



OHIO RURAL LETTER CARRIER

Association Year 2020-2021 - Issue Number 2

FALL ISSUE



Open Season Begins
November 9 and ends
December 14, 2020.

Insurance Options Are
Available for Non-
Career Employees.

See Inside for Details

• 6-7 •

Fall Booster is Canceled!

Due to the current social distancing restrictions imposed by Governor DeWine along with the advice of your National Board, this year's Fall Booster meeting has been canceled.

We realize this is not the news that many of you want to hear. We are all missing the friendship and fellowship that we have grown accustomed to sharing at these events every year. Not to mention all the information we receive regarding our contract and our craft. It seems like an eternity not being able to see any of our friends and mentors since March. We can only hope that this will all be over soon, and we can return to our in-person meetings.

Perhaps we can have a "Spring Fling" when this is all over.

In the meantime, please know that your State Officers are just a phone call or email away. Please do not hesitate to contact any one of us. It is your right and our duty.

Your State Board was elected *by* you to work *for* you!

Our contact information is on the back cover of this issue.

Please Respond as Soon as Possible



**FILL THIS COUPON
AND SEND IT TO:**

Lisa Heaton
705 Drury Lane
Troy, Ohio 45373

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Your Phone Number: _____

Month/Year You Want to Retire: _____

OARLCA

RETIREMENT WEBINAR

**FILL AND SEND
THIS COUPON
TO EXPRESS YOUR
INTEREST IN AN
OARLCA-HOSTED
RETIREMENT
WEBINAR**

**SEE PAGE 6
FOR DETAILS**



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WORSHIP CORNER



Rita Beedy
State Chaplain

Chaplain Chat I Did a Thing!

Have you seen or heard someone say, "I did a thing!"? I see it on Facebook a lot; a new tattoo; a new car; a new hairdo; a young person getting their license.

Well, guess what... I did a thing!

As of August 28, 2020, I joined the ranks of the retired rural carriers. WOW! With it comes a lot of different thoughts.

My people! Will the new carrier love them as I do? Give the service I did? Watch out for them?

The ones I love in the office, will they forget me or forget how much I love them?! (Thank God for Association meetings. When meetings return, I can see my office pals again!)

Then there is the "No more paychecks every other week" issue. Will I have enough or will I have to eat cat food? (I'm just kidding, kinda... No, I'm just kidding.)

Next is the Medicare stuff! Ahh! Social Security! Who the heck am I if not a "maillady"? Oh... my... gosh! So many thoughts!

There is a dear old hymn I love that I sometimes sing to myself. The first part is about life-the day to day stuff... "I don't know about tomorrow, I just live from day to day,". Family, job, COVID, social unrest, an election year (and what all that involves for postal workers), a new PMG, wildfires...

I could go on and on and on... but I am trying to encourage

us! The chorus is my favorite part; "Many things about tomorrow I don't seem to understand, but I know who holds tomorrow and I know who holds my hand". We do not have "hand-holders" in the association, but we do have very smart people who will share their knowledge so we can be the best carriers possible and go out well prepared. And if they do not have the answer, they will help us find it! That's why there are boosters and district meetings and conventions. This year is the exception, but that how we usually do things.

From the Steward in the smallest office to the Executive Board - Thank. you all!

A few quotes I came across while working on this letter. "When you cannot control what is happening, challenge yourself to control the way you respond to what's happening. That is where you will find power."

"Your smile is your logo, your personality is your business card, how you leave others feeling after an experience with you becomes your trademark."

And with the holiday season coming up, "On particularly rough days, I like to remind myself that my track record for getting through bad days so far is 100%, and that's pretty good"!

Please be safe, be kind, know you are loved, distance hugged, and prayed for!

Rita Beedy
State Chaplain

Just a note to you kids out there, consider taking advantage of the TSP program. Just sayin'. Save all you can so when you're ready





The Postal Service Is in the National Spotlight

Hello Ohio!

**Mark Funderburgh
President**

The Postal Service has received a lot of attention lately. We've had COVID-19 problems and newly necessary policies, the appointment of a new Postmaster General, and now we're going into that final political push that

concludes our American election season. This year has certainly put us all in the spotlight.

