



North Carolina Rural Carrier

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

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January-February 2019

National Rural Letter Carriers Assoc. Announces Relief Carrier Appreciation Week will be February 4-8, 2019



Inside this issue:

Contract
Negotiations
Update

Cold or Flu?

Office Duos



North Carolina RCAs and ARCs outdid
themselves during this holiday season!
Thank you all for everything you do!

North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers' Association

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Roanoke Chowan	7	Durham County	12	Sea Level	23
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Cumberland/Hoke	20	Wake	24	Alleghany	4
Cleveland/Gaston	29	French Broad	31	Ashe	6
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Get all the latest news at our website www.NCRLCA.com

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

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

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

Please keep this phone
number for future use.

Cover Photos

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Tara Messier, Jon Wolbert
and Danielle Hunter.

Top Right-RCA Alyssya
Macon in Sanford.

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as Santa's elf.

Bottom Right-In Clayton
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Articles are the opinion of the Author and not necessarily the NRLCA, the NCRLCA or the Editor.



President
Brenda Gibbs

Happy New Year!

I was returning home from a union meeting and while trying to find something to listen to, I stumbled on a talk show about the Postal Service. They were interviewing a union leader from one of our sister crafts who made some very good points about the economy and the significant loss of first-class mail and how that loss lead to the drastic increase in parcels over the past few years.

The host spoke of the President's task force and what recommendations were being made to set the postal service on a solid foundation and to ultimately sell it. They both discussed our pricing and how it compares to other mailers and other countries. Several callers including postal employees and the public responded. One employee reminded everyone of the prefunding retirement that we have heard so much about. But what one lady said caught my attention. She had lived in several different countries around the world. She said that our pricing and services were the "Gold Standard" by which all other postal services should strive to attain. She was impressed with our pricing, what she was able to send through the mail, where we delivered to and how soon it was delivered.

Despite everything else I heard during the program this stuck with me. I've heard it from my customers who have lived abroad. She was right. They are right. We have the best pricing, the right services to meet our varied customer base and we deliver to everyone. We are the "Gold Standard".

Your North Carolina State Board is excited to announce the rollout of our newly redesigned website.

We have been discussing it since July and have finally put our ideas together and met with a specialist who is working closely with us in this endeavor. This new site will be password protected but the password will be published in each edition of the magazine.

We will have most of the same information that is currently on the website, and we will provide lots more; including forms that you can download if needed and the ability to sign up for email alerts in your inbox. This will make it easier for you to keep up with anything new that happens. Contact Vicki Gray if you need to have something put on the website.

Since this is not a seamless redo there may be times when the site is unavailable or not fully available for your use. Please be patient with us as we are working as fast as possible to have the website fully functional by the end of January 2019.

We are also very excited to announce that Jeanette Dwyer has agreed to be our Parliamentarian! The wealth of knowledge she possesses from her many years serving as National President are a great asset to this state.

We look forward to seeing each of you at SAC (South Atlantic Conference). This is your best opportunity to talk one on one with a member of your National Board. I hope you can take the time to attend.

Contract Negotiations Update

Over the past several months, NRLCA officers have continued their efforts to reach an agreement on the terms of a new collective bargaining agreement with the Postal Service. The parties have held several meetings, the most recent being a lengthy meeting this morning between President Stutts and USPS Vice President of Labor Relations Doug Tulino, to discuss the parties' positions. The Union has clearly laid out a number of important, substantive proposals that, in its estimation, must be included in any agreement in order to be ratified by the membership. The Postal Service is now considering these proposals and the parties will have a follow up meeting in early January. At that time, we will have a better picture of whether we are heading towards a fair and just negotiated agreement or whether we are looking at the possibility of impasse followed by mediation and/or interest arbitration.

From the NRLCA website

Chaplain's Message

Jesse Ray Farmer Jr., Chaplain

THE GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

To give is better than to receive. This moral concept has been emphasized to us, and we continue to pass this legacy on to our family and friends. We often forget this during the holidays as we focus on material items that cannot fill the void of time and memories with our loved ones. There are some gifts that we can give that are better than what we can put under the tree. These gifts are of grace and forgiveness.

Grace and forgiveness may not be the easiest gifts to give but can be the most rewarding. During the holiday season and into this next year, it can be easy to dwell on past hurts, broken relationships, and bitterness that can tarnish and steal joy and peace from our lives. According to Ephesians 4:31-32, God shows us by His example that, if He can forgive us, we can forgive one another and embrace peace. We are to lead by example and show others through our example of Christ's love how to forgive others and love unconditionally.

During this past holiday season, hundreds of items were purchased with love and delivered to friends and family. They were so eager to see what surprises awaited them. These gifts are wonderful, but how much more amazing to show others your love by sharing kindness with grace and forgiveness. Reflect on how you can impact others through these selfless gifts and find the peace that you have been looking for. As this new year begins, determine your priorities and set your goals on things that are worthwhile. Sacrificing our selfish desires is pleasing to God when we do not neglect good and share what we have with others according to Hebrews 13:16.

PRAYER: Dear God, thank you for all of our bountiful gifts this year. Among these we thank you the most for our undeserving grace and forgiveness. Help us to share this love for others even in our moments of weakness. Amen

IN REMEMBRANCE:

We would like to send our deepest sympathies and prayers to our previous chaplain, Doug Byrum, for the loss of his wife, Linda. Please keep his family in your thoughts as they endure this difficult time. You may send condolences to him at:

Doug Byrum
1112 Cuthbertson Rd
Waxhaw, NC 28173-743

For any needs of prayer and/or spiritual support, please feel free to contact me on my cell phone. My number is 252-939-6826. You may call or text me.

