



# NORTH CAROLINA



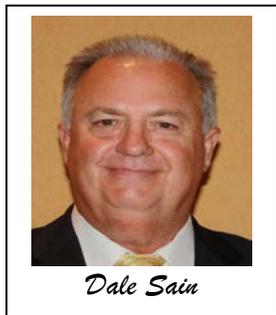
# RURAL CARRIER

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

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<b>Inside This Issue</b>	
Auto/Homeowners Ins.	8
Auxiliary News	17
Calendar	18
Chaplain's Message	3
District Representatives	12-14
Important Meetings	8
National Convention Letter	15
Obituaries	3
Officer Assignments	2
PAC	9-11
President's Message	1
RCHBP	7-8
Retirement	5-7
SAC Information	14
Safety	4&5
Senators/Representatives	16
What to do	15

**State Meetings**  
Please check page 8 for info on the, South Atlantic Conference and 2015 State Convention.



*Dale Sain*

## President's Message

Hello to all my Rural Carrier union brothers and sisters. As I write this article, we are gathered in New Bern N.C. for our annual Fall Booster meeting. On our trip down here, your state officers (Daniel Caudle, Derek Harpe and myself) had the distinct honor of recognizing a fifty year union member. Mr. Duelon Heath (Van Heath's father) recently achieved that remarkable milestone. Our National President, Jeanette Dwyer, sent him a congratulatory letter in which she thanked him for his dedication and support for the association. We need that

same type of support from all the N.C. rural carriers. In a recent service talk, a postal manager informed us that rural carriers had an "easy" job, and then implied that we were overpaid. Unfortunately, this is the attitude that many of us face on a daily basis. I take issue with this line of thinking, and I encourage you to be strong, and to be proud of the service that you provide to your customers. Do not be coerced or pressured by managers to save time by cutting corners that may sabotage your safety. Utilize your stewards, DR's, and ADR's when discipline, threats or harassment come your way.

I am writing this early on the morning of our booster meeting; at the end of my article I will include a summary of the events of the day. Now, I want to share information that will surely benefit many of you. Below you will find a list of websites for rural carriers that will provide you with resources about your job and the rural craft. Please check these out.

- ✓ ncrca.com (State site)
- ✓ nrlca.org (National site)
- ✓ www.liteblue.usps.gov (national site with a host of personnel issues, information and actions)
- ✓ usps.com (e-career info)
- ✓ eap4you.com (employee assistance)
- ✓ opm.gov/insure (retirement info and services)
- ✓ apcu.com (Atlanta Postal Credit Union)
- ✓ tsp.gov (Thrift Savings Plan)

These are just a few of the more important websites available to you.

Our Fall Booster is completed; we had approximately sixty members and sixteen Auxiliary members in attendance. Information was presented on topics of safety, insurance and retirement. Harold Knight spoke about the Provident Guild and Van Heath updated us on PAC. Over \$1,700.00 was raised during our meeting! Our DR's and ADR's led a three hour seminar on hot issues in our state. All in all, it was a great day. Please consider attending upcoming state meetings, and remember SAC (South Atlantic Conference) coming up in Atlanta on January 24, 2015. Be safe out there in these busy days ahead.

God bless you all. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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Peach Belt	5	Ashe	6	Albemarle	2
Roanoke Chowan	7	Smokey Mountain	11	Tri-County	25
Southeastern	8	Guilford County	30	Five County	28
Burke/Caldwell	9	French Broad	31	Cleveland/Gaston	29
Caswell County	14	Harnett County	32	McDowell/Mt. Mitchell	36
Randolph County	42	Tidewater	52	Rutherford/Polk	47
Rockingham County	46	Watauga/Avery	57	Wayne County	56

**Executive Committee**

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MITCH REECE**

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Cumberland/Hoke	20	Alleghany County	4	Alamance	1
Sea Level	23	Durham County	12	Brushy Mountain	3
Wake County	24	Catawba/Lincoln	15	Foothills	10
Person	41	Central Carolina	16	Yadkin River	26
Piedmont	50	Mecklenburg	38	Johnston County	34
Union County	54	Orange County	39	Roanoke	44
				Tar River	51

**Appointed Officers**

**CHAPLAIN**

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**MAIL NEWS ITEMS BY 10<sup>TH</sup> OF MONTH  
AND ADDRESS CHANGES  
TO:**

**DEREK HARPE**

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Phone 336-998-5293

**Please notify the officer assigned to your district four weeks ahead of your meeting so as to eliminate any conflict of meeting dates as much as possible. District Representatives Corriher and Suttles are unassigned and will attend as many district meetings as their schedule permits.**

## Obituaries

**James (Jim) Odell Kiger**, formerly of Winston-Salem, passed away September 2, 2014. Jim was born June 24, 1944 to Robert Odell and Maude Adams Kiger. Growing up in Mocksville, NC. Jim was graduate of Davie County High School, Class of 1962 and Winston-Salem Business College.

Jim proudly served in Vietnam with the 312th Medical Evacuation Unit, and retired from the Army and the Army National Guard as a Staff Sergeant with 20+ years of service. Jim was a member of the Midway Lions Club where he was honored with the Jack Stickley Award, Lions Club foundation. For 30+ years, Jim was a rural letter carrier for the US Postal Service in Advance, NC. Upon retirement, he worked at Davidson Funeral Home for 10+ years. He was currently a member of Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, but attended First Baptist Church of Myrtle Beach.

Jim is survived by his wife, Linda, daughters, Abigail and Andra, a son, Todd and four grandsons and a granddaughter.

**Roy Watson Perry** of Sanford passed away Monday October 13, 2014.

Mr. Perry was born in Cumnock, son of the late Garland and Robena Sloan Perry. In addition to his parents, Roy was preceded in death by a son, Michael Dixon Patterson, and a sister Betty Perry Faulk. Mr. Perry attended Oakridge Military Academy and Campbell College (now University). He served the US Army and after his training in the States, he was sent to England and then to France.