COVID-19 has stopped much of our nation in its tracks. Our schools have had to rethink and restructure their teaching methods. Many are wearing masks to prevent (or at least minimize) spreading the disease. Designer masks of various prints and designs have even become a trend.

Despite all of what is going on, postal workers remain working hard to keep up with the delivery of parcels and mail we receive from the plants. Logistics have been noticeably altered under new orders from the Postmaster General. Often, what mail comes *in* that day is what mail will be worked *for* that day. This has been FIFO (First In – First Out) to the extreme.

My office's Postmaster changed our start time to accommodate mail being at our cases earlier so that everything is ready to go by 7:30 A.M. The new start time isn't quite as early as when I first started at the P.O., but the change has made my personal life easier. I can finish my chores and errands with ease when I'm clocking out by 1 P.M., nearly every day.

The last major issue I will address is the elections and the misconception that the Post Office won't be able to get the mail-in ballots to the final destination. We have the power to do this. We do what it takes every day. **Remember, we already deliver the mail to over 500,000 homes and businesses daily.** If anyone is going to get it done, it will be the U.S.P.S.

I've spoken with various customers on my route about the post office and gave them a general idea of our daily operations (just a taste). I've been receiving notes from customers, thanking me (but broadly, thanking us) for what we do.

*Your mailperson -
We do not take you
for granted! Thanks
for your dedication &
hard work!*

*We have written to
our congressman regarding
the postal issue!*

Linda & Dale

One of the letters stated:

*To our mail person-
We do not take you for
granted! Thanks for your
dedication & hard work.*

*We have written our
congressman regarding
the postal issue!
Linda & Dale*

This sort of feedback is great! If every mail carrier across the state could get 2 people to call their congressperson, then postal reform would

gain even more momentum for congressional consideration. Remember these things the next time you ponder retirement. Consider all that time you did (or currently are) working as a leave replacement. Consider how all those years do not count towards your retirement.

We already have a bill in Congress intended to alleviate that unfortunate reality; H.R.2478 - *The Federal Retirement Fairness Act*.

If passed, it will get us credit for all of those years that we spent (or are spending) in the trenches filling in for the regulars. This will give our current leave replacement carriers a head start on retirement credits that many before us didn't have, and also help those of us who have crossed that glorious threshold into finally holding a career position.

Mark Funderburgh

OHRLCA Dues Schedule (August 29, 2020)			
Membership year begins on July 1 and ends on June 30			
Type	Annual	Period	Per Period
Regular PTF	\$778	Bi-weekly	\$29.92
Retired	\$90	Bi-monthly	\$7.50
Substitute RCA RCR ARC	\$275	Bi-weekly	\$10.58



PAC Power Is in Our Voices

Hello Ohio Rural Carriers. This has been a very trying year, to say the least! Without meetings and conventions, it has been tougher to keep active, updated, and informed.

Tim Barker
Vice-President

Despite this, you responded excellently to the postcard we

mailed you requesting that you to contact Ohio senators Brown and Portman. Through our simply picking up the phone and uniting its voices, Senator Brown's office reported receiving over 1,000 calls on postal reform to save the USPS. Thank you for your help! The squeaky wheel gets the grease, as the old saying goes. Well, Ohio let keep squeaking the loudest of all!

The USPS serves a very important role in the upcoming election. The pandemic has made the USPS even more of a hot topic at this time in history. Keep calling your senators! Please contact the U.S. Capital Operator at (202) 224-3121, then ask to be directed to Senator Brown. Call the number again ask to be directed to Senator Portman.

It's only natural to bring up PAC when elections are discussed. Ohio has always been a leader, especially when it comes

to PAC. Unfortunately, the lack of union meetings has subsequently caused a reduction of PAC contributions. Before COVID swept through, the plan was to have a large raffle at our state convention with tons of prizes up for grabs. Well, we still have all the goodies (TV, mixers, jewelry, etc.), so we are just going to carry all these prizes over and add more this upcoming year. Yes! a super-PAC raffle with double the prizes and double the winners so buy your tickets now!

PAC contributions are necessary for getting our top national legislative director, Paul Swartz, into special meetings with the house and senate. Paul serves to educate and inform the men and women that will be voting on the future of the USPS. He shares precisely how important we are to our communities and to our country!

