

Volume 41 Issue 2 Circulation 5000 Edited in Spring Lake NC September-October 2024

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

Rural Letter Carriers Rally In Reno

Over 200 rural letter carriers along with fellow postal employees, mail handlers and city carriers, held a rally in downtown Reno, Nevada on Monday evening, August 26th. The rally was to bring awareness to H.R. 7629, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (POLC).

POLC was introduced to address the increase in robberies and assaults against letter carriers across the country. If passed, it will provide the necessary resources for the USPS to install high security collection boxes and replace older versions of the universal mailbox (arrow) key with an electronic version. It also calls for new sentencing guidelines so that any assault or crime against any letter carrier be treated the same as the assault of a law enforcement officer, a more severe sentence than is currently in place.

I'm proud to tell you that the Nevada Representative Mark Amodei signed onto H.R. 7629 the very next day! That's the power of a union rally!

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Rally Photos



North Carolina Rural Carriers at the POLC Rally in Reno Nevada, Monday August 26, 2024

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Durham/Orange	12	Yadkin River	26	Foothills	10
Cleveland/Gaston/Lincoln	29	Six County	28	Smoky Mountain	11
McDowell/Mt Mitchell/ Buncombe/Madison	36	Mecklenburg	38	Union	54
Watauga/Avery	57				

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Peach Belt	5	Alamance	1	Brushy Mountain	3
Southeastern	8	Sandhills	20	Sea Level	23
Central Carolina	16	Guilford	30	Wake	24
Johnston/N Harnett	34	Roanoke/Beaufort/Hyde/Pitt	44	Rutherford/Polk/Henderson/Trans	47
Randolph/Montgomery/Davidson	42	Piedmont	50	Tidewater	52

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

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National Emergency Hotline

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

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

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

Please keep this phone number for future use.

WEBSITE

Please visit www.NCRLCA.org for all the latest news.

This month the password will be B@ck2Sch**L

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

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

Cover Photos

Rally in Reno

By Debbie Bennett

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Important Dates

October 13	Fall Booster
October 14	Columbus Day Holiday
November 11	Veterans Day Holiday
November 11	Open Season begins
November 28	Thanksgiving Day Holiday
December 9	Open Season ends



President

Elaine Althoff

The Winds of Changing Seasons

Summer is winding down and Fall is fast approaching.

As I write this article the board is preparing for Fall Booster and the National Convention. While we are there, the Mini Mail Survey will have

begun.

By the time this hits your mailbox, we will have had our Mini Mail Survey. If your route was one of the newly adjusted routes, this being your first after the adjustments have been made, it may take two more surveys to level out, so I'm told. Please have patience for them to level out and pray up the mail for these newly adjusted routes.

For the rest of us this is our fourth. Most of our routes have stabilized. We still have carriers not doing mapping. If your manager is doing your mapping, without the carrier present, contact your steward for advice.

Contract Negotiations: We are still in contract negotiations. Until we ratify a new contract, our old contract is still in effect. The NRLCA Board continues to meet in subcommittees to address the ongoing issues of turnover and understaffing. NRLCA President Don Maston has video updates on the National web page on the subjects.

Highlights from The National Convention: As the seasons change, we also must be prepared for the many changes and adjustments our employer is continuing to roll out. Listening to Mr. DeJoy, US Postmaster General, at the 118th National Convention, the "Delivering for America" plan continues. In his fourth year, his goal remains the same: delivering to 267 million addresses 6 days a week with a focus on driving revenue up and costs down, becoming self-sustaining with a vision into the future; that evolves products and services like:

- ❖ Modernization-which includes upgraded Retail fronts.
- ❖ New Plants-30 new plants coming up. *"We will have better days than Richmond and Atlanta, we will kick UPS' butt, and we will get more packages."* Said PMG DeJoy. He is inspired by what we can do—We must be disciplined to move together.
- ❖ Cutting Cost-We currently pay FedEx 1.7 billion dollars to fly mail, next year that will go to zero. We deliver 50% of parcels a day in advance. That's 95%-96% of delivery. He spoke on the history before he got here *"I am working on a common strategy to put Humpty Dumpty back together again."* He finished by talking about his strong support for crime legislation, his optimism on the changes, and their effect on the

(Continued on page 6)



President Elaine Althoff with the North Carolina flag at the National Convention.



Chaplain

Jesse Ray Farmer Jr.

Mending Fences by Cutting Grass

There are moments in life when silence can become a heavy burden. For over a decade, there was a quiet standoff between me and my neighbor. What began as a small disagreement grew into an unspoken rift, stretching across

years. In that time, the space between us was filled with unresolved tension, unspoken words, and a shared sense of estrangement.

Recently, as I thought over the situation, I remembered the teachings of scriptures about loving our neighbors and even our enemies. Scriptures challenge us to do more than what feels natural; they call us to love in ways that reflect God’s own love.

I knew it was time to take a step towards reconciliation. So, I offered to cut my neighbor’s grass, a simple yet meaningful gesture. It wasn’t just about the grass—it was about breaking the silence, extending an olive branch, and demonstrating love in a tangible way.

In doing so, I was reminded of the profound truth that love is not just a feeling but an action. We are called to love not only those who love us back but also those with whom we have disagreements or even conflicts. It’s easy

to love those who are kind and agreeable, but the real challenge is to extend grace and kindness to those who may not reciprocate.

This small act of service was a step towards healing and reconciliation. It demonstrated that love has the power to bridge gaps and soften hearts. We are called to forgive and give grace to others, breaking down walls of division with acts of love and compassion.

