The opposite is generally true for senior drivers. Data shows that older females actually experience more minor accidents as they age.
2. **Marital Status** Married couples are generally more responsible behind the wheel as opposed to singles, as they tend to be more family oriented. Some newly-married couples may see their premiums drop by as much as 50% since car insurance companies will see them as less of a risk.
3. **Where You Live** You may have heard that most traffic accidents occur close to the home, which makes sense since the area in which you live is typically where you're driving the most. If you live in a highly-populated area, there are more risks since there are more cars on the road, leaving you more vulnerable to experience an accident, or be a victim of theft. If you reside in an upscale neighborhood, and have an accident that results in property damage, your costs will also generally be higher.
4. **Credit Score & History** Just like everything else, credit history affects your rates. The worse-off your credit report, the higher your rates will be.
5. **Your Job and Your Commute** Those who hold jobs that require a lot of driving or traveling, like delivery drivers or sales representatives, are at a higher risk of getting into an accident since they are on the road more. If you have an office job or something else that doesn't require any additional driving besides your normal commute - the person who only has to drive 10 minutes to get to work will be at lower risk than the person who has to drive 45 minutes, an hour, and so on. But it



also includes how often you drive in general. For instance, if you live in North Carolina, but frequently go see your family or old friends up in Virginia on the weekends, you, again, are at more of a risk of getting into an accident.

6. **Your Vehicle's Safety Rating** Cars that have a lot of safety features, such as airbags, lane-departure warning, back-up camera, blind-spot alerts, adaptive cruise control, etc. will both help prevent an accident and likely leave you with less injuries if an accident did occur. Car insurance companies also generally see SUVs, trucks, and minivans as safer vehicles than sedans, coupes, and compact cars.
7. **Engine Size** The larger and more powerful your engine, the higher your rate will be, since sports cars are made to be driven fast and aggressively, which means a higher risk of a collision.
8. **Your Vehicle's Age** Collision coverage rates for newer cars are higher than for older ones, simply because they're generally worth more. Collision insurance is usually required for new cars also since a majority of new cars are financed and the lending companies will require that you get full coverage during the term of your loan. Older vehicles that are involved in a wreck, most times will incur damages that will cost more than the cost of the vehicle is worth all together, and you will likely just have to get a newer vehicle to replace it.
9. **Your Vehicle's Rate of Theft** Every year, a list of top 10 most popular stolen cars is released. So, if the vehicle you drive is on this list, there's a good chance your rates will increase.
10. **Your Personal Driving History** Well, this one should be obvious. The more accidents and moving violations on your record, the higher your rates will be. And, if you have a clean driving record, you should be getting the cheapest rates, since you are at a much lower risk. Accidents and violations, however, don't stay on your record forever, so the longer you go without an accident or speeding ticket, the lower your rates will be over time.
11. **Where You Purchase Your Insurance** Rural Carrier's have a greater chance of lowering their current auto insurance rate by shopping with National General Insurance. So, if you would like to see what we can do for you, call to speak with an agent at (888) 327-7727 and receive your \$10 e-gift card for getting a quote!



Several offices sent in pictures of their Relief carriers and the appreciation party/breakfast that they had for them.

Hickory relief carriers enjoyed a breakfast party curtesy of their regular carriers. The regulars chipped together for a catered breakfast for all their relief carriers on Sunday Feb 4th. They chose Sunday so that their ARCs would be included.

The regulars at Concord also had a party and meal for their relief carriers. Carrboro had a party for their subs.

I hope there were many more moments across the state where our relief carriers were acknowledged and that you just didn't want your photo in the newspaper.

There are photos scattered throughout this issue from many different offices. Names of carriers have been included if provided.

Thank you to all that sent in photos!

Please send your photos to NCRLCASecTreas@gmail.com for possible publication in future issues. The deadline for the next issue is April 15th.



Fletcher Post Office RCA
Becca Jones.

Thank you to all our Relief Carriers for all you do!



Fletcher Post Office RCAs, Left to right: Jennifer Carpenter-Stovall, Madison Austin, Brittany Blankenship, Ashleigh Mays and Jacob Harwood.



This page has the RCAs & ARCs from the Hickory Post Office.





