



North Carolina Rural Carrier

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Correction to the Sept/Oct issue

~ The photo caption on page 6 stated that Earl White received a Membership Longevity Award for 55 years of membership with the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers'. It should have read **65 years** of membership. We apologize for the error.



Mitchell Reece

President's Message

Seasonal Changes

I am writing this article shortly after the time change back to standard time. The daylight hours are diminishing as we approach the winter solstice. This makes it more difficult to complete our routes before it gets dark. Peak season seems to be starting earlier every year with the increasing volume of parcels. There is a desire to get done as quickly as possible, but we must all keep safety foremost in our minds. Each of us is ultimately responsible for our own safety.

We just completed a successful Fall Booster in Greensboro. We had a special presentation honoring Veterans Day and recognizing all the veterans in attendance. Each veteran spoke briefly about their service. I want to thank all of our veterans for their sacrifices and service to this country.

There was information shared with us regarding Open Season for our health benefits and also how to manage your Thrift Savings Plan investments in order to be more financially secure in your retirement years. The district representatives also conducted a Q&A session with the RCAs in attendance. The ADRs had presentations on various aspects of our job as well as information about the mapping of the routes that is in progress in conjunction with the time study.

January is fast approaching and with it comes the best opportunity to learn more about your job and be able to meet and talk with our national officers. I am referring to the South Atlantic Conference (SAC). It is held on the last weekend of January at the Crowne Plaza Atlanta Airport. The Atlanta Postal Credit Union also has its annual meeting on this weekend. Please make plans to attend by calling toll-free 888-233-9527 and asking for the SAC rate. Room rates are \$96/night plus tax. If you are staying onsite, parking is free. There is a charge for parking if you are staying at another hotel in the area. Book your room early because they do sell out. If you have never been to SAC, this is a good time to start. Bring your questions and get them answered.

Our membership continues to grow. As of late September, we have gained more than 450 members since the same time last year. This is due to the efforts of everyone promoting the benefits of being a member; at orientation, the RCA Academies, and in the individual offices all across the state. I want to thank everyone who has recruited a new member and ask that you continue your efforts. We could grow even more if we could get more of our regular carrier non-members to see the benefits of membership. There is strength in numbers.

On behalf of my wife, Christine, and my son, Andrew, I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Until next time, be safe out there.

North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers' Association

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Foothills	10
Durham County	12
Catawba/Lincoln	15
Harnett	32
McDowell/Mt Mitchell	36
Rockingham	46

Albemarle	2
Alleghany County	4
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Caswell County	14
Tri-County	25
Cleveland/Gaston	29
Union County	54

Roanoke Chowan	7
Wake County	24
Five County	28
Orange County	39
Person	41
Randolph County	42
Watauga/Avery	57

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Alamance	1
Guilford County	30
Rutherford/Polk	47
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Tar River	51
Tidewater	52
Wayne County	56

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Smoky Mountain	11
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French Broad	31
Johnson County	34
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Brushy Mountain	3
Ashe	6
Burke/Caldwell	9
Central Carolina	16
Cumberland/Hoke	20
Yadkin River	26

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

Obituaries

Thinking of everyone that lost a loved one this year. We hope that some of the joy of the season can touch your heart. Wishing you peace, strength & hope in the New Year.

Darryl Pleasant transitioned from this life on Wednesday, October 11, 2017. Darryl was a Rural Carrier Associate in the Greensboro office.

Earl Grover White, Sr., 90 of Elizabeth City, NC died Wednesday, October 18, 2017 at Sentara Albemarle Medical Center. He was born October 1, 1927 in Pasquotank County to the late Grover Cleveland White and Lucy Temple White. He was the husband of Audrey Dail White for sixty-seven years.

He was a retired mail carrier after forty-three years of service, Past Vice President of Albemarle District 2 of NC Rural Letter Carriers Association, and a sixty-seven-year member of the National Rural Letter Carriers Association. He was also a certified barber and a Veteran of the U.S. Army having served in WWII.

In addition to his wife he is survived by two daughters, Pamela White and fiancé John Allen of Elizabeth City, NC and Earline Dwarkanath and husband Amar of Chesapeake, VA; a son, Earl "Buddy" White, Jr. and wife Bobbie of South Mills, NC; special friend and niece, Sybil Sowerby; and a host of nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by a daughter, Patricia Ann White; two sisters, Hazel Berry and Emily Soth; and three brothers, Joe White, Leon White, and Lem White.

Lindbergh "Lind" Huffines, 90, went home to be with the Lord on Thursday, October 19, 2017. He was a native of Guilford County and the son of the late Dewey Huffines, Sr. and Pearl Zimmerman Huffines. He was the husband of 68 years to Terry Stephens Huffines who survives. Lindbergh retired after 40 years with Revolution Mills, a division of Cone Mills. He was a member of Apple's Chapel Christian Church and the Helping Hands Sunday school class. In the past, he served in the church as head usher and sang with the men's chorus. Lindbergh was an avid hunter and enjoyed gardening in his spare time. He was a loving and devoted husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

Survivors include his wife, Terry Stephens Huffines; daughter, Judy Jones and husband Andrew; son, Jerry Huffines and wife Nancy; grandchildren, Brian Jones, Stephen Jones and wife Jessica, and Gary Huffines; great-grandchildren, Parker and Lucas Jones, and a sister Chris-

(Continued on page 4)

Chaplain's Message Doug Byrum, Chaplain

Servant Family

Read Luke 1:26 - 38

Mary said [to the angel], "Here I am, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." .
~ Luke 1:38 (NRSV)

As the mother of the Christ Child, Mary believed, obeyed, and served. Believing the message from the angel, she considered it a blessing to carry the child conceived by the Holy Spirit. She obeyed God's will for her life. Mary gave birth to her son and reared him to become our savior.