I will get back to you as soon as I can.



Linda Horne Byrum, age 68, of Waxhaw, went home to be with the Lord on December 6, 2018.

She was born in Union County on May 21, 1950, daughter of Truby and Eleanor Horne. She was preceded in death by her father, Truby Lee Horne. Linda is survived by her loving husband, Doug Byrum; her daughter, Christy Caskey (Perry); her grandchildren, Dakota Hearne, Ally Hearne, Lucas Caskey, Cameron Caskey and Colby Caskey; her brothers, Charles Horne (Trish) and Ronnie Horne (Karlei) and a host of nieces and nephews.

Calvin Bruce Davis, 96, of Kannapolis, passed away Saturday, August 18, 2018 at Tucker Hospice House. He was born October 11, 1921 in Davidson Co. to the late Sandy E. Davis and Maggie Kirk Davis.

Bruce was a veteran of the U.S. Army serving during WWII, and he received a Purple Heart and Presidential Unit Citation.

He was a member of the D.A.V. Chapter 27, the American Legion Post 115, and the Allen-Graham Ma-

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sonic Lodge 695.

In his early years he worked at Cannon Mills Co. and was a bus driver with Carolina Coach Co. After WWII, he worked for the U.S. Postal service as a rural letter carrier for 30 years, retiring in 1980.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Bernice Winecoff Davis in 2006, and eight brothers and sisters.

Those left to cherish his memory, son, Jerry Bruce Davis (Vickie), daughter, Judy Goodnight (Steve), four grandchildren, Landra Staab (Tom), Shannon Sechler (Lynn), Jared Davis (Samo), Jenna Culp (Mark), and eight great-grandchildren, Also surviving Mr. Davis is his wife Jean, and her two children Alice Perreault (Doug), Mark Smith (Denise), three grandchildren; Andrew Smith, Joseph and Matthew Perreault, and three great-grandchildren.

Mr. Davis was buried full military honors.

Samuel Gray Keel, of Bethel, on Sunday, September 9, 2018, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and brother, went to be with Jesus at the age of 87 years.

He is survived by his children, Gregory, LuAnne, and Daniel; his sister, Becky Hutchins; 15 grandchildren; and 2 great-grandchildren. He was the son of Howard Staton Keel and Rachel Barwick Keel. He was pre-deceased by his wife, Anne Whitehurst Keel and his oldest son Howard Gray Keel.

He was born at the Keel Home place just a few miles north of Bethel in Edgecombe County, but spent the majority of his life in Bethel. The last few years were in Tarboro. In his early years, he attended and graduated from Bethel High School. After high school, he attended NC State University briefly and then enlisted in the Army National Guard. He served his country for two years on active duty. Later he worked with US Postal Service as a rural letter carrier until retirement.

He also worked on the family farms. He served his community with energy and enthusiasm. He served for about 35+ years as a Bethel Volunteer Fireman and as an emergency medical technician (EMT) with the

Bethel Volunteer Rescue Squad. He served for a number of years on the local school board and even chaired the board.

He served many years as a delegate to the State and National Rural Letter Carrier Conventions. He was eventually elected as President of the State organization and served for a year in that capacity.

He was an excellent example to all with his volunteer spirit.



Dorothy “Dot” Brooks, Archdale/Trinity, passed away at her home on September 12, 2018. Dot lived her entire life in the Trinity area. She was a graduate of Trinity High School. She joined the Trinity Baptist Church at age thirteen, and remained active until her health began to fail.

On February 16, 1952, she married the love of her life, Jack Brooks. They were married 61 years until his death on October 25, 2013.

Dot is survived by son Lindy (Betsy) Brooks, daughters Sharon (Mike) Andrews and Gail (Ron) Nooe, six grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren.

Dot was hired as a substitute rural carrier for the USPS on October 2, 1971 for rural route 5. She became a regular carrier on March 1, 1981.

She was involved in one serious accident; a Trinity High School student hit her head on while she was serving a mailbox. Dot told the patrolman not to leave the mail until the sub arrived to take charge of it as the EMS was preparing to take her to the hospital. Dot spent four days in ICU and several weeks recovering. She returned to her route and served until her retirement.

Dot loved her work, her co-workers, and the patrons on the mail route. It was a privilege and an honor to have known her and to be one of her co-workers.

(submitted by Owen Moore, past NC State President)



SAFETY

Scott Deal

Weathering The Storm

Congratulations on another safe and successful peak season. I am sure we set another record. As I am sitting here writing this article, the high temperature for the day is 57 degrees. Just a few days ago we had around 17 inches of snow on the ground, most of which ends up scraped in front of the mailbox. With this in mind, it is especially important this time of year to be prepared for the weather and the extremes that can happen overnight.

Just a few reminders for the season:

For our POV carriers: have the snow tires, studded tires, or mud grips ready. Always a good idea to check the tire pressure this time of year. With the cooler temperatures its easy to lose a little air pressure in your tires. Don't' forget to air up your spare tire as well just in case. Having a couple 2 X 4's in the trunk for those dirt road flat tires will ensure you have level ground to put your jack on. Have the tools you may need for the conditions such as a shovel/sand/cat litter or a rubber mallet to gently "tap" those frozen metal mailboxes to loosen the door.

For our LLV carriers, especially our newly hired carriers: start the day off with your morning vehicle inspection paying close attention to your tires, checking air and tread, and making sure you have cables on if needed. Newly hired carriers keep in mind the LLV is rear wheel drive so take it smooth and steady and never drive too fast for your conditions.