Roy loved camping and traveled through 48 states with his wife after retiring 30 years with the Post Office. He was a long-time leader with Scouting. He joined the Lions Club in 1949 and held office of President, Secretary, Fair Chairman, Zone chairman, Deputy District Governor, Eye Bank Chairman, and was honored as a Melvin Jones Fellow for dedicated humanitarian service. Roy volunteered with the Cardiac Rehab program and also at the hospital for a number of years. He was an active member of First Baptist Church, and the Brotherhood Sunday School Class.

He is survived by his wife Peggy Buchanan Perry; sons, Dan Perry and Tom Patterson; daughter, Hope Nobles; four granddaughters, Holly Eldridge, Rebecca Ring, Caroline Dangson, and Amanda Foster; two grandsons, Daniel Perry and Jacob Perry; nine great-grandchildren.

**Dorothy Mae Reel Rutledge**, age 87, of Sherrills Ford, died on Wednesday, November 12, 2014.

Mrs. Rutledge was born July 3, 1928, in Lincoln County, to the late John McLean, (a deceased rural carrier from Lincolnton) and Georgie Lee Ballard Reel. She worked as a rural letter carrier for the United States Postal Service in Sherrills Ford. Mr. & Mrs. Rutledge also owned the Crouse NC Post Office.

She is survived by her husband, Enloe Rutledge of Sherrills Ford; two daughters, Marilyn Stieneke of Raleigh, and Rev. Amy Vaughan Sherrills Ford; and four grandchildren.

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### Chaplain's Message

Doug Byrum, Chaplain

#### A Night of Miracles

Read Luke: 2:1-5

*There is hope for your future, says the Lord.*

*-Jeremiah 31:17 (NRSV)*

What if the Internal Revenue Service decided that all adults should be required to return to their hometowns to pay taxes? We would call it unreasonable, at best. In a similar vein, I'm sure Mary and Joseph grumbled as they made their way to Bethlehem. The road was difficult; they had left behind in Nazareth all that was familiar. Their future was uncertain; they were poor and inexperienced when it came to marriage and parenting. Where would they stay in Bethlehem? How long would they have to be there? Every step toward the future brought anxiety.

But there was good news to come. God was quietly working through them for the redemption of the whole world. We know that now; they didn't know that then. They had to trust.

There is good news for us as well. For most people, whether the change is huge or small, we don't like it. But in the midst of change and chaos, God is at work for our growth and individual life—for us as individuals, as families, as a church, and as the whole human race. In this season of miracles, God asks us to do one thing: trust.

**Thought for the Day:** Where can I find good news in what makes me grumble?

**Prayer:** God of all miracles, help us to trust you when life is uncertain. Open our eyes to see your redemption unfolding. Thank you for allowing us to be part of it. Amen.

**Prayer Focus:** Someone who needs a miracle.

Merry Christmas: From our house to yours. Doug & Linda



## SAFETY

*Vicki Gray*

### Have a Safe Holiday

PMG Donahue has said the USPS is estimating a 12%-14% increase in parcel volume during this holiday season. The Postal Service expects to deliver between 450 million and 470 million packages this year during the Christmas period. Last year the USPS delivered 434 million packages during the holiday period. That number was up 19% over the 2012 Christmas season. And parcel volume was up 12% in 2012 over 2011. I would not be surprised if the USPS actually was a bit conservative with their estimate this year.

We keep getting more & more package business, because we can get them delivered. We deliver them on time, to the correct address, and with tracking points all along the way. From the time it leaves until the moment it arrives at its destination our customers can tell where their package is.

Parcel volume keeps going up, up, up! Not just in the number of packages but also in the size of these packages. How are we going to get them all delivered this year?

The plan is to use Sunday delivery. Starting November 17<sup>th</sup> some areas will be using RCAs to deliver on Sunday. This will include all parcels, not just Amazon, and will continue through December 21st. The USPS says the decision to deliver packages on Sunday is to keep the mail moving, to keep the system clear of packages during the holiday season.

I want to caution those of you delivering on Sunday to be extra careful. The other drivers on the road are not expecting to see a mail carrier out there delivering on a Sunday.

I also want to make sure all of you know your rights in regards to the delivery of your routes during this time. Management tends to come up with new directives during this time. Here are a few of them.

1. Carriers cannot work over their daily evaluation.
2. Absolutely no overtime.
3. No auxiliary assistance.

4. Changing your reporting time.
5. Call office if you are not going to be back as scheduled.

The response from our National Board is this:  
**“First and foremost we are instructing all rural carriers that they are to work safely and should not be pressured to work in a manner that places their well-being or life at risk.”**

The National Board is alarmed by some of these directives as they are in violation of handbooks, manuals and the contract.

If any rural carrier feels that they are being pressured or forced to work in a manner that places them in an unsafe situation, just to comply with these unrealistic directives, you may request a **PS Form 1767**, fill out the form and return it to your immediate supervisor. Discuss the issue with your immediate supervisor and, if unresolved, immediately file a grievance and contact the assigned Assistant District Representative or District Representative for your area.

**Article 8 Section 2** Addresses schedules and the fact that the carrier's work day may vary above or below the daily evaluation of the route.

Management may take the "knee jerk" reaction and require carriers to carry DPS mail to the street. This should only be done when carriers are consistently working over their weekly evaluation and should be monitored all year not just as a reaction in “trying to make the numbers.”

Scheduling is addressed in **Article 30.G.** of the contract. It states, in part, "Schedules should be realistic, based upon the receipt and availability of mail and other related service conditions. The rural carrier will **receive reasonable advanced notice** when the schedule is to be changed.”

Management has the right to control overtime hours. Carriers are not entitled to overtime. They can give auxiliary assistance to control overtime hours during the Christmas Period.

Management **cannot require** you to call the office if you are running behind schedule.

If any of these things are being done in your office then I urge you to call your DR or ADR and let them know. The union can't help you if they don't even know about your issues.