Joseph, too, believed, obeyed, and served. He believed the message God sent by the angel. He obeyed by marrying Mary. Joseph served by giving Jesus the stability of a family and the training and opportunities to grow in the love and admonition of the Lord.

Jesus believed, obeyed, and served. Believing God, Jesus lived out his humanity as our perfect model. In the fullness of time, in obedience to the will of his heavenly Father, Jesus served in the ministry God called him to do: teaching, healing, and dying on the cross to save us.

This servant family set the highest example for us: believe, obey, and serve. They carried out the will of God that we might find a savior.

What is God calling us to do that someone might find the Savior? Will we believe, obey, and serve?

Prayer: God of all the world, thank you for your gift of salvation. Help us to serve you daily by sharing the good news of Christ with others. Amen.

PRAYER FOCUS: SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

We hope you had a blessed Thanksgiving.

Wishing you a Merry Christmas from our house to yours.

Doug & Linda

Thought for the Day:

*How am I
serving
God
today?*

tine Oakley.

He was preceded in death by his parents, three brothers, and two sisters.

Bobby Rudell Cave, age 60, of Dobson, NC passed away on October 24, 2017 after a courageous battle with cancer. He was born in Surry Co. on December 5, 1956 to the late Herman Rudell and Pauline Hodges Cave.

Bobby was a devoted husband to the love of his life, Pam and was a loving father and Papa.

He was a retired rural mail carrier who dedicated 28 years of his life to serving the Dobson community. Bobby will be truly missed by all who knew him.

Left to cherish his memory are his loving wife of 37 years, Pam Nations Cave, two sons and daughter-in-law, Jason Dale Cave, Joshua Brian and Bobbi Ruel Cave; four grandsons, Jordan, Brian, Jackson, and Ethan Cave; sister and husband, Anne and Russell Sechrist; brother and wife, Phillip and Jane Cave; father and mother-in-law, Hugh and Inez Nations; sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Patricia and Donnie Chaffin of Mocksville; adoptive family, Tim and Kathy Atkins, Chuck and Kim Burton; many cousins, nieces, nephews and beloved friends and coworkers.



seat belt and impairment has being ruled out. Tragedy only begins to describe this event.

The driver of the SUV was treated for her injuries at the hospital and has since been released.

RIP Darrell Pleasant, RCA from Summit Station in Greensboro. He was thirty-five years young and recently engaged. We will love and miss him forever. May his loss

never be forgotten and his spirit remain with us the rest of our routes. Our heart-felt thoughts, prayers, and condolences go out to all his family, loved ones, and co-workers.

All the potential hazards on the street, the overwhelming volume of our package business, and even some of our managers "hurry up and be safe" mentality can be a daily challenge to say the least. That being said, as I plea to our new RCAs in the Academy when I'm teaching "You are the captain of the ship; smooth and steady-always under control; safe not sorry; working smarter not harder".

These are the clichés that many of our new carriers tire quickly of me incessantly repeating . They should remain a constant for all of us to remember and never take for granted. For there are, indeed, times when we do everything correctly and the accident or near miss is not our fault and could not have been prevented. When we do have control is when we as professionals must remain vigilant.

With our package volume skyrocketing for peak season, if you ever feel like you can not make it back for dispatch, regardless of your position or years of experience, please, politely inform management and let them address the situation. This is a courtesy to management and your option but I encourage you to work together and let them know how your day feels. Please do not assume they will track you on their computer via our scanner or what I call our digital supervisor. We can only move as efficiently as the mail volume allows. The last thing we need on the street is a call wondering where we are or when we'll be finished, creating yet another distraction for us to contend with. We cannot predict the future, we can only make an educated guess. On the long, high volume days it is even more important for us to remain smooth and steady, and yes, we are still entitled to our 30 minute lunch break, which is not just for nourishment but also to relax and refresh and to take a break from the intense focus it requires while our wheels are rolling.

To aid in delivery, sound your horn when pulling into driveways and always before backing. It is the Post Office's policy that we are to sound the horn to try to hail the customer to the car, announce our presence on their prop-



SAFETY
Scott Deal

Gone but never forgotten...

The loss of one carrier is far to great a price to pay. Unfortunately we have suffered another tremendous loss in the line of duty. This occurred as our carrier was finishing his route around 5:30 pm on October 10, the day after Columbus Day. The cause of the crash has not been officially released at the time that I write this article. What is known is that the LLV lost control and crossed the center median. It was struck on the driver's side by a SUV.

Initial estimates report the LLV was traveling around 30 mph in heavy rain and may have hydroplaned. The carrier appeared to have been under the

(Continued from page 4) Gone but never forgotten...

erty, and most importantly for safety. Checking for things such as dogs or any hazards before we dismount.

If we do dismount we must perform all of the proper parking procedures...setting the parking brake, placing vehicle in park, curbing the wheels, and turning off the engine. Having the keys in our pocket when we go to the door with the mail, package, dog spray, and scanner. (The rural carrier workout—80 times/ 5 to 6 days a week, as has become the norm.)