In your own life, consider areas where there might be unresolved conflicts or strained relationships. Reflect on how you can take a step towards reconciliation, not just with gestures but with a heart willing to forgive and embrace. Love, in its purest form, is an active choice, a deliberate decision to mend what is broken and build what is missing.

Prayer: Help me to reflect Your love in all my relationships, especially where there is discord or tension. Grant me the courage to take steps towards reconciliation and the wisdom to love not just in word but in action, Amen

Reminder: If you are having a difficult time with a decision or need someone to support you in prayer and encouragement do not hesitate to reach out to me at 252-939-6826.



Obituaries

Garland Van Carter, 75, of Plymouth passed away on Sunday, July 21, 2024, at his home.

Van was born in Beaufort County on October 18, 1948, to the late Lee Thomas and Evelyn Spencer Carter. He was married to the former Kay Fulford, for over forty-nine years before she preceded him in death.

Van honorably served his country in the U.S. Air Force during the Vietnam era. He went on to work as a rural letter carrier for the U.S. Postal Service for thirty-nine years, serving in the Roper, Plymouth and Merry Hill areas.

He was the past president of the NC Rural Carrier Association and a long-time board member of the South Atlantic Conference of the National Rural

Letter Carrier Association.

Van also served as past president of Friends of the Library and member of the Jaycees, Kiwanis, and Washington County American Red Cross Board. He was also a member of Perseverance Lodge 59 AF&AM.

Van is survived by his daughter, Jennie Bowen, and husband Dennis of Plymouth; granddaughter, Jessalyn B. Cahoon (Ryan), step-grandchildren, Daniel Bowen (Jessica), and Jenna Bowen; great-grandson, Carter Cahoon and step-great-grandsons, Ethan and Zachary Bowen; a sister, Sallie Carter, and many nieces and nephews.

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 4)

sustainability of the Postal Service. “*You need an impatient PMG!*”

Getting down to business- The fifty-three delegates and 11 non delegates have sat through hours of meetings and seminars. We along with the forty-nine other states and Puerto Rico delegates voted as follows:

- ❖ Fifteen amendments were brought forward to the constitution committee, two were combined, and all eight failed. (11-15 were dismissed.)
- ❖ 11 binding resolutions, 1 passed 10 failed
- ❖ 382 non-binding resolutions 6 were moved to binding. 2 were combined as well as 28-91 combined as a block the motion failed. Leaving 272 resolutions passed with the drop of the gavel. -
- ❖ For a total of 316 passed 61 failed
- ❖ We had 1 appeal and recommendations were upheld
- ❖ We elected the new members to the National Board

CONGRATULATIONS to Bethany Small, elected as our four-year Executive Committeeman. Bethany will be covering the Southern Area. Make us proud!

North Carolina’s new NRO is Michael Merola, who will be covering the Atlantic Area.

Our new National Officers are as follows:

- President Don Maston
- Vice President Patrick Pitts
- Secretary-Treasurer Tommy Turner
- Director of Labor Relations John Adams
- Director of Steward Operations Nicky Phillips
- Executive Committee Chair Jeanette Dwyer
- Executive Committeeman Michael Merola
- Executive Committeeman Kirby Ricketts
- Executive Committeeman Bethany Small

Important Dates to Save!

Fall Booster: We will be having a Resolutions 101 session on how to write Resolutions. Bring your ideas forward by pre-writing your Resolutions for review. The Fall Booster will be held on October 13th at the Sheraton Greensboro at the Four Seasons, Koury Convention Center. 3121 West Gate City Blvd, Greensboro, NC 27407 Phone: (336) 292-9161 use block code: North Carolina Rural Letter Carriers when calling for reservations. We hope to see you there!

Open Season: November 11 - December 9, 2024 There are a lot of changes are going on. This year, you must re-establish your insurance choice. Make sure you go into your options in lite blue and make your selections. As I have said for a long time, if you do plan to make coverage changes, check that your current physicians participate with your new plan as well. If you are in Self plus One and The Family Plan is less expensive, you can choose to take the Family Plan.

Leave Carry Over: I am asked every year if we are going to be able to carry over leave. Yes, a June MOU on leave carryover was agreed upon. This MOU will allow career employees to carry over 520 hours of accumulated annual leave from leave year 2024 to leave year 2025. This MOU will expire with the conclusion of the 2025 leave year. You can find the MOU on the National website.

Peak Season: In October we head into a very Heavy Peak/Political Season, please let the new carriers know how to handle Political mailings in your office. Please be safe out there and take care of your overall health.

Fall Meetings: If your district is having a fall meeting, please attend and get information from your stewards.

BE SAFE AND PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR SURROUNDINGS



*Telisha Locklear
Executive
Committeeman*

School's Back In Session

Hello my rural carrier family. First of all I am your new executive committeeman Telisha Locklear and I will be covering safety.

As we all know fall is upon us and my first thoughts are hurricane season and kids going back to school. (My favorite time of the year cause I have 3 kids in school.)

So for my fellow rural carriers this means rain, wind, buses and more traffic on the road.

Hurricane season is from June through November. September and October have been the busiest months for hurricanes.

Safety is always first and foremost. Our goal is to go home safely to our families. Anytime you feel unsafe during bad weather follow your instincts. PS Form 1767 are always available for those moments.

Be Alert! Be prepared!

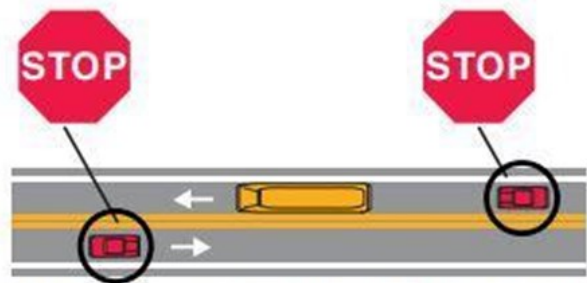
(TWB) That stands for Tires, Windshield wipers and Brakes. Always keep your POV maintained and in working order.