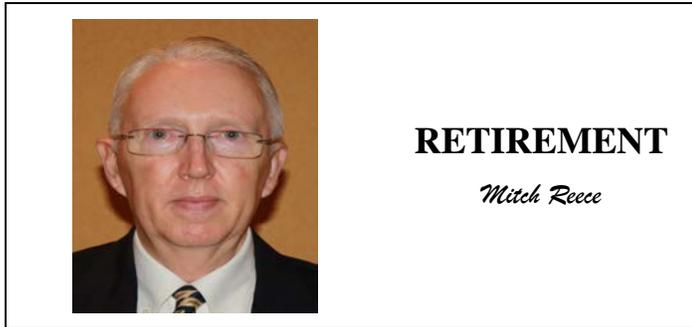
This can be a very stressful time of year. I am concerned that management will be focused on timekeeping, pushing both the regular carriers and the RCAs to keep the times down. Do not let management pressure you into unsafe practices. Please do not slack off on safety procedures to rush through your routes. Cutting corners could be

dangerous. Remember those other drivers out there maybe be rushing to do something also. They may not be paying attention to you as you try to deliver the mail.

Our customers are counting on us to deliver their holiday packages. Wear a smile when you hand that package over. Let's all do our best to make this a truly wonderful time of the year!

I wish you a Safe and Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year!

Happy Holidays, Vicki



This is the second in a series of articles regarding life events after retirement.

### **Death & Survivor Benefits**

When a Federal employee or retiree dies, monthly or lump sum benefits may be payable to survivors. You can learn about these *Death and Survivor benefits* through the menu links to the left and summaries below.

### **Deceased Employees**

Explains monthly and lump sum benefits from the death of a Federal employee.

### **Deceased Annuitants**

Explains monthly and lump sum benefits from the death of a retiree.

### **Deceased Survivors**

Explains lump sum benefits from the death of a survivor of a Federal employee or annuitant.

- CSRS survivor information (Information on this can be found on OPM.gov)
- FERS survivor information (Information on this can be found on OPM.gov)

### **Child Beneficiaries**

Explains the monthly benefits that may be due children of deceased Federal employees and annuitants.

### **Students**

A surviving child of a deceased Federal employee or annuitant who is between the ages of 18 and 22, and is a full-time student at a recognized educational institution may be eligible for a monthly survivor annuity benefit.

### **Reemployment in Federal Service**

#### **CSRS Annuity**

#### **Annuity Stops**

Reemployment will cause your annuity to stop if–

- You are a disability annuitant whom OPM has found recovered or restored to earning capacity prior to reemployment;
- You are a disability annuitant who was medically disqualified for continued membership in the National Guard;
- Your annuity is based on an involuntary separation and your new appointment is permanent in nature; or
- You received a Presidential appointment subject to retirement deductions.

### **Federal Employees Health Benefits Coverage (FEHB)**

If your annuity stops upon reemployment, your health insurance coverage as an annuitant stops. If your appointment is one that gives you eligibility for FEHB coverage, you can enroll in the program when you are reemployed.

### **Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Coverage (FEGLI)**

If your annuity stops upon reemployment, your life insurance as an annuitant stops without a right to convert to an individual policy. You acquire life insurance coverage as an employee under the same conditions as any other employee who is rehired in the Federal service.

### **Future Benefits**

When your reemployment ends, a new determination about your rights to retirement benefits will be made. Your prior retirement benefit generally has no impact on your new retirement benefit.

### **Dual Compensation Waiver**

If reemployed with a Department of Defense agency, you are subject to a dual compensation waiver that allows you to be reemployed with receipt of both annuity and salary. You will not be entitled to further retirement benefits under this waiver. If you retire under a discontinued service provision, you may elect to not receive this waiver and become subject to the CSRS reemployment provisions, which will effectively make you an employee since your annuity would terminate.

In addition, there is a temporary provision of the law that allows you to be reemployed on a limited basis with receipt of both annuity and salary. See Special Reemployment Provision of PL111-84 (PDF file) [61.51 KB].

### **Annuity Continues**

If your annuity does not stop under the rules above, you will continue to receive your CSRS annuity while you are working. Your pay will be reduced by the amount of your annuity paid for the period you work. If you do not work full time, the

reduction in pay will be adjusted proportionately.

There is a temporary provision of the law that allows you to be reemployed on a limited basis with receipt of both annuity and salary. See Special Reemployment Provision of PL111-84 (PDF file) [62 KB].

### **Federal Employees Health Benefits Coverage (FEHB)**

If your annuity continues after you are reemployed, your FEHB coverage will generally be withheld by your agency in order to take advantage of the premium conversion for health benefits. Your agency should alert OPM to your reemployment and inform OPM that they will take over your FEHB coverage. OPM will suspend your coverage as an annuitant until you have separated from your reemployed position. If your appointment does not make you eligible for FEHB with the agency or if you elect not to participate in HB premium conversion with the agency, OPM will continue to withhold premiums from your annuity payment.

### **Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Coverage (FEGLI)**

If your annuity continues after you are reemployed, you retain the life insurance you have as a retiree. However, if the type of appointment you have makes you eligible for FEGLI coverage as an employee, any Basic Life insurance, Standard Option (Option A), and Family Optional (Option C) insurance you have as an annuitant are suspended and you will have coverage as an employee. If you have Additional Optional (Option B) insurance, you may continue your Option B annuitant, or elect to have it as an employee.

### **Future Benefits**

Reemployment may increase your retirement and death benefits. As a reemployed annuitant, you can earn either a-

- Supplemental annuity, or
- Redetermined annuity.

A **supplemental annuity** is an annuity that is added on to your present annuity. If you work as a reemployed annuitant on a full time, continuous basis for at least 1 year, you may be entitled to a supplemental annuity. If you work part time, you must work a proportionately longer period to earn a supplemental annuity.

A **redetermined annuity** is a recomputed annuity that takes the place of your present annuity. If your reemployment continues for at least 5 years, or the part-time equivalent, and you qualify for a retirement upon separation from your reemployment service you may elect a redetermined annuity.

Intermittent service cannot be counted in establishing eligibility for a supplemental or redetermined annuity,

and cannot be used in the computation of a supplemental annuity.

CSRS reemployed annuitant service cannot be credited in a supplemental or redetermined annuity unless a deposit is paid after separation, or retirement deductions are withheld. If you are reemployed in a full-time or part-time position, you may elect to have retirement deductions withheld from your pay. The amount of retirement deductions or deposit is a percentage of your basic pay before it is reduced by the amount of your annuity.