If the customer gets upset or doesn't understand this policy give them your office phone number and let management explain it to them. We do want to be sensitive to our customers that are day sleepers and work night shift. If they come out in their pajamas with "bed head," try and explain the safety aspect of us blowing the horn. If they insist they do not want to be disturbed and can ensure us of our safety for us to dismount, get a letter from them and put it in your route book and give management a copy as well.

This is when I also recommend getting instructions from the customer as to what their delivery preference is when we have an article for them to sign for. Do they want us to ring door bell and wake them up or simply leave them a notice? Again we must have the proper documentation if they want us to simply leave a 3849.

For those customers that do come out to the sound of our horn, shower them with praise and thanks and let them know how much we appreciate their help. I have found that with thanks and educating them with the reasons for the horn, most are understanding and will come help if it's convenient. Nothing makes me smile more than seeing our customers come to the vehicle, sometimes without even having to sound the horn. Educating them does pay! Even if it's only saving one dismount a day. Service is all we have and when we provide it properly, it becomes a two way street and our customers are more willing to contribute... "service with a smile" can mean both the carrier and customer are grinning.

Regardless if the customer is available or we have to dismount, safety should never be a short cut. There is simply no way to move 10 hours worth of mail in 8 hours. Take the time to be safe and do the job properly, serving the route, not simply running the route. Lean on your local or area steward, ADR, or DR if your manager doesn't allow, or if it ever becomes a threatening environment. You are never alone in this role and only have to reach out if you ever need help or have any questions what so ever. The only "bad" question is the one that is not asked!

Let's always focus on safety! Which will in turn lead to longevity which is the goal for all of us. Going home the same way we arrived at work in the morning is the idea. Being able to have a successful career and even more satisfying retirement is the focus.

Set the goal to make the million mile award, encourage those newly appointed RCA/ARCs, set an example for all to follow no matter how long you have been in service. We are all in this together and we all share the responsibility to get down the road in the safest possible manner. Can you imagine a time when the safety teams and districts have nothing to talk about? The possibility does exist!

In closing, thanks for all you do and the many, many close calls, near misses, and accidents that you prevent on a daily basis. I am honored to be in your company.

North Carolina's own Michael Jordan once said, "the ceiling is the roof...". In my opinion, he was stating that the possibilities are endless when it comes to striving for greatness and improving on your potential. As we take on another record-breaking holiday delivery season, let's focus on doing it safely. If we can be safer this year than we were last year what a success that will be. This is what we truly deliver no matter the season or condition!

I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas &
A Happy New Year!



RETIREMENT

Renee Johnson

Your TSP Checkup

Hello Again Fellow Rural Carriers.

By the time you receive this edition of your North Carolina Rural Letter Carrier Newsletter, Christmas will be upon us, and a New Year with all its possibilities will be just around the corner.

Let me first wish you all the Merriest Christmas ever, and a Hearty Wish for a Healthy and Happy Upcoming 2018!!

We can make 2018 a more productive year toward our retirement if we take a moment to assess where we are within that process, and how we might better use our time and funds to plump up our retirement savings.

In the last edition we looked at how much money we might need to properly fund our retirement. This month we're giving you a TSP Check-Up to help you achieve success!

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5) **Your TSP Checkup**

Please note that the occasional year has 27 pay periods, but for the purpose of this assessment we are only using the more common 26 pay period calculation.

TSP Check Up

TSP stands for Thrift Saving Plan. It's a retirement savings account a lot like a 401K.

The idea behind it is as a FERS employee, you have money deducted from your paycheck and deposited into your TSP each pay period. When you retire, you can receive money each month from your TSP.

There are two ways you can save in your TSP: traditional TSP and Roth TSP.

The only difference between them is **WHEN** you pay income taxes, everything else remains the same.

Traditional TSP is tax-deferred, meaning you pay the taxes when you actually withdraw the funds. Roth TSP is NOT tax-deferred and you will pay the taxes in the year that you EARN the funds.

TSP is available to both FERS and CSRS eligible employees.

Visit www.tsp.gov for more information.

TSP Check Up Maximizer

Every year the IRS decides the maximum amount that can be deposited into TSP.

There are two types of deposits: Regular Contributions and Catch-Up Contributions.

For this exercise, you'll need your most recent Leave & Earnings Statement. (Most of us refer to this as our check stub, and it is available through epayroll at <https://liteblue.usps.gov>.)

Regular Contributions

Regular Contributions are contributions you can begin making into TSP at any time while you're working as an eligible Federal employee. The contribution limit for 2018 is being increased by \$500.00 from the previous limit of \$18,000.00, allowing each participant \$18,500.00 of contributions.

YOUR CURRENT TSP CONTRIBUTIONS:

TSP PER PAY PERIOD \$ _____ X 26 = ANNUAL TSP CONT. \$ _____

+

ROTH TSP PER PP \$ _____ X 26 = ANNUAL TSP CONT. \$ _____

=

YOUR ANNUAL TSP CONTRIBUTIONS COMBINED \$ _____

(Continued on page 7)

Catch-Up Contributions

Catch-Up Contributions are extra contributions you can begin making into TSP any time starting in the year that you turn 50 years old, as long as you expect to make the maximum regular contribution as an eligible Federal employee.