If u are driving a LLV or Metris keep them serviced as needed by using a vehicle repair tag .

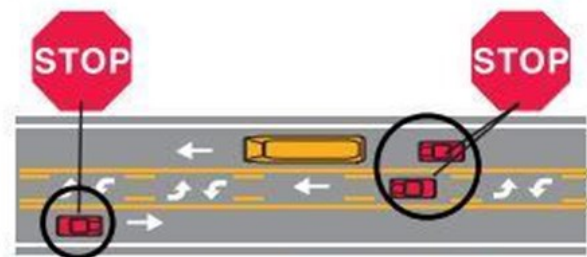
As for the school returning watch for the sudden stops buses make and kids crossing roads. Remember buses stop at railroad tracks. I have listed below a checklist for NC laws for bus stops.

Remember your safety is the first priority.

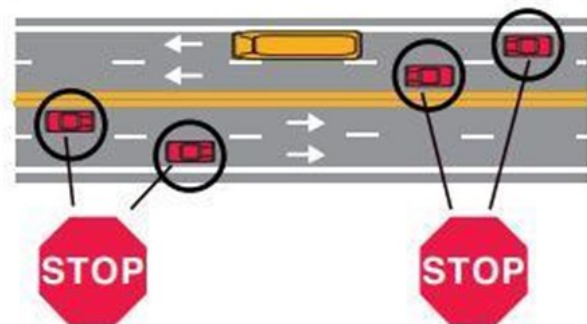
North Carolina SCHOOL BUS STOP LAW



Two-lane roadway: When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.



Two-lane roadway with a center turning lane: When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.



Four-lane roadway without a median separation: When school bus stops for passengers, all traffic from both directions must stop.



*Brian Hamlett
Executive
Committeeman*

The FERS Annuity Supplement

When Congress created the Federal Employee Retirement System, it included a unique feature: The Special retirement Supplement (SRS) also known as “The Bridge”.

This special retirement supplement was designed to bridge the gap between when you retire and age 62 when you first become eligible for a Social Security benefit. It’s based solely on your years of actual FERS service. It doesn’t include any other Social Security covered employment, such as work in the private sector. It also does not include active-duty service in the armed forces, even if you make a deposit to get credit for that time. Your military buy-back counts towards creditable service for your retirement but is not a component of SRS.

FERS SRS is only available to FERS employees. Civil Service Retirement System employees are not eligible. It is a benefit paid out by the Office of Personnel Management, not Social

Security. To qualify you must have 30 years of service and reached your Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) or at least 20 years of service at age 60. There is a 3 step process by which you can estimate your FERS SRS annuity amount.

1. Take your latest Social Security benefit estimate at age 62, which you can get by setting up a personal account at www.ssa.gov/mystatement;
2. Multiply that figure by your total years of FERS service, rounded up to the next higher year;
3. Divide the product by 40.

This benefit will only be paid AFTER OPM adjudicates your application. Payments will end at age 62 whether or not you decide to start receiving your Social Security benefits.

Again, you are only eligible for this special supplement if retire at your MRA with 30 years of service (MRA/30) OR age 60 with 20 years of service. MRA/10, Disability, and Deferred retirement does NOT qualify you.

(Continued from page 5)Obituaries

Angie Tussey, Born in Pinnacle, North Carolina. Angie Arlene Tussey (Jones) was the eldest daughter of Thomas Jones and Verline Rosales (Ashburn).

She is survived by her loving husband Eric Tussey and her children Cody (Mariela), Casey (Luther), Chloe, and Dawson; as well as her brother Chris, stepfather Nicolas Rosales and stepbrother Gerardo, grandson Weston, and grandpup Mila.

Angie is preceded in death by her mother, father, and brother Tony.

While these are immediate family, she also thought the world of all aunts, uncles, and cousins. She also had numerous friends, who she included as part of her own family.

Angie was strongly devoted to her Christian faith throughout her life and attended Mount Carmel Free Will Baptist Church. She also participated with other churches by helping with food banks throughout the county.

Angie worked for the United States Postal Service for 26 years. She was a proud member of the National Association of Rural Letter Carriers, where she fought for Postal Worker rights all over the country.

She became a licensed beautician in 1995 and maintained her license for 29 years.

Angie’s personal goals were always devoted to adventure, thrill, and the service of others. She always enjoyed hiking and fell in love with the Appalachian trail later in life; hiking portions of the trail on two separate occasions with her husband and youngest daughter.

Angie devoutly volunteered to deliver meals on wheels, bringing her two oldest children to deliver meals on the weekends, instilling her selflessness in others around her. Nothing could get in the way of Angie’s adventurous spirit. This was seen up until the day before her major surgery, where she took a week long beach vacation with her family rather than preparing for her operation.

She will be missed dearly by all



Tracy Greer
Executive
Committeeman

Open Season & 2025 RCBP Benefit Changes

We have just returned from the National Convention and with that comes new knowledge. I would like to pass on the changes for the Rural Carrier Benefit Plan for 2025.

1. Enhanced Infertility Benefits
2. Decreased cost sharing for out of network massage therapy
3. Added coverage for non-urgent care services in an urgent care center
4. Removed Payflex/Inspira card and moved to Aetna Wellness Fund Program
5. Added Wellness incentives for tracking physical activity and participating in a coaching program for GLP-1 Weight loss drugs
6. Added additional incentives up to \$200 for maternal care
7. Removed Transform Diabetes Care

Members of the plan will continue to see Low in-network deductibles, low in-network medical

copayments, low in-network drug copayments and 100% cancer benefits.