If you die while reemployed, after establishing eligibility for either a supplemental or redetermined annuity, your surviving spouse may have his or her survivor benefit either increased or recomputed.

### **Dual Compensation Waivers**

There are two laws that permit reemployment without salary offset or benefit termination.

### **Special Reemployment Provision of PL 108-136**

Under Public Law 108-136, effective November 24, 2003, reemployment with a Department of Defense (DOD) agency is automatically under a dual compensation waiver. This means that DOD can reemploy an annuitant without taking an offset of salary or without OPM terminating the annuity if the annuitant retired under a CSRS discontinued service retirement. A CSRS discontinued service annuitant may elect to waive the dual compensation and become an employee (that is, their annuity will be terminated). A disability annuitant would still be subject to medical recovery (before age 60) and restored to earning capacity criteria. However, under the special DOD dual compensation waiver, a disability annuitant would not be subject to administrative recovery. If someone is reemployed under a dual compensation waiver, no further retirement benefits, such as a supplemental or redetermined annuity, are payable. The agency still needs to contact OPM regarding the reemployment since health benefits and life insurance need to be handled in the same manner as any reemployed annuitant.

### **Special Reemployment Provision of PL111-84 (PDF file) [62 KB] (The National Defense Authorization Act)**

Public Law 111-84, approved on October 28, 2009, allows reemployment of CSRS and FERS annuitants on a limited basis with receipt of both annuity and salary. This provision applies to Executive agencies (excluding the Department of Defense and GAO), the Postal Service, and the Judicial and Legislative Branch agencies.

This authority may be used by agencies when they determine that it is necessary to-

- Fulfill functions critical to the mission of the agency, or any component of that agency;

- Assist in the Implementation of oversight of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 or the Troubled Asset Relief Program under title I of the Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008.
- Assist in the development, management, or oversight of agency procurement actions;
- Assist the Inspector General for the agency in the performance of the mission of the Inspector General;
- Promote appropriate training or mentoring programs of employees;
- Assist in the recruitment or retention of employees; or
- Respond to an emergency involving a direct threat to life or property or other unusual circumstances. Individuals reemployed under this provision, serve under appointments limited to a year or less. An annuitant may not serve under this provision for more than 520 hours of service during the period ending 6 months following the individual's annuity commencing date; for more than 1040 hours of service during any 12-month period; or for more than a total of 3120 hours. Individuals employed under these provisions are not entitled to any additional annuity benefits based upon that employment.

This provision expires on October 27, 2014.

#### **Special Information for CSRS Disability Annuitants Considering Federal Reemployment**

- If you are reemployed on a permanent basis in a position equivalent in grade and pay to the position from which you retired, OPM may find that you have recovered from your disability.
- If you are reemployed subject to medical and physical qualification standards equivalent to those of the position from which you retired, OPM may find that you have recovered from your disability.
- The pay of the position in which you are reemployed, prior to the offset of annuity, will be included as earnings in determining whether the disability annuity will stop due to restoration to earning capacity.
- Receipt of, or continued entitlement to receive, full or partial injury compensation benefits from the Department of Labor's Office of Workers' Compensation during reemployment, when those benefits are based on the same injury or medical condition that is the basis for OPM's award of disability retirement, is conclusive evidence (unless there is contravening medical evidence) that you have not recovered from your disability.
- If you are age 60 or over, your annuity cannot be stopped because of your earnings, and OPM can find that you are recovered only if you request to be found recovered.

#### **Federal Employees Dental and Vision Program (FEDVIP)**

#### **Not receiving an annuity**

If you are no longer an annuitant, then your FEDVIP coverage as an annuitant ends. If your appointment is one that gives you eligibility for FEHB coverage, then you may enroll in the FEDVIP program when you are reemployed.

#### **Still receiving an annuity**

If you go back to work and you are in a position that conveys FEDVIP eligibility, you must contact BENEFEDS (1-877-888-3337), if you want your premiums to be deducted from your paychecks. Most reemployed annuitants want to make that change because retirees pay FEDVIP premiums with post-tax dollars and employees pay FEDVIP premiums with pre-tax dollars. If your new position does not convey FEDVIP eligibility you may retain the coverage as an annuitant.

#### **Employment in the Private Sector**

##### **Effect on Your Basic Annuity:**

- **If you retired under CSRS -**

##### ***CSRS Basic Benefit***

Your employment outside the Federal service will not affect your basic annuity payments unless you're receiving a disability annuity and are under age 60. If you're a disability retiree under age 60, you will be subject to the 80% earnings limit. You reach the 80% earnings limit if, in any calendar year, your income from wages and self-employment is at least 80 percent of the current rate of basic pay for the position from which you retired.

If you have any questions regarding retirement, please call me. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you.



If you were at the Fall Booster, you learned a lot from several people about auto and home insurance. The stewards, as always, had a lot of good information for us on the upcoming mail count and what's new in both districts.

We have a great representative in Ali Sherrill, Supervisor Coventry Healthcare. She was invited to attend the Fall Booster but was unable. She sent a lot of great information to share.

Everyone who has Coventry Insurance should have received a letter and a packet. If not, you need to contact Coventry at 1-800-638-8432. The cost for

Rural Carriers in 2015 self only is \$76.45 and family \$110.15.

One of the problems I keep hearing about is, my provider is not in the network. You can request that your provider be added, by going on line to their website at [rcbp.coventryhealthcare.com](http://rcbp.coventryhealthcare.com) and clicking the provider nomination form. This form can be submitted to Coventry for consideration. If you are looking and see that in 2015 your provider is not in the Aetna network, then you need to call the number above to have them help you out.