****You must re-elect Catch-Up Contributions each year. ****

YOUR CURRENT TSP CATCH-UP CONTRIBUTIONS:

TSP PER PAY PERIOD \$ _____ X 26 = ANNUAL TSP CATCH-UP CONT. \$ _____
+
ROTH TSP PER PP \$ _____ X 26 = ANNUAL TSP CATCH-UP CONT. \$ _____
=
YOUR ANNUAL TSP/ROTH TSP CATCH-UP CONTRIBUTIONS COMBINED \$ _____

The contribution limit for Catch-Up Contributions for 2018 is \$6,000.00.

TSP CHECK UP ASSESSMENT:

1. I'm saving the right amount in TSP for retirement. Yes No
Action Consult with a Tax Advisor
 Increase TSP/Roth Contributions
2. I review my TSP investments regularly and know when to adjust. Yes No
Action Review TSP investments
3. My TSP and/or Roth TSP tax strategy is rock solid. Yes No
Action Review and/or Re-elect Catch-up Contributions
4. My TSP beneficiary designation is up-to-date. Yes No
Action Review and Update Designated Beneficiary



RCHBP
Audrey Solomon

It's Flu Season

By the time you read this, open season will have probably ended. If not the end is near. Open season ends on December 11, 2017. I hope you chose the plan that best suited you and your family's needs.

Here is what's new for 2018 with the Rural Carrier Benefit Plan.

The move from Coventry's platforms to Aetna's platforms becomes effective on January 1, 2018.

New family style ID cards with up to five members on one card. These will be mailed sometime in December.

An easier to understand explanation of benefits and a new mailing address for claims.

A FREE 24-hour nurse advice line for members with any health questions.

A redesigned website.

A provider search tool.

Health and wellness resources.

Official Plan Documents including 2018 RCBP Brochure.

Benefit information and much more!!!!

Radiology imaging procedures with in-network free standing imaging centers reimbursement is changing from 100% to 95%.

A change required to comply with the Mental Health Parity.

Coverage for wigs up to \$500 per person per calendar year.

Web-based video conferencing treatment program the AbleTo.

For complete changes, see page 14 of the 2018 RCBP Brochure, which can be found on our website at www.rcbhhealth.com in Member Resources under Official Plan Documents.

RETIREEES MUST MAKE PLAN CHANGES WITH OPM. Retirees will receive a packet with information from OPM with instructions on how to change.

RCAs must get in touch with HRSSC at phone number 1-877-477 3273, then select option 5.

ACTIVE EMPLOYEES must enroll/change using PostalEase. Your pin will be needed.

INFLUENZA

Influenza (aka flu) is a contagious respiratory infection caused by a variety of flu viruses. Influenza can be a mixture of the common cold and pneumonia symptoms. Symptoms could include but are not limited to: headache, muscle aches, sore throat, congestion, cough, fatigue, fever and extreme coldness (chills shivering), runny nose and in some cases, vomiting and diarrhea. Flu can cause severe illnesses such as primary viral pneumonia or secondary bacterial pneumonia. The most obvious symptom of these two pneumonias is trouble breathing. If this occurs seek medical attention immediately.



Flu season usually starts in late December and ends in early March; however, these dates are not etched in stone. The flu can hit you at any time and it can hold your body hostage for two weeks or more.

Treatment for the flu is plenty of rest, drinking plenty of liquids and taking medication such as acetaminophen to relieve the fever and muscle aches. Antiviral medication may be effective, if given early.

Due to the massive amount of people that get the flu each year, some doctors offices and emergency care facilities are unable to handle the influx of patients.

The Rural Carrier Health Benefit Plan has a Telemedicine site that will speak with you when your doctor can't and give doctor's notes when needed.

Prevention is key. Steps to take are frequent hand washing with warm soapy water. Covering your mouth when sneezing or coughing and getting flu shots.



A seasonal flu shot takes about 2 weeks to get in your system; therefore, it is recommended that you get it early.

Personal Privilege Note: From the Solomon Family to yours,

Merry Christmas and Have a Happy and Prosperous New Year. May God's grace and mercy be with you.

RAFT CHANGES

RAFT is the acronym for Recruit A Friend Today. The NRLCA began the RAFT program as an incentive payment for our members; to encourage them to recruit the non-members of our craft to join our Association.

The National Office is no longer sending RAFT payments to individual members for any new member recruited after July 1, 2017. They have encouraged the State to develop their own incentive programs.

North Carolina has decided to implement a "Recruiter Raffle" as an incentive for the North Carolina members to continue their efforts in enlisting new members. We will have a drawing at the end of each quarter. This will be done for a term of one year initially. If this proves successful, it may be extended the following year.

Every quarter the names of all recruiters will be placed in the hat for a chance at winning a \$250 prize. The first award will be drawn on December 31, 2017.

This pool of names will be from all the new members recruited during the previous quarter (July 1– September 30). 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 5 new members, then they will have 5 chances in the drawing at the \$250 prize.



The first winner will be announced in our next issue.

\$250



Please visit the website at

WWW.NCRLCA.com

for the latest information

and to view this issue in color!

Wishing all of you

the Happiest of Holidays

~ your State Board





Auto-Homeowners' Insurance Rep

Brian Hamlett

Insurance Rates Going Up?