For all carriers: even though the Christmas season has come and gone, the parcel volume in some offices has not. Always maintain a clear line-of-sight out of your windows and mirrors. Stay vigilant when it comes to being aware of your surroundings.

Postal Service forms 4056 (your mailbox needs attention) and notice 38 (box blocked) can be useful if you are continually blocked from the mailbox. Management may suspend delivery if the issue isn't addressed in a reasonable amount of time and it continues to cause us delay.

If management gives us permission to use an authorized passenger, remember the passenger simply drives (POV) and must wear their seatbelt. The sanctity and security of the mail is our responsibility, we must keep our customers information safe and secure/private.

Footwear, while our shoe policy has been in place for a long time, it does feel like it has become a hot topic of late. Simply put, a sturdy shoe in good condition will not only keep our feet safe but also dry and warm in these winter months. If you use the Postal provided yak trax, remember those can be slick on uncovered surfaces and **EVERYTHING** is slick on ice. Take the time to be safe. If the conditions become unsafe let management know asap.

I hope everyone had a wonderful Holiday Season and I wish everyone a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year! Thank you for the service you provide! Stay Safe!

South Atlantic Conference January 26-28, 2019

Crowne Plaza Hotel, 1325 Virginia Avenue,
Atlanta, Georgia 30344

Prepare for your job by having the latest information you could possibly need. Attend the South Atlantic Conference and be in the know.

Seminars will begin Saturday night and continue throughout the weekend. Sunday's agenda includes representation from Atlanta Postal Credit Union, GMAC Insurance, Rural Carrier Benefit Plan, Legislative Staff, Legal Counsel and PAC. NRLCA President Ronnie Stutts will address the conference Sunday afternoon and members of the National Board will be available for a Q & A session. There will be seminars on retirement, TSP & money management, retirees health benefits and a seminar for RCAs and new carriers. Monday's session will begin with remarks from USPS Managers and one of our NRO's followed by a Q & A session, paneled by the USPS Management in attendance and our National Board. The conference will adjourn no later than 12:00 PM.

Please join us!



RETIREMENT

Renee Johnson

Planning For Your Retirement

Happy New Year! As we enter 2019, many of you may be contemplating retirement within the months ahead. If retirement is on your radar, here's a few tips to help you organize.

Retirement checklist

Within 6 months of retirement date:

- Attend a Retirement Seminar.
- Choose your exact retirement date. For Voluntary retirements, CSRS annuities can begin on the first, second or third day of the month. FERS voluntary retirements begin on the first of the month.
- Call the HR Shared Service Center 1-877-477-3273 option 5 to request your retirement kit and set up a time for your counseling session.
- After your counseling session, submit all of your completed retirement application forms to the HRSSC.
- Make your health and life insurance decisions. Keep in mind the 5 year health insurance rule.
- **A few days before** your final day at work, request and fill out your Employee Clearance Record and Security Termination Statement.
- **On your last day**, take your signed Employee Clearance Record and Security Termination Statement to your supervisor's office and turn in items such as ID cards, credit cards and keys.
- If you are eligible for Social Security retirement benefits, you may apply to begin your benefits up to three months prior to your eligibility. Contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 at ssa.gov.

If you elect survivor benefits for your spouse, you may wish to clip this article and place it with your important papers. Should something happen to you, your spouse might find this information useful.

Understanding Survivor Benefits:

- It's a difficult topic to discuss, but it's important to know what survivor benefits your spouse is eligible for in the event that you (the Postal retiree) die before your spouse.
- If you retired under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), the maximum survivor benefit payable is 55 percent of your unreduced annual benefit.
- If you retired under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), the maximum survivor benefit payable is 50 percent of your unreduced annual benefit.

How to Report a Death:

1. Online: www.opm.gov/ReportDeath
 2. PHONE: Call 1-888-767-6738* (1-88USOPMRET) The phone lines are open from 7:40AM to 5:00PM ET. It is a busy phone number so you may want to try early in the morning or after 4:00PM when the phone lines are less busy.
 3. Write to: U.S. Office of Personnel Management Retirement Operations Center Post Office Box 45 Boyers, PA 16017
- **Hearing impaired users may utilize the Federal Relay Service (external link) by dialing 1-800-877-8339.

To apply for death benefits:

The survivor/representative will complete the following forms:

- SF 2800 for Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or
- SF 3104 for FERS retirees.
Use the SF 3104B if a FERS employee dies while still employed.
- Attach a copy of the annuitant's death certificate and a copy of the marriage certificate.

Send the completed application to:

Office of Personnel Management
Retirement Operations Center
ATTENTION: Death Claims Section
Post Office Box 45
Boyers, Pennsylvania 16017-0045



RCHBP
Elaine Althoff

Cold or Flu?

What is the difference?

The flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone.

In general, the flu is usually worse than the common cold, and symptoms are more common and intense. Colds are usually milder. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations.

Flu can have very serious associated complications. Special tests that usually must be done within the first few days of illness can tell if a person has the flu.

Are you worried about catching the flu?

I don't blame you ~ many of us whom attended the National Convention in Grand Rapids came down with the flu! Most were diagnosed with the H1N1 strain of influenza A. It's impossible to tell exactly how many got sick. I hope everyone has recovered.

I was fortunate enough to have dodged it this go around. Last year I was not as lucky, so as soon as I got home and made sure I was in the clear I went to my local CVS Minute Clinic to get my flu shot.

Most insurances cover the flu shot. review your plan to find out if your does.