Please contact the U.S. Capital Operator at (202) 224-3121, then ask to be directed to Senators Brown and Portman

It is very important for NRLCA representatives to have these one on one talks with these decision-makers. It's just as important for constituents to keep calling... emailing... squeaking.

2020 hosts a very important election and we need Paul in those offices fighting for us, so please dig a little deeper and donate some your hard-earned money so that the most trusted government branch can carry on for generations to come. The only way to the White House is through winning Ohio. Wear your seat belts and stay safe out there my union brothers and sisters.

Union Proud,

Tim Barker
Executive Committeeman

Drawing to be held at 2021 State Convention



FILL THIS COUPON AND SEND IT WITH YOUR PAYMENT TO:

Brittany Levensky
3405 Leiby Osborne Rd.
Southington, Ohio 44470

OHRLCA 2021 STATE CONVENTION

PAC Reverse Raffle

TICKETS:
1 FOR \$25
5 FOR \$100

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: NRLCA-PAC

Your Name: _____
Your Address: _____
Your Phone Number: _____
Amount Enclosed: _____
How Many Tickets Are You Purchasing? _____

YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO BE PRESENT TO WIN A PRIZE.



To all those who have earned the distinction as a Veteran, thank you for your service to our nation and its people.

If you are a Veteran, you may purchase credit for your Military Service time toward your Retirement.

Considering the USPS is one of the largest employers of military veterans (over 97,000 according to Postal Facts at usps.com), credit for military service and how it affects your retirement can be a big deal in your retirement plans. While each case is unique here's some general information to consider.



What should I do about my military service when I apply for civilian retirement?

You should review your Official Personnel Folder (OPF) to make sure there's a record of all of your military and civilian service. If any of the records are missing, your employer should help you document the service and obtain any missing records.

If you have civilian service for which you must pay retirement contributions or repay a refund of contributions in order to receive full FERS or CSRS credit, your employer should tell you about what impact payment or non-payment has on your eligibility and the amount of your retirement benefit.

If you elect to make a payment to receive credit for military service you performed after 1956, you must make that payment before you retire.



If you are receiving military retired pay, you should discuss whether or not you must waive the retired pay with the personnel officer at your agency.

Veterans' Day is November 11th!



Your personnel office can also tell you about receiving credit in your annuity computation for various types of service and about the payments described above, as well as help you with service documentation.

How do I make a payment to get credit for service?

If you are covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), then you should apply to make a payment by completing Form SF-2803.

If you are covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), then you should apply to make a payment by completing Form SF-3108.

If you are within 6 months of retirement, you should submit your request to make the deposit or redeposit at the same time you submit your application for retirement. You can use a form or letter to do this.

The office of Personnel Management will notify you of any amounts due so you can decide whether or not to make the payment. They cannot, however, authorize your regular annuity payments until they have your decision about the payment.

If you have applied to buy back military service or military leave without pay from your agency and your annuity hasn't changed you should check the status of your application. Federal retirees should contact OPM and active employees should contact HRSSC.

There are other factors that need to be looked at on an individual basis. Be sure and discuss it during your retirement counseling session with HRSSC or any outside retirement counseling provider if you use one.

DID YOU KNOW?

IF YOU ARE A VETERAN,

YOU MAY PURCHASE CREDIT FOR YOUR



MILITARY SERVICE TIME TOWARD YOUR

RETIREMENT.





Penny Koren
Secretary/Treasurer

FEHB Open Season Approaches

Open season is approaching fast. Please keep your stress levels down by starting to compare your plan options early. Get any questions you might have answered early on.

In a few weeks, you will be mailed your Health Insurance Plan guide or a brochure with the new updates on

coverage options or premiums changes. You can also review plans online. Do not wait until the last minute to start comparing policies.

Whether you are a new employee eligible to enroll, a current employee, or retired, you may have had a qualifying life event this past year and need to make additional changes. Take a few minutes to sit down and compare your options.

Also, note that if you are in the *Self Plus One* plan, you may want to consider the Family Plan if it is cheaper as it was this past year. No matter who you are, you will need to think carefully about your choice and a plan that fits you and your family's health care needs.