In June of this year the State Insurance Commissioner signed a settlement agreement with the North Carolina Rate Bureau, an independent group representing all auto insurance companies in the state, in response to their request for a 13.8% increase in auto insurance rates. The agreement allowed for an average increase of only 2.2% - a difference of more than \$1 billion dollars from the requested rate over the next two years.

The new rate went into effect for new and renewal policies beginning October 1, 2017. The Rate Bureau also agreed not to request an increase in 2018 so the change will remain in effect until October 2019.

With the new rate in effect, it may be a good time to shop around for a better deal. Many rates for liability insurance will be within a few dollars of each other from company to company. This is due to how laws, unique to NC, govern the insurance industry and help spread liability exposure across all companies.

This does not affect pricing for any other auto insurance product you buy, such as Comprehensive coverage,

etc. If you need a recommendation on a company to call for a quote, feel free to give me a call. My contact information is just inside the front page of this newsletter.

One of the main reasons an increase was sought is due to distracted driving. We are constantly being reminded about driving safety on the job and we should take it to heart.



Safe driving not only affects us and our passengers but every driver, passenger, and pedestrian on the highway.

We all know what Christmas means for our workload so we must remain extra attentive to our driving and other travelers.

As always if I can help in any way please let me know and Happy Holidays to all!

Donate to the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF)

From hurricanes to floods and other storms, many parts of our country are in need.

The USPS is reminding employees they can turn to the *Postal Employees Relief Fund (PERF)*. This fund helps postal employees & retirees whose homes are significantly damaged by natural disasters or house fires.

To make an immediate donation:

Go to postalrelief.com with your credit card

or send a check to:

PERF

P.O. Box 7630

Woodbridge, VA 22195-7630

PERF is not an emergency relief or immediate needs replacement agency, such as the *Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)* or the *Red Cross*. PERF (part of the Combined Federal Campaign) provides relief grants to help qualifying individuals get re-established after a loss, based on an application process.

Since shipping and distributing goods in the affected area is nearly impossible, we are asking that you donate money to allow agencies on the ground to spend it as needed as this is the best immediate thing you can do to help those in need.

Any donation, no matter the amount, is needed for our postal families. Please give today!



PAC CHAIR
Steve Rogers

Tired?

Tiredness ~ A feeling of exhaustion, mentally or physically; weariness.

Everyone has something they are absolutely tired of. Some are tired of their nosy neighbor; others are irritated with the old hunk of junk they have to drive every-day. Plenty are irked by the negative news stories we hear daily on the way to work.

Now let me ask you this; if there was a way to help relieve your irritation of something that you deal with every day, would you? What if I told you that you can? Everyone is getting completely tired of our elected officials attempting to take away our rightfully earned benefits. Together we can fix this issue.

We have all the tools and opportunities for you to make a difference in our industry. Here are just some opportunities:

- ⇒ **Get involved in your local district meetings**
- ⇒ **Attend the Fall Booster**
- ⇒ **Check out the State Convention**
- ⇒ **Go to the National Convention**
- ⇒ **Contribute to North Carolina’s PAC**

Attending any of these specific events will allow you to become involved in understanding what your union officials do for you everyday. I can promise you, you will leave any of these with knowledge that will help you and will allow you to preform your duties and protect your future. Right now it is more important than ever to work to keep your job and benefits.

Everyone remembers how hard the days of being an RCA were, hoping one day that we would be blessed enough to get on full time. We looked forward to all the benefits to come; including annual leave, sick leave, insurance and retirement benefits. Now that we are full time, all of these benefits that we once looked forward to are constantly being attacked and threatened by our elected officials. Whether it is six day delivery, retirement plans, health insurance or our COLA!

To keep these hard earned benefits will take a lot of work from each individual. Together, if each of us would get involved, we can prove that old saying ‘strength in numbers’!

Let me ask you another question. Is your job worth a dollar a day? How about two dollars a day? There are

some of us that do believe that! We need to increase the number of individuals that do believe in this idea. Only a small percentage of our union members donate annually to the North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers’ Association Political Action Committee (PAC). Wouldn’t you love to open up your newsletter and see your name being recognized as a donor? Imagine how many people will commend you and thank you for your contribution! Some of our consistent donators will be proud and honored to have your name beside of theirs. Let us prove that working together can truly change the outcome of our careers.

So how do I donate? It’s a lot simpler than you may think. All you have to do is call me and I will be more than happy to help you through the process!

Even if you are against the idea of donating to PAC, please still feel free to call me and give your input. Every opinion matters to me. I would love to hear from you.

So I will ask you one more time. Isn’t your job worth a dollar a day?

I strongly encourage each of you to consider giving as little as \$10.00 per pay period. That is just a dollar a day! I truly believe that my job is worth at least a dollar a day.

I would personally like to challenge all rural carriers to give your part, and let’s make a difference.

Never say “I’m too tired”!

Please send PAC Donations to:
Steve Rogers
PO Box 11372
Winston-Salem NC 27116-1372
(336) 414-7642 *new contact number

Don’t forget the State Convention coming up in Atlantic Beach in June. Again this year, for every \$25.00 you have donated to PAC, your name will be entered in a drawing. First prize will be \$250.00, second prize will be \$150.00, and third prize will be \$100.00. (The PAC year is August 1st until the end of the State Convention)

PAC does work for you.

Keep your eyes open for additional prizes throughout the year, just for donating to PAC.