Even though flu season typically starts in early fall and last through spring, my practitioner told me that even during the summer she still sees one to two cases a month of the flu.

Last year, the most prevalent strain of the virus, Influenza A (H3N2) spread quickly and caused severe illness. Like any flu strain, H3N2 can mutate and last year it did. As a result the vaccine wasn't as effective against this strain of the virus.

The overall vaccine effectiveness of the 2017-2018 flu vaccine against both influenza A and B viruses is estimated to be 40%.

This means the flu vaccine reduced a person's overall risk of having to seek medical care for flu illness by 40%.

Protection by virus type and subtype was: 25% against A(H3N2), 65% against A(H1N1) and 49% against influenza B viruses.

While flu vaccine can vary in how well it works, it is the best way to prevent flu and its potentially serious complications. For example, during the 2016–2017 influenza season, CDC estimates that flu vaccines prevented an estimated 5.3 million illnesses, 2.6 million medical visits, and 85,000 hospitalizations associated with influenza. Vaccination also has been shown to reduce the risk of flu death in children.

(Continued on page 10)

Is it a cold or flu?		
Signs and Symptoms	Influenza	Cold
Symptom onset	Abrupt	Gradual
Fever	Usual	Rare
Aches	Usual	Slight
Chills	Fairly common	Uncommon
Fatigue, weakness	Usual	Sometimes
Sneezing	Sometimes	Common
Stuffy nose	Sometimes	Common
Sore throat	Sometimes	Common
Chest discomfort, cough	Common	Mild to moderate
Headache	Common	Rare

Sources and Image from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

What is a Cold?

Over 200 viruses can cause the common cold.

Most of us have had a cold at some point in the season. Yes, they are more annoying than anything, but for the most part colds are harmless. Let's start off with what is a cold? Colds are minor infections of the throat, nose and sinuses and can last anywhere from one week to two weeks.

There are over 200 different viruses that can cause a cold. Cold symptoms like sneezing and a scratchy throat are among the leading causes of doctor visits during cold season.

The cold season runs August through March typically. Colds seem to hit children and their caretakers the hardest. In part due to daycare and schools, children are in such close contact with each other and this makes it easier to share germs.

Most adults on average get two to four colds a year. I'm not forgetting our seniors, you average about one a year.

There are many steps that you can do to ward off both virus and stay healthy this cold and flu season. Washing your hands frequently, wiping down surfaces if you or your loved ones are sick, regular exercise, healthy eating and getting plenty of rest, just to name a few.

Daily Preventive Actions to Stop the Spread of Germs

- ♥ Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- ♥ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- ♥ Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like flu.
- ♥ Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- ♥ While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- ♥ If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone for 24 hours without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)
- ♥ Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. After using a tissue, throw it in the trash and wash your hands.

RAFT RAFFLE

You could
WIN \$250!

Recruit A Friend Today (RAFT)

North Carolina has implemented the **"RAFT Recruiter Raffle"** as an incentive for our members to continue their efforts of enlisting new members. We will have a drawing at the end of each quarter. Every quarter the names of all recruiters will be placed in the hat for a chance at winning a \$250 prize. The next drawing will be on March 31, 2019. This pool of names will be from all the new members recruited during the previous quarter (October 1 - December 31).

New members must still be employed with the rural craft 90 days after their enrollment date. Any member that has separated or moved to another craft within those 90 days is ineligible.

The recruiter will have one chance for each new member they recruit. If they have recruited five new members, then they will have five chances in the drawing of the \$250 prize.

This program will continue throughout the 2018-2019 membership year.

*December Raft Raffle Drawing Winner will be published in the next issue. Drawing did not take place before this issue went to print. The date for this RAFT drawing was misprinted in our last issue as November 31, 2018. The correct date is actually December 31, 2018.

Relief Carrier Appreciation Week

February 4-8, 2019

A binding resolution passed by the delegates at this years National Convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan stated that the NRLCA would establish a Relief Carrier Appreciation Week.

The NRLCA has declared that Relief Carrier Appreciation Week will be February 4-8, 2019.

We all know that our ARCs and RCAs are a vital part of the postal service.

If you are an ARC or RCA, please know that **we do value your service**. It is not an easy job and many do not have the wherewithal to make it.

If you are a regular carrier please take a moment during this special week to let all the relief carriers in your office know how much you appreciate them. Let's support our subs as best as we can.

There are several photos of our North Carolina relief carriers taken during our 2018 Christmas delivery period throughout this issue. Thank you to all that sent in photos.



Top Left-RCAs Casey Hedrick and Amanda Potts Culler team up in Lexington.

Top Center-RCA Ebony Lundy prepares mail in Sanford.

Top Right-RCA Dexter Palmer sorts parcels in Sanford.

Bottom-ARC Anthony McLean loads his van for parcel delivery in Clayton.



**Auto-Homeowners'
Insurance Rep**
Brian Hamlett

Are You Covered?

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday and are probably as glad as I am we've survived another Christmas delivery season. I would like to help you understand a little more about what you're getting when you pay your insurance premium.

What is liability?

Liability is Bodily Injury and Property Damage - This is the coverage that pays out, to the other party, when you are at fault in the accident. These are also the coverages provided by the Federal Tort Claims Act when you are on your route and have an at-fault accident.

- Bodily Injury pays for injuries to the other party (i.e.; broken leg, needing stitches, whiplash) Bodily Injury is typically written in a split limit 25/50. This limit represents paying no more than 25,000 per person and will pay no more than 50,000 total for one accident.
- Property Damage pays for damages to property (i.e.; a vehicle, a house, a building, a mailbox, etc.) Property Damage is typically written in a single limit like \$10,000. This is 10,000 per accident.