Beginning January 1st, 2025, PSHB will take effect and is a new separate program within the FEHB Program administered by OPM. It is highly recommended that you validate your election options during open season, as the 3-digit designation codes will be changing.

Open Season ~ November 11 - December 9

Open season will begin November 11th, 2024, and will end December 9th 2024. A new platform, the Postal Service Health Benefits System will be introduced for the 2024 Open Season. The new system will require a login.gov account and you can visit www.login.gov for information on how to setup this account. If you have any questions or need assistance, call the PSHB Navigator Helpline at 1-833-712-7742. You may also visit keepingposted.org or text "PSHBP" to 39369. Watch your NRLCA magazine for updates and you may also contact me as well.

North Carolina Delegates & Guests in Reno, Nevada 2024



We've Come A Long Way!

I have just returned from our NRLCA National Convention in Reno, Nevada. On Monday August 26th, over 200 rural carriers along with members of the NALC and APWU had a “Protect Our Letter Carriers” rally. It can be viewed on multiple platforms.

H.R.7629, Protect Our Letter Carriers Act of 2024 is sponsored by Brian Fitzpatrick and has 113 cosponsors. Representatives Donald Davis (NC-1) and Kathy Manning (NC-6) are the only two from North Carolina that have sign on. It’s companion bill in the Senate is S.4356 sponsored by Kirsten Gillibrand. It has only 2 cosponsors and neither are from our state. If you haven’t contacted your Representative please do so and for those of you that have contacted them, do so again. We have eleven Representatives that have failed to provide the necessary protections for us!

The Federal Retirement Fairness Act, H.R.5995 sponsored by Derek Kilmer has 124 cosponsors. Representatives Kathy Manning (NC-6), Wiley Nickel (NC-13) and Donald Davis (NC-1) have signed on as cosponsors. We often referred to this as the buyback bill.

So where are the rest? Alma Adams (NC-12), Dan Bishop (NC-8), Chuck Edwards (NC-11), Valerie Foushee (NC-4), Virginia Foxx (NC-5), Richard Hudson (NC-9), Jeff Jackson (NC-14), Patrick McHenry (NC-10), Greg Murphy (NC-3), Deborah Ross (NC-2) and David Rouzer (NC-7) are NOT cosponsors of either piece of legislation. You can find their addresses on our NCRLCA.ORG website under the Legislative tab.



PAC CHAIR

Brenda Gibbs


New PAC Co-chair

I would like to introduce my new PAC co-chair. She is Elissa Gonzalez from Wake Forest. Elissa is an active union member and has attended both State and National Conventions for some time along with her local district meetings. Her contact information will be included on page 2 of this issue. I am looking forward to working with her for our 2025 PAC year. I will have all 2024 PAC donation members and totals listed in our next issue.

Thank you all for your support!

Become a Sustaining Donor

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

	I hereby authorize my bank to deduct from my checking account the monthly sum of: (circle one)				
	\$50	\$25	\$15	\$10	Other: \$ _____
Signature: _____		Date: _____			
Name (print): _____					
Employee ID Number: _____					
State: _____		Zip Code: _____		Phone Number: _____	
Please attach a voided check or include Bank Routing number along with your account number.					

One More Time



**Legislative
Representative**
Van Heath

With the National Election less than sixty days away, the Capitol is quiet. Every Representative is home campaigning for re-election as well as one-third of the Senate.

“The Postal Service is a pillar of our democracy, enshrined in the Constitution and essential for providing critical services: delivering prescriptions, Social Security benefits, paychecks, tax returns and absentee ballots to millions of Americans, including in our most remote communities.

I continue to receive notices that more members of the House are signing onto **HR 7629, the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act**. As of the week before the NRLCA Convention in Reno, we have 106 cosponsors including only two from NC. They are Don Davis (D-1) and Kathy Manning (D-6). That means we are 12 members of the NC Delegation short. That can only be remedied by letters and phone calls. Every member of the House is up for reelection. This is the best time to contact them. If enough of us write and call, they will cosponsor our bill in hopes of winning reelection. Note: Kathy Manning is retiring.

Sadly, I do not expect this bill to make it to the floor for a vote in this Congress. It will have to be reintroduced into the 119th Congress next year.

Please write or call or do both.

There are still only two cosponsors for the companion bill in the Senate and of course, neither of them is one of ours.

The Social Security Fairness Act, HR 82/S 597 is now up to 325 cosponsors. It is unforgivable that this bill has not been brought to the floor for a vote. If you have an opportunity to ask a question of your Representative, ask why the Social Security Fairness Act has not been brought up for a vote.

The bill which repeals Prohibition in the Postal Service and would allow us to deliver alcohol just like our competition, **HR 3721, The United States Postal Service Equity Act** may be a lost cause. It is beyond my understanding why Congress would not give us an equal opportunity to compete. There are only 22 cosponsors.

The bill that we have been trying to get passed since 1988 that would give us the right to **BUY BACK** our RCA time towards retirement is the **Federal Retirement Fairness Act, H.R. 5995**, We are up to 120 cosponsors.

We still only have two cosponsors from our state: Kathy Manning (D-6) and she is retiring at the end of this session. NC District 6 will have a new representative when the 119th Congress is sworn in January. The other cosponsor is Wiley Nickel (D-13)

The only way we are going to get these bills passed is if we write and call our members. There are pre-written letters for all four of these bills on the State and National websites. Send those letters. Ask your spouse and adult children to do the same thing. Ask friends and neighbors as well! Talk it up on the workroom floor. Do not be afraid to resend your letter every month until your member signs on as a cosponsor. This bill would probably benefit every carrier still working.