PAC Donor List

As of October 2017

CAPITOL SAPPHIRE LEVEL \$2000-\$2999

Caudle, Daniel

Dwyer, Jeanette

Rogers, Stephen

RUBY LEVEL \$500-\$999

Cook, Heather

Hudgins, Bryan

Lineberger, Ronald

Prevatte, Brenda

CONTRIBUTOR LEVEL \$1-\$499

Athey, Jayne
Bennett, Debra
Britt, Celeste
Byrum, Doug
Cantler, Marlene
Caudill, Michael
Comer, James
Conley, Dennis
Corriher, Sally
Deal, Scott
Derrick, Christopher
Essick, Jeff
Farmer, Jesse
Frazier, Ken
Fuller, Kenneth
Fulwood, Phillip
Gibbs, Brenda
Gray, Vicki
Greer, Tracy
Gurganus, Robert
Harpe, Derek
Heath, Van
Hedgepeth, Priscilla

Heller, Kathleen
Hogan, Catherine
Huffines, Jerry
Huffines, Terry
Hunter, Eric
Inman, Robert
Johnson, Bonnie
Johnson, Glenn
Jones, Judith
Josewitz, Mary
Kelly, Carl
Kenny-Futch, Kelly
Kight, Janet
Laney, Christine
Ligon, Martha Sue
Lindsay, Connie
Liverman, Melissa
McClanahan, Catherine
McClelland, Jadwiga
Mildner, Norbert
Neal, Deborah
Neal, Reginald
Norris, Harold

Parker, Donna
Ranker, Kim
Reaves, Cecil
Reece, Mitchell
Rogers, Tina
Sain, Dale
Schreiber, Jay
Simmons, James
Small, Bethany
Snipes, Christina
Solomon, Audrey
Southern, Larry Roger
Stow, Joshua
Vance, Michelle
Westbrook, Betty Ann
White, Brenda
Young, Arthur



Why become a Sustaining Donor?

Automatic PAC contributions give NRLCA PAC a predictable income. A predictable income helps the Legislative Department strategize in advance for upcoming postal legislation.

Support NRLCA-PAC

Sign up for Electronic Fund Transfer

A monthly deduction from your checking account on the 5th of each month



Questions? Please contact Chana Ryan, Assistant to the Director of Governmental Affairs

crvan@nrlca.org

-or-

(703) 797-8415

I hereby authorize my bank to deduct from my checking account the monthly sum of:

\$45 \$25 \$20 \$15 \$10 Other: \$_____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____

Employee ID Number: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please attach a voided check

Send to NRLCA-PAC

1630 Duke St, Floor 2
Alexandria, VA 22314

By making a NRLCA-PAC Electronic Fund Transfer Authorization, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your monthly contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association or employment by the Postal Service nor part of union dues and that NRLCA-PAC will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office as permitted by the law.

You are also making this Electronic Fund Transfer authorization understanding that the NRLCA-PAC contributions are not tax deductible and your selection shall remain in full force and effect until you cancel by notifying the NRLCA-PAC in writing.

North Carolina District Representatives

Mid-Carolinas

Sally Corriher
PO Box 460
China Grove, NC 28023-0460
704-855-2629
Sally.Corriher@nrlca.org

Greensboro

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James.Suttles@nrlca.org

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Mid-Carolinas

Brenda Prevatte
910-738-8424
Ralph Fernandez
321-278-9479
Scarlett Hall
910-658-2972
Adam Campbell
910-554-6574

Greensboro

Art Young
919-868-9524





**Mid- Carolinas
District**
District Representative
Sally Corriher

Greensboro District
**Assistant District
Representative**
Gail Naillon
Christmas Overtime



National Mail Count

Beginning February 24, 2018 and ending March 9, 2018, there will be a two-week mail count. The engineered study has not been completed so this count will be based on current standards.

Many routes in Mid Carolina have not been counted since 2012. There has been no official word about how many routes will be counted, but do not be surprised if all routes are required to count.

Both the carrier and the management must agree in writing **not** to count, or the route will be counted.

Mail count training classes will be set for January, 2018. Postcards will be sent with dates, places and times for the scheduled trainings. This information will also be available on the NCRLCA.com web site.

If your route is to be counted, please attend the training class that is in your area. Regular rural carriers and leave replacements need to get this very beneficial training. We all need to be reminded of how a mail count is conducted and how each mail piece, parcel, scan, DPS, FSS, and accountable items are recorded so we get the proper credit for the work we do. I know what you are thinking — "I've counted before, I know how a mail count is done. I don't need the training. I have better things to do. It is a waste of time."

We all forget the basics sometimes and we need to be reminded of the proper way the mail pieces are recorded. Remember this mail count will determine what your salary will be until the next national mail count. Our current contract ends in 2018. There are no mail counts scheduled after the February-March 2018 mail count that is coming up.

Please attend mail count training if you are being counted.

The Christmas overtime period begins on December 2, 2017 and ends on December 22, 2017. Article 9.2.C.5.k states that during this time when a regular rural carrier works their relief day and is entitled to an X day, the X day must be scheduled and given by the employer in the same pay period in which the relief day is worked.

If the X day is not received within the same pay period, the carrier will be compensated at 100% of their daily rate of pay in lieu of the X day.

Regular rural carriers are not allowed to use X days that were earned prior to October 14, 2017 (the beginning of the guarantee period) through December 22, 2017 (the end of the designated Christmas period).

Christmas overtime is not an entitlement. Management has the right to control overtime by utilizing auxiliary assistance in the office or on the street.