What happens when these limits aren't enough to cover the loss?

YOU CAN BE SUED AND HELD PERSONALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DIFFERENCE!!

Linda Foran, a licensed agent and our National General Account Manager, recommends you carry limits high enough to cover all of your assets. If you own a home, it is recommended you carry, at least, 100/300/100. This is \$100,000 per person; \$300,000 total per accident for bodily injury and \$100,000 for property damage.

Think of how much a visit to the ER could cost if you are not admitted. What about if you are admitted?

EXAMPLE: The state minimum limits in North Carolina are 30/60/25. That's \$30,000 per person/ \$60,000 per accident for bodily injury and \$25,000 for property damage. If you have a multi-vehicle accident, that you caused, will \$25,000 cover all the damage? Think about what vehicles cost new, I'm sure more than \$25,000.

If your agent ever tells you that they "found you a lower rate"; double check to make sure your liability hasn't been lowered.

Always trust, but verify, and know what you are paying for.



Doris Reed from Mid Carolinas Human Resources recognizes Charlotte rural carrier Grace Holland as she retires from the USPS with 30 years of service. Grace's husband Robert is at her side.

Big Changes In Washington

Back on January 3rd, the new Congress was sworn in. The Republican Party maintained its control of the Senate but lost its Super Majority. At the same time the Democrat Party won control of the House of Representatives. By the time you read this, Nancy Pelosi (D, CA) should have been elected as Speaker of the House. She is no friend of the current administration and has promised government shut downs and anything else that she can do to make life unpleasant for President Trump. At the same time, President Trump has promised a government shut down if he does not get his southern border wall. No matter which side you agree with, the next two years promise to be very interesting.

Now we all know that when the government shut-downs do come; we are not included in those non-essential personnel that need not come to work. For all of us it will be normal routine.

With the extreme gridlock that I expect to see, we have to remain vigilant as I mentioned last issue because sometimes the Congress can be very sneaky. A member of Congress can attach a postal reform bill that is not good for the Postal Service to a must pass bill; such as Military Funding, and “Wham,” Postal Reform is passed or who knows what may be passed. Many laws that otherwise would never have passed the Congress have become law using this process. I wish this process were illegal, but we all know about wishes. It is how the Congress works.

OPPOSE POSTAL REFORM LEGISLATION

Postal reform legislation (H.R. 756/H.R. 6076 and S. 2629) would require current retirees to enroll in Medicare Part B in order to continue receiving their current health insurance coverage through the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, ultimately raising their overall health insurance premiums an additional \$1,600 or more per year, despite the fact that they previously declined this coverage.

I believe we should oppose this bill because it unfairly burdens 76,000 postal retirees and their survivors by changing the bargain regarding their health benefits, removing choice and setting a dangerous precedent for all federal employees and retirees.

Legislative Representative

Van Heath,



MYTH vs REALITY

MYTH: Mandating that U.S. Postal Service (USPS) retirees sign up for Medicare in order to keep their federal health insurance coverage will save the USPS from a taxpayer bailout.

REALITY: In actuality, the Postal Service is profitable but appears to be running a deficit due to a burdensome \$5 billion annual prefunding requirement for retiree health benefits. No other agency or private-sector company is required to make such a payment. Forcing current postal retirees to enroll in Medicare to “save” USPS ignores some of the real issues within the Postal Service, adds an additional financial burden to those living on a fixed income, and eliminates health care choice for postal retirees, who should not be responsible to saving the agency.

A bipartisan majority of the House of Representatives has cosponsored House Resolution 993, calling on Congress to take all appropriate measures to ensure that the Postal Service remain an independent agency of the federal government and not be subject to privatization.

An identical resolution introduced in the Senate (S. Res. 633) now has 41 cosponsors. Neither of our Senators is a cosponsor.

If your member is not on the list, it is not too late for them to sign on. Please call these and Thank them for their sponsorship. They are:

Rep. Alma Adams, D-NC12

Rep. G K Butterfield, D-NC1

David Price, D-NC4

Walter Jones R-NC3 (New)



PAC CHAIR
Steve Rogers

PAC Works!

Things that are constant in our lives such as the weather, our health, or our jobs can change in the blink of an eye. Sometimes this change is not for the good.

Are you prepared for life's dramatic changes? What if you could be proactive? Would you do it?

Unfortunately only 9 percent of North Carolina's union members have thought about and contributed to their future!

PAC uses your donation to educate our elected officials about our point of view on bills that are before congress.

With your donations we were able to get a bill defeated, that would have cost the post office 100's of millions a year. This bill would have stripped the post office of the ability to sell money orders.

We must have the ability to speak with our elected officials so that they can understand the tremendous negative effect these types of bills can have on the Post Office. PAC donations allow us to do just that.

Let's start this year working as one group united!! If we stand together, we will stay together. If we let the people that make the laws change our future, we will never be the same!

Will you be the one that steps up and contributes to PAC? Please donate today.

Pac works for you!!

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Please send PAC Donations to:
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Winston-Salem NC 27116-1372
Phone (336) 414-7642
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Task Force Report Released

On December 4th, the Task Force on the United States Postal Service released their report on increasing the financial stability of the Postal Service. While the report is non-binding, it did make recommendations the Postal Service can take to reduce labor costs. These steps include eliminating collective bargaining over pay for postal employees, increasing employee contributions to the pension system, and converting to a defined contribution system. The report also recommends lifting the caps on how much the USPS can charge for letter delivery, giving it the authority to eliminate a day of mail delivery, and allowing the Postal Service to charge private carriers for access to the mail box.