"No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."

—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



**North Carolina
Carriers at the
Protect our Letter
Carriers Rally in
Reno.**

More photos our on our website.
WWW.NCRLCA.org







Auto-Home Insurance
Carlton Crutchfield

Are You Covered for Hurricane Damage?

Hurricane season in North Carolina typically runs from June 1st to November 30th, with the peak of the season occurring between mid-August and late October. North Carolina is vulnerable to hurricanes due to its location along the Atlantic coast, and the state has experienced **numerous devastating** storms in the past, such as Hurricane Florence

in 2018 and Hurricane Matthew in 2016.

Is there a difference between hurricane insurance and wind and hail insurance?

Hurricane insurance typically covers damage caused by hurricanes, including high winds, storm surge, and flooding. This type of insurance is usually included in a standard homeowners insurance policy in areas prone to hurricanes.

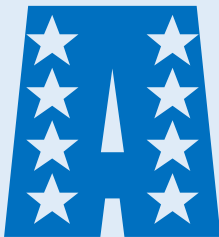
On the other hand, wind and hail insurance specifically covers damage caused by high winds and

hailstorms, which can occur separately from hurricanes. This type of insurance may be purchased as a separate policy or added as an endorsement to a homeowners insurance policy in areas prone to wind and hail damage.

Residents of North Carolina should take precautions and be prepared for the possibility of hurricanes during the season. This includes having a plan in place, stocking up on emergency supplies, securing their homes, and staying informed about weather updates and evacuation orders.

It is also important to review and understand your insurance coverage, including hurricane insurance and wind and hail insurance, to ensure you are adequately protected in the event of a storm.

Do not hesitate, give National General Insurance a call today at 1-888-325-7727 and one of the knowledgeable representatives will be glad to help you with your questions or concerns!



ARMED FORCES VETERANS CLUB



The Armed Forces Veterans Club (AFVC) is a fraternal organization composed of veterans or anyone who supports their goals of providing financial support for high school seniors and college students whose parents and grandparents are NRLCA AFVC members. All proceeds go to provide \$150 scholarships for students to further their education. Dues are \$10 per year payable by June 30th.

At the state convention in June, a record 37 members signed up or renewed their memberships. Additionally, four scholarship applications were submitted and have been sent to the national AFVC office where they will be entered into the drawing for a scholarship. The number of scholarships awarded depends on the amount of contributions national receives.

On Monday afternoon at the state convention, the state AFVC held their annual meeting. The officers from last year were re-elected to their positions. A constitution change was approved to conduct a drawing for a scholarship at the state level at the 2025 state convention from all applications received by the last day of the convention. The only requirement is for the parent or grandparent to be a current member of the AFVC and their child or grandchild be enrolled in college or other higher education institute.

You can join by sending a check or money order for \$10, payable to NC AFVC, to:

Mike Shue
325 ED Weavers Rd.
Salisbury, NC 28146

Debbie Bennett Pres.
Audrey Solomon V-Pres.
Mike Shue Sec.-Treas.

EMA Rate Drops to 97¢

On September 11, 2024, the Bureau of Labor Statistics released the August Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which established the Private Transportation Index at 276.426, a decrease from the May 2024 Index of 280.714. Therefore, based on the August 2024 CPI-W release, the Equipment Maintenance Allowance (EMA) for rural carriers will decrease 1.5¢ to 97.0¢ per mile.



Webmaster
Renee Johnson

This EMA rate will be effective October 5, 2024 (Pay Period 22-2024).

Rural Carriers

In accordance with the provisions of Article 9, Section 2.J.3 of the USPS/NRLCA National Agreement, effective October 5 (Pay Period 22-2024), the Equipment Maintenance Allowance (EMA) will decrease to 97.0¢ per mile, or a minimum of \$38.80 per day, whichever is greater.

Auxiliary Rural Carriers, Rural Carrier Reliefs, Rural Carrier Associates, Rural Carrier Part Time Flexibles, and Auxiliary Assistance

Employees providing auxiliary assistance or serving auxiliary routes under the provisions of Article 9, Section 2.J.5, will receive EMA of 97.0¢ per mile or \$10.30 per hour, whichever is greater. This EMA should not exceed the amount provided in the special EMA chart for route stops and miles.

This was the tenth opportunity for an EMA adjustment under the terms of the 2021-2024 USPS/NRLCA National Agreement. The next quarterly adjustment will occur after the release of the November 2024 Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) and will be effective the second full pay period after release of that index.

* From the NRLCA Website

Rural Carrier McKinney Carroll Retires

Rural Carrier McKinley Carroll officially retired on 8/30/24.

On August 24th, with his family present, the Clinton Post Office had a celebration of his service along with a farewell breakfast for all.

McKinley has been a rural carrier since 1982 and a union member for over 35 years.

Congratulations on your retirement!



McKinley Carroll and his family at his retirement breakfast.

Photos by Michelle Wilson

2024 National Convention

118th NRLCA National Convention State of the Union Address

President Maston began the State of the Union right on time at 1:00pm Monday. He started off discussing that evenings Protect the Letter Carrier rally. This brought a cheer from those on the convention floor when he said the NALC also supporting H.R. 7629 and the Senates companion bill S. 4356 would be rallying with us.

The Finance Committee then reported we have decreased in membership by about 1,050 in the past year. However, they are being fiscally responsible with the current uncommitted reserve of one half of one year's expenses. Most organizations try and keep one full year in reserves.

The NRLCA currently has 134 full time employees this year compared to 140 last year. A Constitution change to allow the cash out payment of accrued sick leave was submitted by the Finance Committee but failed later in the week.