#### Here are some Did You Know Facts:

- Coverage for preventative care is paid at 100% when services are rendered by an in-network provider \$10 copayment for services provided in a convenient care clinic, such as a CVS minute Clinic or a Walgreen Take Care Clinic.
- The RCBP pays 100% of covered charges for drugs, services and supplies for the treatment of cancer!
- Combined the separate out-of-pocket limits for medical care and covered prescription medications.
- CVS Caremark has changed its name to CVS Health.
- Members will access Aetna Choice POSII (Open Access) providers (we will no longer use Coventry National Network).
- RCBP members can now obtain their flu shots at their CVS Health participating pharmacy using their drug card with no member cost sharing!
- CVS Health now has a dedicated number for RCBP members: 1-800-292-4182.
- All members will change from their current Coventry National Network to Aetna Choice POS II beginning 01/01/2015.
- All members will receive a new RCBP ID along with a letter at the end of November or December. It is important that you do not begin to use this card until 01/01/2015.

If you need help call the customer service for RCBP at 1-800-638-8432. Their hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00 am to 5:30 pm and Friday 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.



*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!  
From Derek and Pam Harpe*

## Auto-Homeowners' Insurance Update

*Brenda Gibbs*

### How does your insurance rate?

- ✓ Do they have 60 plus years of experience?
- ✓ Do they have an understanding of the Tort Claims Act?
- ✓ Do they have full rental car coverage?
- ✓ Do they have knowledge of rural carriers?

### What discounts do they offer?

- ✓ Paid in full discounts
- ✓ Safe driver discounts
- ✓ Multi-vehicle discount
- ✓ On-star subscriber discount

### What services do they offer?

- ✓ Convenient payment options
- ✓ Guaranteed claims service satisfaction
- ✓ Valet service- After an accident will your repaired auto be returned to you and the rental picked up?
- ✓ After an accident will they find a replacement vehicle if yours has been totaled?
- ✓ Will they inspect it after an accident to ensure it's in top condition?
- ✓ Emergency expense allowance

Be sure you get the most out of your insurance company and the most value for your money.

### 2015 State Convention

**June 14-17, 2015**

Hilton Wilmington Riverside Hotel  
301 N Water St Wilmington, NC 28401  
(910) 763-5900; \$139 / night

### South Atlantic Conference (SAC)

Place: Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel  
1325 Virginia Avenue  
Atlanta, Ga 30344

**Saturday January 24 – Monday January 26, 2015**

**Room rates: \$96 plus tax with parking included  
(\$6 parking for those staying off-site)**

**Phone #: 404-768-6660 (ask for SAC rate)  
888-233-9527**

South Atlantic Conference SAC 2015 will be held in Atlanta, Georgia January 24, 25 & 26, 2015, at the Crowne Plaza Atlanta Airport, Atlanta, GA. Telephone # 1-404-768-6660. The room rate will be \$96 with free parking for guests of the hotel. If you stay elsewhere and drive in the parking will be \$6 per day, if you get your parking pass stamped the charge for parking will be half price. Please plan to attend the Atlanta Postal Credit Unions' Annual Meeting also on Saturday, January 24.



# We're Never Safe From Congress

## Have I gotten your attention yet?

Recently I spoke with our lobbyist Paul Swartz. There are six bills before the house and senate that I have been watching. The first two are H.R. 630 (DeFazio) and S.316 (Sanders). They are called "the Postal Service Protection Act" and if passed into law would eliminate the future retiree health benefit prefunding requirement, protect six-day mail delivery and prevent the closure of rural post offices. Paul says he doesn't see these two going anywhere.

The next one is H.R. 2748 (Issa). This is the House version of "The Postal Reform Act." This bill moves the Postal Service to five-day delivery, removes protections for injured workers and eliminates to-the-door delivery in favor of cluster boxes. Paul says he hasn't heard much about Chairman Issa's plans during the lame duck session of Congress to advance HR. 2748. He thinks if any version of postal reform is to pass the House; it will be up to the House Leadership to bring it up.

Next is S. 1486 (Carper). This is the Senate version of "The Postal Reform Act." It threatens the integrity of the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program by removing postal workers and retirees from the program, cuts workers' compensation benefits and eliminates the Federal Employees Retirement System pension for new hires. Paul says that Sen. Carper would like to get his bill passed during the lame duck session, but he thinks it's a long shot. Lame Duck sessions are typically predicated on how the elections went. If the Democrats had kept control of the Senate, we might have seen something on postal reform get passed but even then it was a long shot. Republicans won control of the Senate and he doesn't see much getting done during the lame duck session as the Republicans will control both houses of Congress next year, so they will want to do as little as possible knowing they control the agenda next year.

Finally, we have H.R. 4193 (Issa) and S.2117 (Warren), "The Smart Savings Act." These bills would take new employees automatically enrolled in

the Thrift Savings Plan and have their funds deposited in the L (Lifecycle) Fund instead of the G Fund. Paul thinks both HR 4193 and S. 2117 have a very good chance of passing as there seems to be a lot of support for this non-controversial legislation. In reality, once again it all comes down to when does Congress *have* to get done during the lame duck in the time they have (i.e. fund the government, nominations) versus *what they would like* to get done during the lame duck.

I highly recommend that anyone who has not already signed up for the E-Network Activist mailing list go to the National Website and sign up as soon as possible. We cannot risk waiting on a monthly National Magazine or bi-monthly state paper to learn about what is happening in Washington. The E-Network Activist list allows Paul or Jeanette to notify us whenever it is important that we take action immediately. Please sign up as soon as possible.

**We desperately need your financial support to keep our lobbyists working on Capitol Hill and --- - if you have not called your member of Congress and both Senators to voice your support of six day delivery; WHY THE HECK NOT? The election is now behind us and Senator Hagan's seat will have a new occupant come January. Continue to call them and write letters to their in-state offices. Make your voice heard and protect your job and benefits and the future of the United State Postal Service.**

NC Membership (10/31/2014)	4,668	
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Members missing (10/31/2014)	4,563	(97.75%)

2.25% of our members are carrying a lot for the rest of us. Please send in your PAC donation today.

Just imagine the power this organization would have if the numbers above could be reversed. UPS would no longer be the largest lobbying organization, it would be **US**.

You don't have to break your bank account to support PAC. We have members that have donated

\$5 this year and we will have members that will hit \$500 or \$1000 or more by the end of the State Convention. Every donation helps. Make your donation today.