The report states the Postal Service should restructure the payments made into the Retiree Health Benefits Fund to be based on the population of postal employees, but the report continues to recommend the current mandate to pre-fund.

The Task Force's entire report can be read at https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/USPS_A_Sustainable_Path_Forward_report_12-04-2018.pdf



RCA Tracy Greer cases up his Aux route in Vilas, NC.



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REAVIS, LUE (ELLEN)
REECE, MITCHELL
ROGERS, STEPHEN
SALMON, STEVEN
SCHREIBER, JAY

SEARS, RHONDA
SIMMONS, JAMES
SIMMONS, PHILLIP
SMALL, BETHANY
SOLOMON, AUDREY
SOUTHER, TAMMY
SOUTHERN, LARRY ROGER
STONE, NATASHA
STOW, JOSHUA
VANCE, MICHELLE
WAGONER, DORETHA
WAISNER, SARA
WESTBROOK, BETTY
WHITE, BRENDA
WOLBERT, JOHNATHAN
YOUNG, ARTHUR



**HAPPY
VALENTINE'S
DAY ♥**

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Ralph Fernandez

321-278-9479

Scarlett Hall

910-658-2972

Greensboro

Kim Atwell

757-871-1505

Scott Deal

(828) 234-5593

Andrew “Drew” Prichard

(919) 749-6333

Steward Protocol

(“Who should I call?”)

If you have a local steward, **talk to them first!**

If your office doesn't have a steward, call your Area Steward or your Assistant District Representative.

If you do not know who your assigned steward is, then contact your District Representative. They will be able to tell you who is assigned to your office.

All calls will be returned ASAP.



Mid-Carolinas
District
Representative
Sally Corriher

OFFICE DUOS

Many of you were involved in DUO moves back in 2010 and 2011. All rural routes were relocated to another post office which was under the control of a different postmaster than the original facility.

The postal service is now rethinking **some** of those relocations and beginning to move those rural routes back to their original offices. There is no list of relocations of offices and no time frame for this to happen at this time.

Some offices in Mid Carolinas have already returned to their original offices. At this time, we have no idea if more offices will be returning to their original offices.

There are some things that you need to know if your office is moved back to its original facility.

Regular Rural Carriers

When the relocation is announced, regular rural carriers who want to stay on the routes that are relocating back to the original office do not have to do anything. You will go with your assigned route.

If a regular rural carrier doesn't want to move with the route from the current office to the original office, then the regular must write a statement stating they want to remain at the current office and do not wish to move with the route. The route will then be offered by seniority to any regular wanting to volunteer to move. If no regular carrier volunteers to move then the most junior regular will be required to move. The carrier who is required to move will have retreat rights. This carrier **must** write a letter stating they want to return when the first route becomes available and they want to be notified when there is any route posting.

RCAs

RCAs wishing to remain at their current office will be allowed to do so based on their seniority. If the office has a full complement of RCAs, the most junior RCA would move if no RCA volunteers to

move. If there is not a full complement of RCAs, the RCA will remain in the office and will be able to bid on any vacant primary assignment. If no RCA moves, then the original office will hire leave replacements.

If relocation of rural routes back to their original office is announced, please call the ADR assigned to your area, or call me. We want to give you any assistance and information you may need to make the move without any problems.

PARCEL TOSSING

Rural carriers are responsible to deliver parcels to our customers in good condition. It seems everyone has a camera on their house, porch, or in the doorbell.

If we throw parcels, step on parcels, or mistreat parcels in any way we may be caught on camera.

More and more carriers are seen tossing parcels and are being caught on home security cameras. We then see these carriers on YouTube, Facebook or other social media.

Please remember the customers are expecting all of us to handle their parcels as we would want our own parcels handled. Do you want the contents of your parcel damaged? As rural carriers we are expected to provide professional service to all our customers.

Don't throw parcels!

Remember there are cameras everywhere.





Greensboro
District
Representative
Jeff Essick

**Greensboro District Assignment
changes effective December 22, 2018**

In order to meet the current needs for proper representation and efficient coverage, the following changes were necessary in the Greensboro District. We lost a part time ADR and gained two Area Stewards.

On December 6, 2018 a resignation from Arthur “Art” Young, Jr. was received and accepted. Art made the decision to resign effective December 21, 2018. We thank Art for his service to the rural craft and wish him well.

I am pleased to announce the appointment of two additional Area Stewards: Scott Deal from Taylorsville and Drew Prichard from Fuquay Varina. We are thankful for their commitment and willingness to serve their fellow rural carriers. As always, please contact the steward assigned to your office first. Remember, Area Stewards are part time and they continue to serve their routes. They are not always able to receive calls during the day while carrying their route.

Listed Below are the three Area Stewards and their assigned offices.

Kim Atwell – (757) 871-1505

Ahoskie/Colerain/Harrelsville, Chocowinity, Conway, Elizabeth City/Camden, Enfield, Engelhard/Fairfield/Scranton, Grimesland, Hertford/Tyner/Hobbsville/Belvidere, Murfreesboro/Como, Roper/Merry Hill, South Mills/Sunbury/Corapeake, Windsor, Winton/Eure/Gatesville/Gates, Whitakers, Williamston.

Scott Deal – (828) 234-5593

Catawba, Claremont, Connelly Springs, Hiddenite/Stoney Point, Hildebran, Hudson, Lenoir, Newton/Conover/Maiden, Taylorsville.