Compare out-of-pocket costs, co-pays, and what is covered versus what is not. Ask yourself:

- "Do I/we need to add a Vision & Dental plan, or Life or Disability Insurance?"
- "Do I even need to make changes to my current plan?"

If you do plan to make coverage changes, check that your current physicians participate with your new plan as well.

It all can be a bit overwhelming so start early. I urge you to look at your current plan and compare it to the RCBP plan and all it has to offer. Thank you for being a member of RCBP. You can log on to RCBPhealth.com and select "Official Plan Documents" under "Member Resources" to view the Official Plan Brochure and to help you better understand the benefits and resources available to you and how to access them.

What Insurance is Available for RCAs?

The USPS Health Benefits Plan is available to eligible non-career employees. (RCA Health Plan). United Healthcare underwrites this plan. It is the only Health care plan available to RCAs at this time.

The NRLCA has made Dental, Vision, Life and Disability plans

available to RCAs. These are closed plans available only to members of the NRLCA.

Sources for this article: Rural Carrier Benefit Plan, Liteblue, HR, How RCBP works with Medicare, United Healthcare, and the Aetna Member Website.

Membership Analysis Report

As of September 12, 2020, the Membership Analysis prepared by the National Office has Ohio's total membership at 4,440. Ohio has 2,703 Rural Routes with 2,162 Regular Carriers, 37 PTF Carriers, 946 Retired Carriers, 1,283 Relief Carriers, 5 ARCs, and 6 Associate Members. The Membership Analysis dated September 12, 2019, had Ohio's total membership at 4,590. Ohio has lost 150 members in the past year. We need to continue our efforts to recruit new members. The strength of our union is our members. To remain strong we need to increase our membership and it is every member's duty to recruit non-members.

All Statewide and National Meetings have been canceled. Because of these cancelations, union members wishing to retire have been contacting the State Board and asking for guidance. Governor DeWine's COVID safe distancing orders have made an in-person retirement seminar is out of the question. As an alternative, the OHRLCA Board would like to offer a **RETIREMENT WEBINAR** (see front cover for coupon).

We want your feedback to ensure that the OHRLCA membership is interested in a retirement webinar before we use state resources to make it happen. Please complete the coupon if you would be interested in a retirement webinar.

The cost of living increase (COLA) went into effect on August 29, 2020. Because of the wage increase, your NRLCA portion of dues has also increased. The new dues chart (with the increased amounts) is printed on page 3 of this issue.

The Federal Employees Health Benefits Open Season begins November 9 and ends December 14, 2020. Open Season allows federal employees and retirees to review their plan choices and make changes to their FEHB and FEDVIP coverage for the upcoming benefit year, beginning January 1, 2021. The website to compare premiums rates and Health Benefit plans is:

www.myfederalretirement.com/fehb-plan-comparison

Also, please remember to take full advantage of the U.S. Postal Service's Flexible Spending Account (FSA) program

for regular and PTF rural carriers. The FSA program allows carriers to pay for child or adult daycare expenses and family health care expenses (which are not reimbursed by insurance) with tax-free dollars.

Veteran's Day is always November 11th. Never forget our Veterans who served to keep the United States of American free. Give thanks for your freedom.

Exercise your American right and remember to vote on November 3rd.

I hope the virus will soon be gone and we may meet in person again. In the meantime, enjoy the beautiful fall weather.

Stay Safe!

Denny Koren



Lisa Heaton
Executive
Committeeman

Open Season for RCAs

When is the "open season"?

Open season for the 2021 benefit year will be Monday, November 9, 2020, through Monday, December 14, 2020.

This is the period when employees (including RCAs) can sign up for health benefits if you have not already chosen to do so within your first 60 days of employment.

What can I do during the open season?

It is the time of year when you can choose to enroll, change, or cancel your health benefits.

What benefits are available for RCAs?

Health Insurance options are available for *self only*, *self plus one*, and *family* coverage.

This can include free preventive care visits, preventative dental coverage, and \$10 generic drug coverage. Other types of insurance are offered including accident insurance (both on and off the job), short term disability income insurance, dental, vision, hearing,

and term life insurance. Check out the RCA Enrollment Guide at nrlca.benefithub.com under the "RCA" section of the page.