Burlington Post Office RCAs & PTFs, Left to right: Nazir Hamlet-Maye, Keith Harrington, Taylor Moore , Silvana Montione, Matthius Richmond (in the back), Gladys Espinoza, Betty Bradsher and Ishmael Huntley. Missing are Dylan Beal, Alexis Cooper and Shanique Armond. Alexis and Shanique were doing parcel runs when the picture was taken.



Aberdeen Post Office RCAs, Left to Right; Rona Gonzalez, Dean Smith, Melissa Hines, Amber Morris and Matt Williams.

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North Carolina District Representative

Bethany Small

Spring has sprung and as we move through the first quarter of 2024, I hope this new year has found each of you well. We have just completed the third Mini-Mail Survey and we are about to embark on disputes once again. Make sure that you refer to the documentation requirements posted on the National website (nrlca.org) before your disputes are sent off. Please remember, if no documentation is provided with your disputes, we will not be able to do much of anything with them. Documentation is essential to a successful dispute!!

The weather is getting warmer, and people are spending more time outside which causes me to think about several things. With Spring, we are back to focusing on our need to stay on top of our health, ensure that you are properly hydrated, stay away from direct-sun exposure as much as possible and always wear your sunscreen. Also, warmer weather means that we will be seeing more kids and pets outside playing so it would be wise to refocus our attention on our safety, and the safety of our customers, both the two- and four-legged kind. Pay attention to plants and vines growing around the mailboxes you serve – that is home to a lot of critters that sting and bite.

For this month’s article, I wanted to address something that is starting to concern me. I have noticed that over the last several months, we have seen a considerable increase in carriers receiving discipline for failure to follow instructions. We have carriers who are saying no to direct orders, carriers walking off the job when given a direct order they object to, carriers yelling and cursing out management, amongst other things. I must caution our craft against behaving this way. The Postal

Service is a very militaristic environment where expectations are that employees obey the directives of management. There are two occasions when we can object to a direct order and those two occasions are when the directive is illegal, or when the directive is unsafe. If the directive is legal and will not jeopardize our safety, we must comply with our orders and if we believe them to be outside our contract, then filing a grievance is the appropriate next step. Walking off the job or arguing with management is not the proper way to handle your objections. Please comply and file a grievance!

There is no denying that our craft is exhausted. It has been several years since I remember a ‘slow season.’ We have lost so many people and management’s failure to staff our craft has caused the leave replacements to work outrageous hours and regulars to feel compelled to chip in and try to help. I understand that it is difficult to blindly accept an order that we do not want to do as fatigue and frustration are sometimes difficult to see past, but the reality of our jobs is that management is the party that makes decisions, and we are the party that executes those decisions. When we fail to comply with a safe and lawful order, we are opening the door to discipline, up to and including removal. I implore each of you to consider the potential consequences of your decisions, and to act accordingly.

RRECS ~Please remember, if no documentation is provided with your disputes, we will not be able to do much of anything with them.

Please understand that you will eventually have to answer for those choices, and sometimes a momentary lapse in judgement can turn your life upside down. I have seen firsthand how that split-second decision made in anger can cause tremendous hardship in a carrier’s life. Please do not do that to yourself and your family.

Lastly, please remember that Edit Books and mapping are here to stay! Please keep your Edit Books up to date and make sure that you are reviewing your LTM/DPM on a regular basis. If you are having problems getting your Edit book for updates or you have not been permitted to review and update LTM/DPM, please contact your Steward! Happy March everyone!

NO TEXTING PLEASE

The NRLCA does not want the employees of the National Steward System (NSS) texting. This includes your DRs, ADRs, Area Stewards and Local Stewards

Texting is not an acceptable form of business communication.

When needed, please **CALL** your assigned Steward or Representative.

NCRLCA Dues for 2023-2024

Regular, PTF...Cash.....	\$829.00
1187...Bi-Weekly.....	\$31.88
Retired.....Cash.....	\$115.00
1187R...Monthly.....	\$9.58
73, RCA, RCR, ARC...Cash.....	\$276.00
1187.....Bi-Weekly.....	\$10.62

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.

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 Supervisor's Initials (Filing date)	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.

NCRLCA STATE CONVENTION

Junior Release Form

June 17-19, 2024

This is to certify that (**name**) _____

(**age**) _____ has my permission to take part in the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers Junior Auxiliary Program and activities sponsored by the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers Association and Auxiliary.

T-shirt size for my child is _____

All children must wear the Junior T-shirt when participating in Junior activities. This helps us to easily identify the children in our group. This shirt is provided free of charge.