Andrew “Drew” Prichard – (919) 749-6333

Angier, Benson, Broadway, Coats, Creedmoor, Four Oaks, Fuquay Varina, New Hill/Moncure Pittsboro, Siler City, Willow Springs.

Please join me in welcoming Scott and Drew to their new positions.

Also, some changes to the ADR assignments were necessary.

Daniel Caudle (336) 580-0089 now has: **McLeansville** and **Stoneville**.

Bryan Hudgins (252) 331-9794 now has: **Bunn, Goldsboro, Middlesex, Princeton, Selma** and **Smithfield**.

Gail Naillon (336) 455-3973 now has: **Garner, Knightdale, Wendell** and **Zebulon**.

All of the changes will be posted on the North Carolina website soon.

From all of the Stewards/Representatives in the Greensboro District, we hope you had a wonderful Christmas and were able to enjoy some time with friends and family. Remember, it’s not about the presents, it’s all about a Gift!

I realize it is hard to be Merry when there are so many demands placed upon each of us at this time of year within the USPS. I wish each of you a very prosperous and Happy New Year. Hopefully, by the time you read this, we will have a new contract or an extension and a renewed direction for 2019.

NCRLCA Dues for 2018-2019

Regular, PTF...Cash.....	\$700.00
1187...Bi-Weekly.....	\$26.92
Retired.....Cash.....	\$111.00
1187R...Monthly.....	\$9.25
73, RCA, RCR, ARC.....Cash.....	\$233.00
1187.....Bi-Weekly.....	\$8.96

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.



The Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF) exists to help active and retired postal employees, both management and craft, whose home, as a result of a major natural disaster was completely destroyed or left uninhabitable--displacing the postal employee and their family for an extended period of time. The Fund provides small relief grants to assist qualifying victims of

such circumstances re-establish residence and to help replenish basic necessities in the aftermath of a devastating loss. If you have been a victim of a major disaster such as a hurricane, tornado, flood, wildfire, or earthquake, and meet the criteria, we urge you to print and complete the [APPLICATION FORM](#) on this website <http://www.postalrelief.com/> and mail it, along with required documentation, to PERF. *All relief requests must be received within 6 months of the incident.*

The Grantors of the Fund are the Postmaster General and the Presidents of the National Association of Letter Carriers, American Postal Workers Union, National Postal Mail Handlers Union, National Rural Letter Carriers Association, National Association of Postal Supervisors, and the Co-Presidents of the United Postmasters and Managers of America. Each of the Grantors selects an individual to represent their organization on **the Fund's** Executive Committee, which handles the day-to-day operations of the Fund.

PERF is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization operated by the various management and union organizations of the U.S. Postal Service to benefit postal employees. The Fund was created in 1990 to assist postal employees affected by Hurricane Hugo and the California earthquake, and to provide a permanent process to assist postal employees who become victims of a major natural disaster. The Fund has provided thousands of grants totaling millions of dollars to active and retired postal employees impacted by hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires and isolated house fires.

The Fund is here to assist our postal families in their time of need.

If you have any questions, call 202-408-1869 or email your question or comment to: perf10268@aol.com.

New Postage Rates for 2019

USPS requested the rate changes in October.

In November, the Postal Regulatory Commission approved the rate increases. All rates changes will **go into effect on Jan. 27, 2019.**

With these new rates the cost of a forever stamp will increase from 50 cents to 55 cents.

However, the charge of an additional ounce will decrease from 21 cents to 15 cents.

Using Priority Mail services will also cost more at the end of January.

An example being sending a retail small flat rate box currently costs \$7.20 and will increase to \$7.90.

The rate of a metered letter will increase as well from 47 cents to 50 cents.

See the chart below for the most commonly used rates.

In a release, USPS said the "rates will keep the Postal Service competitive while providing the agency with needed revenue."

Effective January 27, 2019

Product	Current Rate	New Rate
1st Class/Forever Stamp	50 cents	55 cents
Additional ounce	21 cents	15 cents
Metered 1st class letter	47 cents	50 cents
Regular Flat Rate Envelope	\$6.70	\$7.35
Legal-size Flat Rate Envelope	\$7.00	\$7.65
Small Flat Rate Box	\$7.20	\$7.90
Medium Flat Rate Box	\$13.65	\$14.35
Large Flat Rate Box	\$18.90	\$19.95
Large APO/FPO Flat Rate Box	\$17.40	\$18.45

The First United States Postage Stamps



Before the introduction of stamps, it was the recipient of mail—not the sender—who generally paid the cost of postage. The postmaster would note the postage due in the upper right corner of the letter. The postage rate was based on the number of sheets in the letter and the distance it would travel. Only occasionally did a sender pay delivery costs in advance.

An Act of Congress on March 3, 1845, established uniform postal rates throughout the nation, with a uniform rate of five cents for distances under 300 miles (500 km) and ten cents for distances between 300 and 3000 miles. However, Congress did not authorize the production of stamps at that time.



On March 3, 1847, Congress authorized the U.S. Postmaster General to prepare postage stamps, “which, when attached to any letter or packet, shall be evidence of the payment of postage”. The first official postage stamps issued by the U.S. consisted of an engraved 5-cent red brown stamp depicting Benjamin Franklin (the first postmaster of the U.S.), and a 10-cent black stamp with George Washington. They went on sale on July 1, 1847 in New York City with Boston receiving stamps the following day and other cities thereafter.