How do I enroll?

To enroll, visit PostalEase (<http://ewss.usps.gov>) or call HRSSC at 1-877-477-3273, option 1.

What if I like my plan and do not want to change?

You don't need to do anything. Your plan is self-renewing. It will continue automatically.

What is the cost of health insurance for RCAs?

For the year 2021, the rates are listed in the chart below. RCAs with one year or less, your premium will be the middle column (RCA1). RCAs with more than one year, your rate will be the right column. (RCA2)

2020	All Other	CCA/PSE/ RCA1	CCA/PSE/ RCA2
Self Only	\$61	\$61	\$61
Self Plus One	\$298	\$148.05	\$105.75
Self and Family	\$474	\$209.65	\$149.75

1 First CCA/PSE/RCA appointment
2 Subsequent CCA/PSE/RCA appointments per the terms of your respective bargaining unit agreement

If your earnings fall below \$609 in a pay period, you *may* have an adjusted premium contribution.

See <https://liteblue.usps.gov/humanresources/benefits/insurance/benefits-noncareer.shtml> for more information.

When will my premiums be taken out of my check?

The first day of the first pay period that begins on or after January 1, 2021

You can find more information online at postal ease and www.nrlca.org.

Lisa Heaton
Executive Committeeman

Federal Employees Health

**Benefits Open Season begins November 9
and ends December 14, 2020.**



Carla Dedden
Executive
Committeeman

Honoring the Flag of the United States of America

The topic I chose to write about this month for OHRLCA Newsletter is "Our American Flag". The information I have provided in the following article was extracted from *Our Flag*, 2006 revised edition, resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring).

In June 1776, Betsy Ross was called upon by a committee of Congress to draw a flag depicting 13 red and white stripes to represent the first 13 colonies and 13 stars representing the statehood of the first 13 states. The final rendering of the flag was redrawn in her back parlor by General Washington. This became the first flag of the United States of America. Eventually, in 1960 the current flag was formed displaying the 50 stars representing the 50 states of the United States of America and the alternating red and white stripes representing the first 13 colonies in America. Flag Day is June 14 and celebrates the birthday of the flag of June 14, 1777 (authorized by Continental Congress).

"The laws relating to the flag of the United States of America are found in detail in the United States Code. Title 4, Chapter 1 pertains to the flag and seal, seat of Government, and official territorial papers; Section 700, Title 18, Chapter 33, pertains to desecration of the flag and penalties; Title 36, Chapter 1 pertains to patriotic and national observances. These laws were supplemented by Executive Orders and Presidential Proclamations."

During the rendition of the National Anthem or the rendition of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, when the flag is displayed, all present except those in uniform should stand at attention facing the flag with their right hand over their heart. Men not in uniform should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold their hat at their left shoulder. Persons in uniform should render the military salute at the first note of the Star Spangled Banner or the first words of the Pledge to Allegiance to the Flag and remain till final words. When hoisting, lowering, or passing by of the flag, these procedures should also be followed.

The displaying of the flag of the United States of America should be from sunup to sundown. The flag may stay up 24 hours if illuminated at night. The flag should not be displayed in inclement weather, except an all-weather flag. No other flag

or pendant shall be placed higher or above the United States of America flag. *"The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff."* The President of the United States may order the flag to be flown at half-staff.

"No disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, state flags, and organizational or institutional flags should be dipped as a mark of honor. Presentation of the flag during a ceremony should be preceded by a brief talk emphasizing the importance of the occasion. Following the presentation, all present should salute the flag, recite the pledge of allegiance, and sing the national anthem".

The magnificent flag of our great country stands for freedom for all. Show it off proudly.

Carla Dedden
Executive Committeeman



Catherine Funderburgh
District Representative
Northern Ohio and
Ohio Valley Districts

Hot Topics in the Stewardship

Holidays: The upcoming holidays are Monday, October 12th (Columbus Day), Wednesday, November 11th (Veterans Day), Thursday, November 26th (Thanksgiving), Friday, December 25th (Christmas Day), and Friday, January 1st (New Year's Day).