Vice President Pitts made remarks on how our conventions are out growing some of the locations and that hotel staff had to flip our room from the 1,400-theater seating into over 130 banquet tables for our dinner...in just two hours. He also talked about how the Academy curriculum has evolved thanks to three reviews in the past 6 years making it significantly better.

Secretary/Treasurer Turner shared a personal story and encouraged us to not wait for medical check ups if we sense something wrong. He also gave us a history lesson that in March 1903 the Rural Free Delivery newsletter began as the initial formation of the NRLCA. In 1914 there were 20,000 members growing to 109,369 in 2024. Of the total number of members, 91,844 are active carriers, 17,305 are retirees and the remaining 220 are associate members (no not RCAs). In the past year, 865 carriers have cancelled their membership; 449 were regular carriers and 381 were regular carriers who went into management. Also, in the past year 1,646 regular carriers and 15,418 leave replacement

union members resigned or were terminated. These numbers do not include retirement or those that passed away. On the flip side, there were 3,412 regular and 21,046 leave replacement new brother and sister union members that join the NRLCA the past year.



Vice President
Jay Schreiber

41,907 – that is how many coworkers your union dues support who (according to President Maston are “SCABS”) receive representation without contribution. If they were to join, it would add over \$17,000,000 for the union to train and support our Stewards in protecting carriers from management who ignore our contract.

President Maston also spoke on collective bargaining which began on March 5th with the NRLCA having 426 resolutions with 100 of them saying the same thing. The National Board takes the resolutions and must weigh and prioritize, strategize, and whittle down to find value for the most beneficiaries. They are still in discussions with the Post Office and the membership needs to remember that arbitration could give us gains but we could lose ground. Also, its not just the nine members of the National Board. They have brought in consultants, lawyers, economists, and a former Teamster collective bargaining expert.

Some basic numbers: carriers nationally are still averaging 6 hours under their weekly evaluation, 25% of routes were overburdened after RRECS, 4,900 routes have finally been adjusted. Things are changing whether we want to or not. E-commerce is the future of this business. Union leaders are trying to police the postal service and will need to forever, according to President Maston.

(Continued on page 17)

2024 National Convention

New National Board

President Don Maston

Vice President Patrick Pitts

Secretary-Treasurer Tommy Turner

Director of Labor Relations John Adams

Director of Steward Operations Nicky Phillips

Executive Committee Chair Jeanette Dwyer

Executive Committeeman Michael Merola

Executive Committeeman Kirby Ricketts

Executive Committeeman Bethany Small

(Continued from page 16) National Convention

The NRLCA website will begin having a storefront so carriers can [purchase](#) and wear union themed attire instead of just postal attire.

Director of Steward Operations Shirley Baffa encouraged carriers to step up if you do not have a local steward. Currently there are 1,913 local stewards in the [nearly 10,000](#) offices, 148 area stewards (NC has 14), 138 ADRs (54 part-time and 84 full-time) as well as 37 District Representatives across the country.

We [were adjourned](#) in time to ensure those that wanted to [participate](#) in the Protect the Letter Carrier Act rally had sufficient time to board the buses going downtown Reno to City Plaza.

Second Time Delegate View

By Josh Stowe

Well... what a convention! We as a group have spoken and done so loudly, we want better, we deserve better. Our craft is strong, we know what we want. Our new National Board now has the instructions to help make this both a better job and a more perfect union. Like I said last year, plan on hearing my voice at the microphone and to be honest it wasn't THAT terrifying.

As a second timer, I am now more versed in the running and decorum of a National Convention. Y'all might have actually heard my voice a few times, I hope I spoke for the members that I represent; I have gained more confidence since last time. As far as the resolutions went, I made sure to do my research and dive into the possibilities of each resolution. I am always amazed at the potential for one delegate speaking either yea or nay to persuade the body to change their minds. Further, I am in awe of the wealth of knowledge that members of the body possess. The ability to look not just at the matter ahead but to also examine all facets that might come up in the future, good and bad is something that should be practiced not just in a National Convention but also in each of our personal lives.

I would be remiss if I didn't thank all of those who allowed me this honor to attend. It shows that any craft member, no matter how much time you have in, can step up to help advance the views and wishes of those who couldn't be in attendance. I found myself looking for those who were either first timers and/or in attendance on their own money and time. I found it further heartening when I saw that RCAs were in attendance. We need to encourage those that are young in their career and/or in their pre full time that they are welcome and needed to help us in our discussions of issues that relate to them specifically. While I look forward to attending every State and National Convention as a delegate from now until I retire, I recognize that there are those who are coming up through the ranks that need to be heard. Everyone has a voice, RCA/ARC, Regular, PTF, Retired and it is my hope that everyone we as a State send those who best represent the wishes of the roughly 100 people that each delegate is elected to represent.

I want to recognize and congratulate those who were either reelected to their position and those that took the chance and won the office that they were seeking. I want to take a moment of personal privilege and recognize our very own Bethany Small,

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(Continued from page 17) **National Convention**

you will do great things and all of the NC delegation is lucky to have our state represented by you. Without getting too deep into details, this convention taught me that words matter and we should all be judicious with our words as they might be taken out of context or used as a means to hurt others. When I heard the multiple instances of words being used to insult or hurt I knew that we could and should do better.

In summary, even the second time around, I want to reinforce the notion that the National Convention is NOT a vacation no matter what you may either see in photos or hear from others. There was hardly one night I went to bed before eleven, and I need my beauty rest, I got none. I have learned from last year that my role



Bethany Small wins the four year Executive Committeeman position.

is to do the business of the Union and to give our National Board the resolutions that we would like to someday see in our National Agreement. It was so grueling this year that I am energized to come up with resolutions that we can discuss at our next convention, I'm pumped. Let's do this!