Types of overtime

During the Christmas period, regular rural carriers are eligible for two types of overtime ~ FLSA overtime and Christmas overtime.

1. FLSA overtime is paid at all time throughout the year, not just during the Christmas period. Regular rural carriers are paid FLSA overtime under two circumstances.
 - a. Hours worked in excess of 12 hours in a day.
 - b. Hours worked in excess of 56 hours a week. These hours are calculated automatically when the total weekly work hours are greater than 56.
2. Christmas overtime is paid only during the designated Christmas period. Regular carriers are paid Christmas overtime under two circumstances.
 - a. Christmas assistance – This is the assistance provided by the regular carrier on his or her relief day. Therefore, only regular carriers assigned to a J or K route are eligible.
 - b. Hours worked in excess of the route's evaluation. This is based on the total actual work hours for the week, not on individual days.

Carriers should not feel pressured to "hurry up and get back". That will cause them to work in an unsafe manner.
Remember safety first!



(Continued on page 16)

Christmas overtime is paid at 150% of the carriers regular rate of pay.

There is no additional compensation for second trips, except mileage when carrying in a POV during the Christmas period.

Carriers should not feel pressured to “hurry up and get back”. That will cause them to work in an unsafe manner. Remember safety first!

Mail count

Mail count is quickly approaching. Mail count dates are set for February 24 thru March 9, 2018. This is a two-week count and it is an opt out count. This means that BOTH management and the rural carrier have to agree to opt out in writing for the route not to be counted. If either the manager or the carrier does not opt out then the route will be counted. At this time the NRLCA has not received any information on how many routes the postal service plans to count.

I strongly suggest that you plan on attending mail count training seminars near you. I urge all rural carriers both regular and relief carriers to attend the upcoming mail count trainings. It doesn't matter how many you have attended before or if this one will be your first. There is always something you may have forgotten or possibly not heard before. After the count is over and you remember some-

thing you missed that you were entitled to, then it is too late. Are you too busy to spare a few hours of your time for something that will affect your salary?

Remember the results from this count impact not only the regular carriers salary but also the relief carriers. If the route is not counted correctly and given the proper credits due, then the overall daily evaluation of the route and your pay will be impacted.

Each office will have a pre-count conference by February 9th. This is the time you have to address any issues that have come up in the past or any that you foresee coming up in the future. This is the time that management and the carriers can discuss and resolve any issues, rather than waiting until the mail count is over and doing a mail count dispute. You should document in writing the verbal agreements made during this conference to have something to refer back to in case a discrepancy should show up later.

Mail count trainings for Greensboro District will be held from 6:00 pm until 10:00 pm on:

- ⇒ **January 31, 2018 at Bob Martin Center in Williamston**
- ⇒ **January 31, 2018 at Crowne Plaza in Hickory**
- ⇒ **February 1, 2018 at Embassy Suites in Greensboro**
- ⇒ **February 6, 2018 at Sheraton Imperial Hotel Raleigh-Durham Airport at RTP in Durham**



The very first United States postage stamp featuring an image of Santa Claus was issued on November 9, 1972. It cost eight cents. The USPS had been printing special Christmas holiday stamps since 1962 but had never had an image of Santa Claus on one prior to this issue. It would be eleven more years before Santa would appear again on a US postage stamp. This second Santa postage stamp was released on October 22, 1983 at the issue price of 20 cents. Now, each year, the Postal Service has both a Contemporary Holiday issue and a Traditional Holiday issue for the Christmas season.

The USPS also pays tribute to other religious & cultural views with special stamp issues.

In 1996, the USPS recognized the Jewish Festival of Lights, by issuing the first Hanukkah stamp. It featured a stylized illustration of a menorah. A design featuring a beautiful ornate dreidel followed in 2004.



In 1997 the first Kwanzaa stamp was issued. Kwanzaa is a non-religious African-American festival which synthesizes and reinvents traditional African celebrations. It is celebration of family, community, and culture. The stamp portrays a colorful rendition of an African-American family. In 2004 a second stamp is released with an image of seven figures in colorful, traditional African robes.



In 2001, the Postal Service paid tribute to Eid. This stamp commemorates the two most important festivals on the Islamic calendar: Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. On these days, Muslims wish each other “Eid Mubarak” – which translates literally as “blessed festival”. The phrase “Eid Mubarak” is printed in gold Arabic calligraphy on a blue background on this stamp.

The dates for these festivals vary greatly from year to year. Eid al-Fitr, is on the first day of the Islamic month of Shawwal. It marks the end of the month-long fast of Ramadan. It was in June this year and will be in June in 2018. Eid-al-Adha is celebrated around the 10th - 13th days of the Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijjah. It marks Ibrahim's willingness to follow Allah's command to sacrifice his son. It took place in September this year and will be in August next year. The second USPS Eid stamp was issued on August 12, 2011.



PLEASE JOIN US

SOUTH ATLANTIC CONFERENCE (SAC)

INVITATION

COME ON DOWN TO ATLANTA!

When: January 27-29, 2018

Where: Crowne Plaza Atlanta Airport, 1325 Virginia Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30344

Rooms: Group Rate: \$96 per night plus taxes. Please ask for the SAC rate. Parking is complimentary for hotel guests.

Call 1-888-233-9527 by **January 7, 2018** for reservations under the group rate. Don't wait until the last minute.