Under **Article 11.2.B**, a regular carrier is granted the day preceding their relief day as their "holiday off day", contractually known as the carrier's "designated holiday." A regular carrier required to work on a designated holiday shall receive the daily rate of pay for such work in addition to their holiday pay.

Management may (but is not required to) schedule a regular carrier working a relief day before scheduling a regular carrier to work on his or her designated holiday. The carrier working their designated holiday does not receive 150% of their daily rate of pay as could a carrier on the Relief Day Work List (RDWL). In this light, the Postal Service's labor costs are less

when working a regular carrier on their designated holiday versus utilizing a carrier who receives 150% of their daily rate.

The only exception to this compensation rule is if a regular carrier is required to work their designated Christmas holiday. In that case, that carrier would receive 150% of their daily rate of pay. See **Article 11.2.C.** and **H-70** in the Steward Reference Guide.

RCA Availability: Coming into peak season (When did we ever leave it? Am I right?), management will be wanting to schedule leave replacements for extra duties such as the delivery of Express Mail, auxiliary assistance on other rural routes, or any other rural carrier craft duties. These are NOT reasons for annual leave requests properly requested via PS Form 3971 to be denied. The only reason that an annual leave request should be denied is if there is no leave replacement available at the time of the request. Contact your steward if management utilizes an RCA for another craft (clerk or city carrier work), and that assignment is what management claims made the RCA “unavailable”. By nature of the concept of an “emergency”, an “emergency” can never be scheduled.

Management should not be using an RCA to fill the clerk schedule. PS Form 50 shows that the employee was hired as an RCA and not a clerk. RCAs not on leave and not scheduled for RCA duties should be “available” at the start of the rural carrier shift if needed. If management is failing to schedule or is improperly scheduling RCA employees and that results in denied leave, then file a grievance.

X Days: From the start of the Guarantee period (October 10) through the end of the Christmas period (December 25th), any X day earned in the pay period must be utilized within the same pay period. If the X day is not utilized, you will receive 150% of your daily rate instead of keeping that X day. No X days earned before the start of the guarantee period may be utilized until after the end of the Christmas period. You may still utilize annual and sick leave throughout this 11 week period.

Leave Carryover: The Postal Service has made an agreement with the Union which allows carriers to carryover 65 days of annual leave into the 2021 leave year instead of the standard 55 days of annual leave. The 2021 leave year will start on January 2, 2020 (PP 02), and the leave carryover agreement expires on December 31, 2021.

Extended Leave-Bidding: If you are ever on extended leave, remember to **send your Postmaster a letter requesting a written copy of any rural route bidding notices posted through the entirety of your extended leave.** I urge you to send this via Certified Mail. Include your name and address in

the letter and be certain to keep a copy of your letter for your records. You have a right to receive these bid notices but only after you send a written request for the bid notices to your Postmaster (or OIC).

Things that every RCA should know:

Probationary Period: Every RCA has a probationary period for their first 90 working days or first calendar year of employment, whichever comes first.

Transfer: RCAs still within their probationary period may not transfer. Non-probationary RCA employees may transfer to any office in the country provided an opening exists in the receiving office and they have agreed to take you. Once your transfer has been approved, the losing office has thirty days to release you to the gaining office. Once transferred, you will have the shortest period of continuous service in the new office and be at the bottom of the RCA “seniority list”.

Matrix: Under **Article 30.2.D.1**, offices will have a leave replacement assignment list. It is commonly identified as “the matrix.” Every RCA will have a primary route assignment. You can only change your primary assignment when one of the following conditions of **Article 30.2.E.1** has occurred:

- after the route has changed route classification (for example, a K route changes classifications to a J or H route), OR;
- the regular carrier has their relief day changed (for example, Saturday to a Tuesday), OR;
- a regular carrier has been off on extended leave for more than thirty calendar days and there is no primary relief carrier assigned to the route, OR;
- the primary leave replacement assignment becomes vacant.

Management will fill in the holes in the matrix and assign you two additional routes.

You are **entitled** to work your primary route assignment. If you are on the matrix for a route needing a leave replacement, then you should be called in first to work your assigned route (according to the matrix) before that work is offered to the senior RCA not on the matrix for that open route. An exception would be if there is a PTF in the office. In that case, you are only entitled to your primary route assignment. When there is a PTF in the office, management can elect to give the secondary/tertiary work to PTF before any RCA. This is their option.