In 1851, Congress reduced postal rates. These new rates practically eliminated distance as a factor and created a need for new stamp denominations. The 1¢ stamp (Franklin) was used on “drop letters” which were mailed within the same town. The single letter rate, based on a half-ounce, was changed to 3¢ (Washington) for mail not over a distance of 3,000 miles. Mail exceeding this distance was lowered to 6¢. These rates remained unchanged for 30 years. Prepayment was still optional. If postage was paid by the addressee upon receipt, the rate was higher.

In 1855, the Post Office made the use of prepaid postage stamps mandatory for mailing letters.

Only Franklin and Washington appeared on stamps until 1856, when a five-cent stamp honoring Thomas Jefferson was issued. A two-cent Andrew Jackson stamp was added in 1863.

The United States post office has issued over one hundred thirty stamps depicting Benjamin Franklin.

George Washington’s image has appeared on more U.S. postage stamps than any other person. Washington is typically issued as the rate for a first-class domestic letter.

USPS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
A Program You Can Trust



EAP - A Program You Can Trust

EAP offers free confidential counseling and referral services to all postal employees and their families.

800-EAP-4-YOU

(800-327-4968) TTY: 877-492-7341

EAP4YOU.com

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential short term counseling and referral service that can help you and your family successfully deal with life's challenges. EAP services are available to you at no cost, as your employer has prepaid these services.

EAP can help with things like stress, anxiety, depression, relationship problems, job or work stress, parenting, alcohol and drugs, legal issues, and financial concerns and dependent care issues.

All EAP counselors have a minimum of a master's degree in counseling or social work, as well as clinical experience in dealing with a wide range of personal and workplace concerns. Your privacy is protected by strict federal and state confidentiality laws and regulations and by professional ethical standards for counselors. Information you share with the EAP may not be released to anyone without your prior written consent, except when required by law or when in compliance with a court order.

Rural Letter Carrier Word Search

Word Search Rules

Locate the given words in the grid, (eight possible directions) running forward or backwards; horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

WORDS IN THE PUZZLE

- ATTEMPTED NOT KNOWN
- CHANGE OF ADDRESS
- CONSTITUTION
- CURB YOUR WHEELS
- ENGINE OFF
- FIRST CLASS
- FLAT
- GRIEVANCE
- KEYS IN POCKET
- LETTER
- MAILBOX
- MOVED LEFT NO ORDER
- NO SUCH NUMBER
- PAC
- POSTAGE
- PROVIDENT GUILD
- RESOLUTION
- RURAL CARRIER
- SAFETY FIRST
- SET BRAKE
- STAMP
- STEWARD
- TORT CLAIMS ACT
- UBBM
- UNION MEMBER



February 18, 2019

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Auxiliary News

Sue Kelly
Secretary Treasurer

Scholarship Time

Hello Family.

I hope that everyone had a safe and happy Thanksgiving as well as a Merry Christmas. It's time to put back on our running shoes and start another year. I am thankful all the cooking is over. Don't know about you but I will be spending more time in the gym for awhile .

It was possible this year to award 12 scholarships in the amount of \$500.00 each. This would not have been possible if not for the generous giving this year from all of you. This year the following districts gave extra to the scholarship programs, McDowell, Brushy Mtn., Union, Catawba and Rutherford. Also thanks to Mecklenburg and Union counties for there support to the Lineberger, Page and Adams Scholarship funds.

It gave me great pleasure to mail scholarship checks to each of the following recipients in October.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| 1.Lane A. Johnson | McDowell County |
| 2.Sarah Katherine Wagoner | Brushy Mtn. |
| 3.Claire Wallace | Union County |
| 4.Kalie Cook | Catawba County |
| 5.Wade Andrew Johnson | Rutherford County |
| 6.Cody Alan Copeland | Charles Adams |
| 7.Alexandria Scott | Prennis Page |
| 8.Jacquelyn Hope Keel | Harriet Lineberger |
| 9.Alexis Riddick | |
| 10.Caleb Wallace | |
| 11.Bailey Smith | |
| 12.Abigail Lyndsey Keel | |

The 2018-19 scholarship application as well as the poster contest information are available. **National scholarships must be postmarked by March 1, 2019.** State scholarships must be postmarked by June 1, 2019. Poster contest ages 6-20 are due by the first morning of the State convention. If you need copies of the scholarship applications or contest information give any **Auxiliary board member** a call and they will be able to assist you.

This year the following districts gave extra to the Junior program so that they might continue to have a fun time at the State convention, Mecklenburg, Rockingham, Piedmont, McDowell and Union counties.

I also have project items and raffle tickets for the Program of Awareness. Call me if you are interested in any of these items.

Have a safe and keep warm winter.

Life is short no matter how long we live. Live it to the fullest each day. My desire is to help others. I leave you with this thought.

How would you like to be remembered all year long?

FEBURARY 2019

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

MARCH 2019

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

Dates to Remember

January 1	New Year's Day Holiday	February 18	President's Day Holiday
January 12	Dwyer Homecoming Party	March 10	Daylight Saving Time Begins
January 21	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday	March 17	St. Patrick's Day
January 26-28	South Atlantic Conference (SAC)		
February 14	Valentine's Day		



Top left- RCA Iskea Artis works his Aux Route in Sanford.
Middle RCA Robin Baker fills her car with parcels in Sanford.
Right- RCA Francisco Danois cases mail in Sanford on his Aux route.
Bottom- RCA Ashley Shelton gets her parcels ready for delivery in Yanceyville.

Are you moving?

*Please notify the Secretary Treasurer of your new address. Address corrections sent through USPS or to Human Resources **do not** get forwarded to the Union.*

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