Thank you.

**Mail PAC Donations to:**

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25722 US HWY 64  
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Cell: 252-809-2144

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### Mid-Carolinas District Representative

*Sally Corriher*

Mail Count is coming February 7 and ending on February 28, 2015. Remember it is an opt-out count. Both you and the manager have to sign the opt-out form or you will be counted.

Mail Count Training has been set up. The dates for the training in Mid Carolina will be on the following dates:

- ✓ **January 6, 2015--Kinston at the Hampton Inn, 1382 Hwy 258 South**
- ✓ **January 7, 2015--Wilmington at the Hampton Inn University, 124 Old Eastwood Road**
- ✓ **January 8, 2015--Fayetteville at the Holiday I-95, 1944 Cedar Creek Road**

- ✓ **January 13, 2015--Charlotte at the Holiday Inn, 2707 Little Rock Road**
- ✓ **January 14, 2015--Asheville at the Comfort Suites, 890 Brevard Road**

**TRAINING START TIME 6:30 PM**

**ENDING TIME 9:30 PM**

Mail Count Training is for **YOU** so please make every effort to attend a training near you!

### Leave Year

The new leave year begins on January 10, 2015. If you have over 55 annual leave days, you need to take your any leave over the 55 days prior to January 10 or you will lose those days. Management should work with any regular carrier who is in this situation. Call an Assistant District Representative or me if you are having problems scheduling your leave.

## Safety

Any rural carrier who involved in a preventable vehicle accident must be retrained prior to being allowed to drive a postal vehicle (LLV, FFV, or van) or a POV on duty. The District Manager must approve all training requests. He will approve the training within a day of receipt in his office the request for training. Local management is responsible for getting this request to the District Manager quickly. It has been brought to our attention that the carriers are sitting home for more than a day while waiting for this training to be scheduled. You should file a grievance immediately for compensation for the days you are home waiting for training.

Please drive with your eyes on the road—not on the mail or on the cell phone. **Drive defensively!** For some reason other drivers cannot see the big LLV or the flashing amber lights that NC requires all rural carriers to have on our personal vehicles. The **working** amber light is not an option, but a NC law. It has to be seen for 500 feet in both directions. Remember, safety is every ones responsibility.

Christmas will be here very soon. Barbara, Tracy, Bethany, Brenda, Kelly, and I wish you and all your family a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**Greensboro**  
**District Representative**

*Frank Suttles*

### News from the Greensboro District

#### Christmas Overtime

The Christmas overtime period is from Saturday, December 6 through Friday, December 26, 2014. During this time a regular rural carrier who works his relief day and is entitled to an X-day must be given the X-day as scheduled by the employer within the same pay period in which the relief day was worked. (Ref. Article 9.2.C.S)

If the X day is not received within the same pay period, the employer will compensate the regular rural carrier 100% of the carrier's daily rate of pay in lieu of the X day. (Ref. Article 9.2.C.S)

Regular rural carriers are prohibited from scheduling previously earned X days from the beginning of the guarantee period (October 18,

2014} through the end of the designated Christmas period (December 26, 2014}).

**Remember:** Christmas overtime is not an entitlement. Management has the right to control overtime by utilizing auxiliary assistance in the office or on the street. While management has the right to control overtime, carriers should not be intimidated or pressured to work unsafely by rushing around the route.

Christmas assistance is additional service provider on a rural route during the Christmas period. For regular carriers, Christmas assistance applies only to assistance given by the carrier, on his/her relief day, while a replacement carrier carries the full route.

For replacement carriers it applies to any assistance provided on a regular or auxiliary route during the Christmas period.

Regular carriers can perform Christmas assistance only on their relief day. Therefore, only regular carriers assigned to a J or K route may report Christmas assistance. There are no provisions for paying a regular carrier for performing service on a Sunday, on an actual holiday, or on any route other than their own.

#### MAIL COUNT

I urge each rural carrier, both regular and substitute carriers, to attend upcoming mail count trainings. I don't care how many counts you been through or mail count trainings that you been to, most carriers will forget something, for at least a few days during the mail count. Missed opportunities at a mail count can be fatal. Once you've gone through the count and gotten all that you thought you were entitled to, invariably, you find or see something that you forgot. Remember, it's your route, it's your money, is it not worth a little time to attend the mail count trainings to make sure you're going to be all you can be.

RCA's, you ask, how does this affect me? During the mail count you may have to work a route on a daily basis. If it's not counted correctly then the wrong credits would be in place and you would not get the proper time that you deserve. This cuts down the time that the route is given on a daily basis therefore hurting the overall evaluation of the route which affects the time given to do the route. At the pre-count conference would be the time to address any issues that have come up in the past or any issues that you might see in the future. It is the time that carriers and

management can agree on certain issues rather than waiting till the mail count is actually going on and management does not have time to talk to you. Some kind of documentation in writing from the pre-count conference could help in any discrepancies that may show up later.

There will be a three week mail count from February 7 through February 28, 2015. This will be an opt-out count. This means that both management and the rural carrier have to agree to opt out in writing for the route to not be counted. If either management or the carrier does not opt out then the route will be counted. At this time I have not received any indication from management as to what their plans may be about the number of routes that will be counted. You should plan accordingly and attend the mail count training seminars.

Mail count training will be held the first full week in January 2015. We have scheduled the mail count trainings as follows:

- ✓ January 6 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Hickory. The address is 1385 Lenoir Rhyne Blvd. SE,
- ✓ January 6 at the Bob Martin Center in Williamston. The address is 2900 Hwy 125 S.
- ✓ January 8 at the Embassy Suites in Greensboro. The address is 204 Centreport Drive.
- ✓ January 8 at the North Raleigh Hilton. The address is 3415 Wake Forest Road. All mail count trainings will be from 6:30 till 10:00.

## **SAFETY**

The Safety teams are still out and about EVERY DAY. Make sure you are doing your job in a safe manner. I get a report on a daily basis that shows the number of accidents/incidents that all carriers are involved in. We have way too many carriers that are injured each day because of accidents. Do your job the right way and hopefully, you'll be able to walk back into the house at the end of the day just as you walked out that morning. FOLLOW PARKING PROCEDURES ANYTIME YOU DISMOUNT YOUR VEHICLE!!!! If you don't and a member of management sees you, there is a very good chance that discipline will follow, up to and including removal.