Registration will be open: Saturday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm, Sunday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm and Monday 7:00-10:00 am.

For those interested, Atlanta Postal Credit Union has their Annual Meeting Saturday afternoon with GREAT CASH PRIZES! Bus transportation will be available from the hotel.

Saturday: A Labor Relations seminar will be 6:30—9:30 pm.

Sunday: Morning services will begin at 8:30 am with a worship service for those wishing to attend. Opening session begins at 9:15 am with the Presentation of Colors. National Auxiliary President Julie Houston will speak on her project for the coming year. Charles Head will present information on the Atlanta Postal Credit Union, followed by Linda Foran with National General Auto Insurance. Following a short break, new carriers and RCAs will break out for special sessions where RCAs will hear more about the rural craft and new carriers will learn more about their jobs. The main session will continue with information from the Rural Carrier Benefit Plan, Legal Counsel and PAC. This session will end at noon. After lunch our National President Jeanette Dwyer will speak, followed by a refreshment break leading into a Question & Answer (Q&A) session with the National Board. A retirement seminar including TSP information will be available beginning at 6:30 pm with Ronnie Stutts.

Monday: Session begins at 8:00 am. We will have the postal managers and/or vice presidents speak followed by a Question & Answer (Q & A) session with them and the National Officers. Our Executive Committee will speak also. New officers will be installed and we should finish no later than 12 noon.

Come on down for a VERY informative session!

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your state SAC Board member.

We look forward to seeing you in Atlanta!

Pam Berry

SAC President

NORTH CAROLINA AUXILIARY OFFICERS

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336-816-0999

VICE PRESIDENT

JANICE FULWOOD
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Phone 910-443-2071

SECRETARY/TREASURER

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910-488-5424

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252-792-6614

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L.E. WHITE

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252-771-8180

CHAPLAIN

MRS. CAROLYN WARD

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252-221-4683

PROVIDENT GUILD

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New Bern, NC 28562-5499

HISTORIAN

MRS. LUANN SHUE

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Salisbury, NC 28146-8570
704-857-6926

JUNIOR SPONSOR

MRS. SARAH STEWART

251 Cedar Drive
Stoneville, NC 27048-8412
336-427-3675

JUNIOR OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

BOBBY DWYER

305 W Oak St
Lake Waccamaw, NC 28450

VICE PRESIDENT

BLAYNE COPELAND

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Camden, NC 27921-7668

SECRETARY/TREASURER

MADISON HALL

9028 Main Street
Godwin, NC 28344-8387

CHAPLAINS

Lily Gray & Issac Groves

Auxiliary News

from

Sarah Stewart, Junior Sponsor

By the time you are reading this, you may have celebrated a wonderful Thanksgiving with family or friends. I hope you all have special family customs and traditions centered around this special time of year. Though many have suffered the loss of a family member, decline in health or trauma of some type we should all be able to find things which we should be thankful for. We need to teach the younger generation the importance of showing thanks, even for the smallest of blessings.

Quickly approaching is one of the most wonderful times of the year with young and old alike enjoying the festivities of food, music, gatherings and gift giving. May we remember and teach others that it is not really about the gifts, but rather the one who came to Earth as a little bitty baby. The most special gift we can give are love and time.

The National Auxiliary President Julie Houston's program is titled "A Program of Courage, Honor and Sacrifice" with the humanitarian project being "Folds of Honor".

I was unfamiliar with this organization at first but I am so pleased to share the mission of assisting children and spouses of those killed or disabled serving our country by providing educational scholarships. The project items being sold by the Auxiliary members this year will support this worthy cause. You can find additional information at www.foldsofahonor.org.

Lastly, it is never too early to think ahead to the State Convention ~ June 24 through June 27 at Atlantic Beach, NC this year! Tentative Junior day trip plans include the NC Aquarium at Pine Knoll Shores, Harker's Island and Cape Lookout Lighthouse and Seashore! Make plans now to be there.

The Juniors need to prepare their Junior Contest entries. If you need information on this, please contact me or another member of the board.

I hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving and I wish you A Merry Christmas!

Merry Christmas



Happy New Year!

NCRLCA Dues for 2016-2017

Regular...Cash.....\$689.00
1187...Bi-Weekly.....\$26.50
Retired.....Cash.....\$111.00
1187R...Monthly.....\$9.25
73, RCA, RCR, ARC.....Cash..... \$230.00
1187.....Bi-Weekly..... \$8.85

The membership year begins July 1, ends June 30. Please make checks payable to NCRLCA. Checks or membership form 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.

SAC

When: January 27-29, 2018

Where: Crowne Plaza Atlanta Airport,
1325 Virginia Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30344

Rooms: Group Rate: \$96 per night plus tax.
Please ask for the SAC rate. Parking is complimentary for hotel guests.

Call 1-888-233-9527 by **January 7, 2018** for reservations under the group rate.

DECEMBER 2017							JANUARY 2018						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1 PAY DAY	2		1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2	3	4	5	6 PP-2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 PP-26	7	8	9	10	11	12 PAY DAY	13
10	11	12	13	14	15 PAY DAY	16	14	15 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY	16	17	18	19	20 PP-3
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 PP-1	21	22	23	24	25	26 PAY DAY	27
24 31	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26	27	28	29 PAY DAY	30	28	29	30	31			



NCRLCA
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SPRING LAKE NC 28390-1562

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