Always in Solidarity.

First Time Delegate View

By *Alicia Pressley*

Hello fellow union members. My name is Alicia Pressley from Clyde, North Carolina. I was an RCA for nine years and have been a regular carrier for eleven years. My husband is a Waynesville Police Officer, and we have two adult sons.

After attending the last two NCRLCA State Conventions, I had the privilege of attending the 118th NRLCA National Convention in Reno, Nevada August 27-30. As a first timer, I had no idea what to expect, but what an amazing experience! My husband and I arrived two days early, and I am so thankful, because the three-hour time difference took some getting used to.

On Monday, I got registered and received my ditty bag, which included various committee reports, my YEA/NAY voting card, and the program of events. That afternoon, I attended the State of the Union Address, led by the NRLCA President, Don Maston.

Monday evening, I proudly participated in a Protect Our Rural Carriers Rally at the City Plaza in Downtown Reno. The purpose of the rally was to bring attention to

the alarming rise in violence against letter carriers and to ask for the swift passage of the POLC act, a bipartisan bill designed to address the escalating violence faced by postal workers. Many speakers took the mic at the rally, including our very own Brandi West, who spoke on behalf of a carrier from Mars Hill who was robbed and sustained multiple injuries, including a gunshot to the face.

On Tuesday morning, the Joint Opening Session began with the Advancement of Colors and Parade of States. Our very own NCRLA President, Elaine Althoff, carried our state flag. The National Anthem and Pledge of Allegiance followed. This patriotic ceremony was a beautiful way to officially start the 118th National Convention for the NRLCA! The rest of Tuesday flew by, with an address from Postmaster General, Louis DeJoy, and several introductions, awards and speakers.

One of the fantastic opportunities at the National Convention was the numerous seminars available. I attended the First Timers' Seminar and the Academy Facilitators Seminar. They both provided invaluable information, along with time to ask questions.

My main takeaways from Wednesday were the nominations for our National Officers and later, we began voting on the 15 amendments presented by our Constitution Committee.

The Resolutions Committee then reported that there were 11 binding resolutions and 382 non-binding resolutions. Over the next few days, as a delegate, I had the privilege of casting a vote for each resolution that was objected to. (If

(Continued from page 18)**National Convention**

the resolution isn't objected to, it is automatically passed). I learned that this is one reason why our annual National Conventions are so important. These resolutions are written and passed at each state convention. They are gathered and presented to us, the delegates at the National Convention, where we decide collectively to object, pass or fail each one. This is our voice! We choose what issues, and the literal resolutions to the issues, that are presented to our National Board of Officers as they represent us in contractual negotiations with the Postal Service.

I'll be honest and admit, that I came into this convention foggy on resolutions, their purpose, voting, etc. but this experience has taught me so much and I have an even deeper appreciation for the opportunity to be a delegate.

Thursday evening was Caucus night! Each candidate for the board of National Officers had 15 minutes to campaign/answer questions for eleven different state associations. It was a very long night but filled with lots of information and discussion that enabled each of us to confidently cast our votes on Friday.

As you all know, after voting on Friday, we have two new National Officers, one of which is our very

own Bethany Small, as an Executive Committeeman! This was truly thrilling to see a DR from North Carolina demolish the competition with her articulate and powerful promise to fight for our craft! Go Bethany!

To sum up my experience as a first timer at the National Convention – WOW! It was inspirational, informative, and a life-changing experience.



Brandi West and Alicia Pressley at the National Convention in Reno, Nevada.

I thank each delegate, non-delegate and guest that represented North Carolina alongside me at this convention.

Many of us are carrying mail daily, diligently fighting for fair pay and treatment from our employer, as we get used to the new normal of RRECS. Many of you are retired, and your experience at changing the status quo - by getting resolutions passed and fighting for our craft - is invaluable. Thank you, and God bless each one of us as we serve our country, one mailbox at a time.

First Time Alternate View

By Pam Swann

I tossed my name into the National Delegate Hat in North Carolina in 2024. I was elected as an alternate to represent North Carolina.

I've never been West, so part of the excitement was traveling

somewhere I had never been. I'm socially connected with some others from other states who were attending, so we were comparing flight schedules. The almost 2600-mile one way drive was more than I wanted to try.

I arrived in Reno after 10 pm Pacific time, and that time difference meant something when I was communicating with my co-workers back in North Carolina or contacting family.

There were seminars on Monday that I attended. Signage was everywhere to help you get where you were going. **Lots of handouts** on the information being shared in the seminars. There was a Protect Out Letter Carriers Rally that evening a few miles away.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were busy with the business of the Union and nominations for Officers of the National Board.

Resolutions are the issues and concerns of the members of our Union on what changes they want to see introduced to the Union or presented in contract negotiations with the USPS. Resolutions sent up from each state or territory in 2024 that had been shared with delegates and now required review and voting on whether to accept them or fail them. There were around 400 Resolutions all said and done.

Friday was the day delegates voted for National Board Officers. And also, still chugging through those resolutions.

I've met lots of new people from all over our country. Overall, it's been a great experience.

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North Carolina District Representative

Bethany Small

Thank You!

Greetings fellow Rural Carriers of the great state of North Carolina. Change is upon us once again as we start the fall season. At the National Convention in Reno Nevada in August, I was elected to the 4-year Executive Committeeman position on the National Board.

Cliff Workman, a FT ADR in the Charlotte area has been selected as the new District Representative for the North Carolina District.

While I have been assigned to the Southern Area, the North Carolina district is where my passion for our craft began. As this will be my last article in the North Carolina paper, I just wanted to take a moment to thank you all for allowing me to serve this wonderful district.