Hoping to see you at the mail count trainings!!! Barbara, Bryan, Gail, Brenda, Jeff, Daniel, and Frank

MERRY CHRISTMAS to all and hoping for everyone to have a very prosperous and HAPPY NEWYEAR.

## **SAC 2015 Is The Place To Be**

Do you have questions about your job, the Contract? You won't find a place with more information or informed people to answer your questions, than at the upcoming 2015 South Atlantic Conference (SAC). We have National Officers, Insurance Specialist, Retirement Specialist and many more scheduled, just to answer your questions.

The conference begins on Saturday, January 24 and goes through noon Monday, January 26. The location is the Crown Plaza Atlanta Airport Hotel at 1325 Virginia Avenue. To make reservations you may call 888-233-9527 or 404-768-6660 and give the name of the South Atlantic Conference. Room rate \$96.00 plus tax. Parking is complementary if you are staying at the hotel, but there is a \$6.00 fee if you stay off site.

Our goal is to provide the membership with as much of the latest information possible concerning our craft. We provide this information through seminars, invited speakers from craft and management and through Q & A. This conference will provide you with the best opportunity to spend time with our National Officers.

Registration will be open from 10:00am Saturday thru Monday morning's session. The Atlanta Postal Credit Union will hold its annual meeting Saturday afternoon at 2pm and encourages SAC members to attend. Shuttles to the APCU meeting will begin at 12:15pm and will return attendees following the meeting. For those wishing to drive directions will be available at registration.

Seminars begin on Saturday night at 6:30pm and go thought-out the weekend. Worship service will begin at 8:30am Sunday morning. NRLCA Labor Relations Director Joey Johnson will present a labor seminar. Retirement Specialist, Joni Montroy, will be in house with 2 seminars. The first will be on "Understanding your TSP Benefits" from 6:00pm to 8:00pm Sunday evening. Then the second session of the evening will be from 8:00pm to 10:00pm on "FERS/CSRS Putting It All Together \$\$". She recommends you bring your TSP statement and or your paycheck stub to the sessions, as they will be helpful for reference.

Insurance specialist, Larry Waligora, will be giving a health and benefits seminar.

You will hear from our National President, Jeanette Dwyer, NRLCA legal counsel Michael Gann, legislative staff and many more. Our National Board will be available for Q & A session Sunday afternoon. Monday will begin at 8:30am with remarks from USPS Managers and one of our NRO'S. Followed by Q & A session with a panel of USPS Managers and members of our National Board. This year one of the USPS Managers will be Capital Metro AVP Kristin Seaver.

The conference will adjourn no later than 12 noon.

## **WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF ACTIVE CARRIER'S DEATH**

1. Notify employee's immediate supervisor/postmaster;
2. Notify the Secretary/Treasurer of the National Rural Letter Carrier's Association and the State Secretary of the State RLCA where the deceased was a member. Give the Social Security number of the deceased employee;
3. If the deceased employee was in receipt of a benefit payment from the U.S. Department of Veterans' Affairs, you may notify the VA by calling 1-800-827-1000. Spouses may also be entitled to VA death benefits and assistance;
4. Notify local banks and/or postal credit union;
5. Notify the Social Security Administration at the local office;
6. Insurance companies for policies on life (if Provident Guild, write Secretary/Treasurer, 1315 Deerfield Rd., S.W., Dalton, OH 44618-9429; if Federal Employees Group Life Insurance contact local personnel office; if NRLCA Life Insurance, 1630 Duke Street, Suite 200 Alexandria, VA 22314), hospitalization (if NRLCA, write Rural Carrier Benefit Plan, 1630 Duke Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314), house and automobile (local insurance carrier);
7. Notify the Internal Revenue Service and State Income Tax Department;
8. Check for safety deposit box and instructions;
9. Change name on all important papers to surviving party's name;
10. Notify supervisor/postmaster/employees of the time and place of memorial services;
11. Have mortuary obtain enough death certificates for your needs. They can advise how many;
12. Give supervisor/postmaster any items belonging to the Postal Service;
13. Papers to fill out (available in some post offices from personnel section or postmaster):
  - SF 2800 – application for death benefit
  - SF 1153 – claim of designated beneficiary for unpaid compensation
  - SF 1155 – claim for unpaid compensation, no designated beneficiary
  - FE 6 – claim for benefits, federal employee group life insurance
14. Check with personnel section or postmaster for annuity for yourself and any minor children;
15. If a previous marriage, secure divorce papers;
16. If a present marriage, secure marriage license;
  17. If the cause of death is due to a job related injury, the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) will pay up to \$1000 burial expenses, minus any amount the VA pays;
  18. In the case of job related death, the survivor may also apply for an annuity from the OWCP. He or she can then choose the higher amount, but there are precautions that you need to discuss with Personnel or the Union on this subject.
  19. As a surviving spouse you are eligible to continue receiving the NRLCA magazine. Contact your State Secretary to see if the state pays for subscriptions. If they do not, you can mail a check for \$15.00 to the NRLCA to continue receiving the magazine.

**Note: A will should be seriously considered. If there is no will, an executor must be named and an expensive court action could result.**

### **A Look at the National Convention**

Hello everyone, my name is Christina Snipes. I have been an RCA in the Lumberton Post Office since July, 2013. I went to the National Convention this year in Grapevine, TX as a non- delegate. I was asked by the board of North Carolina to write a paper on my experience. Let me tell you something, this was definitely an experience. Through the good and the bad, I enjoyed myself and learned a lot. I would like to thank the board first off for giving me this opportunity to write this paper and share with everyone what my experience was like, also for the opportunity to be able to go to the convention.