Medical conditions and any other information we should be aware of.

Please list below and give treatment plan and/or medicine to be administered during this time.

Examples: bee sting allergy, food allergies, asthma, nose bleeds, headaches.

We hereby waive and release any and all rights and claims for damage and/or injuries he/she may receive while taking part in the Junior program and activities.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent or Guardian's signature required for all participants.

Hotel: _____ **Room #:** _____

Hotel and room number can be completed on site after your arrival.

Parent/Guardian Cell Phone Number: _____

One form for each child. Child must be at least six years old & in the 1st grade to participate.

Mail to Heather Greer, PO Box 41, Vilas, NC 28692

Or Email form to HeatherGreer74@gmail.com ~ **Subject Line:** Juniors - State Convention 2024

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CHAPLAIN

KAYLEIGH CASE

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Milks River, NC 28759

It's That Time Again!

Auxiliary News

From

*Heather Greer
Jr Aux Chaperon*

Well, its almost that time again...State Convention! I hope everyone is excited about the Great Wolf Lodge this year. This will be my first year as Junior Sponsor and I am very excited to be working with everyone again and getting to know all of you better.

Just to let you know a little bit about myself, I have been a Registered Nurse since 2004 and am the proud mother of two boys.

I was lucky enough to be able to volunteer to work with Sarah Stewart, the previous Junior Sponsor, at the last two conventions in Cherokee, NC. I am looking forward to working with her and the other volunteers again this year. The Auxiliary has also been very supportive.

Attention Juniors (and parents and grandparents): National Scholarships should be completed by March 1, 2024 (probably past now) and NC Scholarships are due June 1, 2024. I want to encourage everyone who is eligible to apply.

The Humanitarian Project is "The Hero Company". The Hero Company pairs shelter dogs and rescue dogs with veterans and first responders battling with PTSD. Keeping this in mind, this is a great opportunity for our Juniors to participate in the Junior Contest by entering either an essay or a poster according to their age category. I encourage everyone to participate!


State Convention, Great Wolf Lodge, Concord, June 17-19, 2024 - plan to be there! If attending, PLEASE send me name, age, address, parent/grandparent name and shirt size for your children.

Email: heathergreer74@gmail.com Subject Line: Juniors - State Convention 2024. The Junior form is in this issue.


I hope to see you there!



APRIL 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1  2	3	4	5	6 PP 9	
7	8	9	10	11	12 Pay Day	13
List Posted						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 PP 10
Relief Day Worklist & RCA Volunteer List Posted						
21	22	23	24	25	26 Pay Day	27
Relief Day Worklist & RCA Volunteer List Posted~ Ends on the 26th						
28	29 <i>Last Day for Delegate Nominations</i>	30				

MAY 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4 PP 11
5	6	7 <i>Last Day for District Meetings</i>	8	9	10 Pay Day	11
12 <i>Mother's Day</i>	13	14	15	16	17	18 PP 12 Armed Forces Day
19	20	21	22	23	24 Pay Day	25
26	27 	28	29	30	31	

Important Dates

March 31	Easter Sunday	May 7	Last Day for District Meetings
April 13-26	Relief Day Worklist Posted	May 12	Mother's Day
April 13-26	RCA Sunday/Holiday	May 18	Armed Forces Day
	Volunteer List Posted	May 27	Memorial Day Holiday
April 29	Last Day for Delegate Nominations	June 17-19	State Convention



NCRLCA
424 WAPITI DR
SPRING LAKE NC 28390-1562

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
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FAYETTEVILLE NC
28302

Address Service Requested

Official Convention Call

North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers' Association

119th State Convention

Great Wolf Lodge

10175 Weddington Rd, Concord, NC 28027

June 17 thru June 19, 2024

Room Rate is \$129.99 + tax/night Group Code is 2406NCRU

Call 866-751-9653

Or reserve online at www.greatwolf.com

Reservations must be made by May 15, 2024

Official notice is hereby given that the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers' Association State Convention will convene at Great Wolf Lodge in Concord, North Carolina on June 17-19, 2024.

Business begins at 8:00 am on Monday June 17, 2024. Elections for the positions of President, Vice-President (one year terms), Secretary/Treasurer (two year term) and Executive Committeeman (three year term) will be conducted on Wednesday June 19, 2024.