For 16 years I have been a steward and for 16 years, the unique stories of the carriers of North Carolina inspired me to keep fighting for them. The North Carolina delegation has always had an incredibly special energy. From our retired members to those who were attending the state or national convention for the first time, I have had the privilege of seeing the growth and evolution of this association and its members right here in North Carolina. Brand-new baby-faced RCAs that I remember in Orientation are now seasoned

Regulars with families of their own and years of experience as carriers under their belts.

Outside of Union functions, I have met many of you when you either needed representation or needed someone to discuss a problem with. Some of you I got to know because you decided to become a Steward. Throughout all of it, the many people I have met, many of whom I now call friends, have been an inspiration. But most of all, you have been my greatest teachers.

If I could impart a single encouraging phrase to the carriers of this district, it would be keep going. Do not give up when things feel hopeless or predetermined.

Do not let yourself be frustrated into inaction. We make things better by persevering and not relenting in the face of a challenge.

Do not give up when things feel hopeless or predetermined. Do not let yourself be frustrated into inaction.

Unions derive 100% of their power from their members. Support your Steward if you cannot be one.

Stewards are the helpers, the ones who move towards trouble, the ones who are charged with fighting for others. I have complete faith that the North Carolina district is in GREAT hands,

and you have a team in place that can manage the worst the Post Office can throw at them. But for the Steward team to be effective, Carriers must use the available processes (i.e., Filing Grievances) to address issues you are having in your office. Help the Steward team help you – empower the Stewards to empower you.

Thank you, sincerely, for allowing me to serve you and the North Carolina district. It has been my pleasure, and I hope that I will make North Carolina proud in this new chapter.

Relief Day Work List (RDWL)

The RDWL will be posted in each delivery unit three weeks prior to the beginning of the new guarantee period. The new guarantee period begins on October 5, 2024.

The RDWL should be posted for sign up on Saturday, September 14, 2024 and remain open through Friday, September 27, 2024.

The new RDWL will be effective on October 5, 2024.

REA CORNER

Sunday/Holiday Parcel Delivery Volunteer List

The sign up list for volunteers for Sunday/Holiday Parcel Delivery will be posted in each delivery unit on Saturday, September 14, 2024 and remain up through Friday, September 27, 2024.

The new Volunteer list will be effective on October 5, 2024.

Remember: “When it is necessary to schedule rural carrier leave replacements for Sunday/holiday parcel delivery, management will first utilize any ARCs assigned to the hub location or associated ‘spoke’ offices. If there are no ARCs assigned to these locations or an insufficient number of ARCs, management at the hub location will then select leave replacements from the volunteer list on a rotating basis. If there is an insufficient number of leave replacements on the volunteer list, management will schedule leave replacements from the non-volunteer list, also on a rotating basis.”

North Carolina First Time National Convention Attendees



Left to right, sitting, Liza Talini-Zamora, Candi Pressley, Pamela Swann, & Alicia Pressley.

Standing, Jim Morrison Jr., Denise Peay, Helen Woodward & Nathan Warren.

Missing from photo are Kristina Parks & Lyn Albright.

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SECRETARY/TREASURER
NATHALIE WARREN

CHAPLAIN
TRENTON GREER

What A Great Convention!

Auxiliary News

From
Roanoke Heath
President

The National 2024 Convention is now history. I hope you had a great time in Reno, Nevada. The Auxiliary celebrated our 100th Anniversary. We had special events to celebrate the occasion – Wednesday many of our members dressed in 1924 attire. The auxiliary also celebrated with cake and punch. The days were filled with the business of our auxiliary.

The program for our Auxiliary was for Patriotism (2023-2024). The auxiliary raised over \$58,000 for our project ‘THE HERO COMPANY.

While at the convention the auxiliary members served on different committees doing the work of the auxiliary. I served on the committee that judged the 6 and 7 year olds posters. There were 18 entries with a total of 3 winners. The design of the posters was “how police and firefighters help us”.

This year our National Auxiliary Chaplain was North Carolina’s Norma Williford. Ms. Norma brought us great inspiration each day.

We elected a new President, Lesa Routh-Halcomb (CO).

Lesa’s project for 2024-2025 is *A Program of Love*.

Humanitarian Project: The Cure Starts Now



THE CURE STARTS NOW®

Symbol: Mailbox with “The Cure Starts Now” symbol

Inspiration: “He renews our hope and renews our bodies”

Psalms 147:3

Americanism: Support Your Carrier

Safety: Skin Cancer Awareness

Songs: *Shalom to You* and *Hallelujah*

Flower: Peonies, Sunflowers and Wheat

The other officers that we elected for the Auxiliary board are: Vice President Michelle Wertz (SC), Secretary–Treasurer Cheryl Mason (AL), and Executive Committee Marlene Cummings (IA), Tyrone Francis (SC) and Mary Kappenman (IN).

While at the convention I attended a banquet on Wednesday night. I also attended the Caucuses on Thursday night. Candidates for Association Officers came to talk with the delegates.

The week was long and the flights even longer - after our traveling back home, I’m glad to be back in eastern North Carolina.



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Fall Booster

October 13, 2024

Joseph S. Koury Convention Center
Sheraton at Four Seasons
3121 West Gate City Boulevard
Greensboro, NC 27407

We will have a session on **“How To Write Resolutions”**

Rooms are \$129/night

To receive the group rate reservations **MUST** be made by calling 1-800-242-6556 and using the block name **NC Rural Letter Carriers**.

Reservations made online will not be at our special rate.

Rooms are limited. Please reserve your room ASAP.

Room cut off date is September 20, 2024.

The Fall Booster begins at 8:30 am and will end by 5:00 pm.