We were in meetings from 8 am until 5 pm every day. I learned a lot about the process that helps make up our contract. It was amazing to me to see so many people trying to get resolutions passed to help us as carriers. Of course there were people that didn't agree with everyone else, hey that is going to happen. I really liked the way that people that went as delegates were able to voice their opinion on something as to whether they agreed or disagreed with something. It was nice seeing so many people working towards the same resolution. Even the people that didn't agree with others did it in an adult manner. At times the meetings got boring, however there again that is going to happen.

I would like to stress to everyone that want to go to the National Convention to try and go as a delegate, this way you would have a voice. I am hoping I will be able to go back next year as a delegate so I will have a voice as well. Everyone that was there from the State of North Carolina welcomed me. If I didn't understand what was going on all I had to do was ask and they would help me. If they didn't know the answer to my question then they would find someone that could answer it. There were a few people from different states that helped me feel welcomed as well. Some people would just walk up to me and thank me for coming to the National Convention. It was a great experience. I encourage everyone to at least try and go to at least one Convention in their career. I guarantee you that if you do go you will want to be able to voice your opinion and help make changes.

**FIGHT FOR 6-DAY DELIVERY!**

**Contact your Senators and Representatives to urge the continuation of 6-Day Delivery.**

**To Contact Your NC Senators and Representatives:**

**NC Senators:**

Richard M. Burr ([burr.senate.gov](http://burr.senate.gov))  
217 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510  
(202) 224-3154

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**Congressional District 13:**

George Holding ([holding.house.gov](http://holding.house.gov))  
507 Cannon House Office Building  
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**NOTE:** You may reach any of your legislators by calling the Capital Switchboard at (866) 220-0044 and ask for your Congressional Representative by name. You may also use the toll-free hotline at (877) 217-8234

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## Auxiliary News

It was great to see everyone at the Fall Booster in New Bern. New Bern is an awesome place to visit and reconnecting with our NCRLCA friends and families from across North Carolina is always great.

The Auxiliary National Program for 2014-2015 is "A Program of Miracles, The face of Alzheimer's". I personally think this is an awesome program to be involved with. I challenge each of you to check it out. I was asked to speak about Americanism – Volunteerism. As I researched "Volunteerism", I seemed to be drawn into "Volunteerism", a word I really never thought that much about and struggled with saying it the first few times correctly.

Volunteerism – the use or involvement of volunteer labor, especially in community services.

Volunteering is serving a cause greater than one's self, a way of giving back to the community for the many blessings and courtesies that you have received. It means taking the time to help someone who cannot help themselves, and providing those who need just a little boost to get started back in the right direction. It means taking a few minutes of your own time, but for those who struggle, it can mean absolutely EVERYTHING. It gives you an opportunity to provide HOPE, BALANCE and CONSIDERATION to others.

Volunteering has an enormous impact on the health and wellbeing of communities worldwide. Just think of all the ways volunteering can make a difference in a day of someone's life.

- ❖ Volunteering to help keep our neighborhoods, parks, rivers and waters clean and safe for everyone.
- ❖ Volunteering to tutor, teach or mentor children and adults.
- ❖ Coaching community sports.
- ❖ Volunteering to help foster dogs, cats and many animals. To help with adoptions in your homes, animal shelters or rehabilitation centers.
- ❖ Volunteering to help deliver critical services such as volunteer fire fighters, to man phone lines at domestic violence or assault centers.
- ❖ Delivering meals to home bound seniors.
- ❖ Volunteering your time at homeless shelters, hospitals or even in disaster areas worldwide to help rebuild houses or schools, or aide in helping the sick or less fortunate.

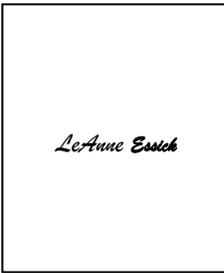
### IMAGINE THE IMPACT OF VOLUNTEERS!

Just imagine if ONE day ALL volunteers just simply decided not to show up? What would happen? What would our communities, schools, churches, medical centers look like? What basic needs would go unmet? And what opportunities to grow, learn and thrive would be lost?

### VOLUNTEER TODAY

My favorite, all time author, is Dr. Seuss, and I think he said it best! "Oh the wonderful way I feel" you'll cheer, "Cuz I just went out and volunteered!"

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*



## NCRLCA Dues for 2014-2015

- Regular...Cash.....\$598.00
- 1187...Bi-Weekly.....\$23.00
- Retired.....Cash.....\$109.00
- 1187R...Monthly.....\$9.08
- 73, RCA, RCR.....Cash.....\$204.00
- 1187.....Bi-Weekly.....\$7.85

The membership year begins July 1, ends June 30. Please make checks payable to **NCRLCA**. Checks or membership form should be mailed to Derek Harpe, Secretary/Treasurer. The address is listed on page two.

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

## POLITICAL ACTION FUND

Contributions are needed for the NCRLCA lobbying effort. The fund is used to maintain friendly relations with members of Congress, to preserve your fringe benefits and work practices, affecting the welfare of each rural letter carrier, substitute, PTF, RCA, RCR, retired carrier and their families.

Make checks payable to the NCRLCA PAC Fund and mail to:  
 Van Robert Heath  
 PAC Chairman  
 Address in on page two

Upon receipt of \$5.00 or more, you will receive a membership card. Please return this form with your contribution.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
 STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_

**CIRCLE ONE**

REGULAR                  RETIRED                  SUBSTITUTE

### MEMBERSHIP

If you have forgotten to pay your membership dues for the next year, please do so immediately. If your dues are delinquent, it could affect your Rural Carrier Benefit Plan. The most convenient way to pay is to sign a "dues withholding" form (1187 or 1187R for retirees). If you need a form, please contact a board member. Regular and substitutes can sign a form NOW.

### December 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5 <small>Pay Day</small>	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 <small>PP-01</small>	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 <small>Pay Day</small>	20
21	22	23	24	25 <small>Christmas</small>	26 <small>PP-02</small>	27
28	29	30	31			

### January 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
				1	2 <small>Pay Day</small>	3 <small>PP-24</small>
4	5	6	7	8	9	10 <small>PP-03</small>
11	12	13	14	15	16 <small>Pay Day</small>	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 <small>PP-04</small>
25	26	27	28	29	30 <small>Pay Day</small>	31

**TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL**



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