For even more details on how the Matrix functions, review **Article 30.2.D**, and **O-6**, “Order of Consideration”, in the Steward Reference Guide.

Additional Duties: (**Article 30.2.Q**) Management may assign you additional duties such as delivering express mail or parcels or helping on other routes and you will be compensated at the hourly rate. Management can assign you to case and carry more than one route in a day but the total daily evaluation of the two routes added together cannot be more than 12 hours.

Management is your Employer. Never refuse a direct order unless it is criminally unlawful or poses a risk to your safety. For example, if you are instructed to wash and wax the Postmaster’s car, then “wash and wax the Postmaster’s car” and then file a grievance. However, if you are directed to go rob a bank or juggle chainsaws, just refuse, and file a grievance.

Pay: As an RCA you will be paid actual hours worked for the first five pay periods (10 workweeks) of employment. This includes any training on your new route. After that period, you will then be paid the daily evaluation(s) of the route(s) you work on that workweek (Saturday-Friday), provided you work 40 or less actual hours within the workweek.

If you work over 40 actual hours in a workweek, the “evaluated compensation” rule will no longer apply to that week. Instead, you will be paid for 40 hours at the straight-time rate. For every minute worked beyond 40 actual hours, you will be paid overtime at 150% of your hourly rate.

If you have not been on the route you are carrying since at least twelve consecutive months prior, then you are entitled to the greater time of actual work hours worked or the route evaluation (see **Article 9.2.M.3**). If the regular carrier of your assigned route is on limited duty and he/she performs any duties for the route, then you will be paid for the actual hours you work – not “evaluated pay”. In this situation, your work hours are considered “auxiliary assistance.”

Sunday Package Work List: The 2015-2018 National Agreement initiated guidelines for creating a Sunday/Holiday Parcel Delivery Work List for PTFs, RCAs, and eventually, ARCs. Leave replacements would report to a Hub Office in which they will deliver parcels for multiple cities. The Parcel Delivery Work List is established under the same time parameters as the Relief Day Work List of **Article 8.5.A**.

The list is re-established before the start of the guarantee

year in October and again before the first full pay period in May. Each new list will supersede the previous list. The hub office is responsible for maintaining the list and scheduling carriers. Management should be updating these lists as leave replacements are converted to career employees, are separated, or transfer to another office.

Every leave replacement will have the opportunity to sign the list as a “volunteer” or as a “non-volunteer”. Newly hired leave replacements will have the opportunity to sign the list within sixty days of being hired. All hub and spoke offices will be combined into one list in alphabetical order to create the volunteer and the non-volunteer lists. A leave replacement may get off the volunteer list at any time but will have to wait until the next sign up period to move their name back to the volunteer list. However, if a carrier is scheduled to work before they elect to remove their name from the volunteer list, they still must report to work for that final day.

ARCs are to be scheduled first, then volunteers in the alphabetical rotation, then non-volunteers if needed. PTFs and Designation 79 RCAs (these are RCAs assigned to auxiliary routes) are not excluded from working Sundays and Holidays.

There is no language in our contract that restricts RCA or PTF employees from working more than six days in a row. The only way a leave replacement can be bypassed if they are a designation 74 (these are RCAs covering a route when the regular carrier is on an extended absence), if they are waiting to become a 74, if the work schedule for the upcoming week will place the carrier in overtime, or have approved leave or a non-scheduled day in conjunction with Sunday or the Holiday. Even with these reasons, a leave replacement does have the right to notify management that they do not wish to be skipped.

A leave replacement cannot claim religious accommodations as a reason to be skipped on the list as that is a direct violation of **Article 30.2.P**. This is not intended to hamper or insult any faith, but Sunday work is a term of employment agreed upon when we sign up for this job.

With dynamic routing, a leave replacement may be delivering parcels in an unknown area. All parcels are to be taken to the door. If there is no safe location to leave the parcel at the door then they may be left in a mailbox but only after an attempt was made to the door.

THERE IS
NO LANGUAGE
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THAT RESTRICTS
RCA OR PTF
EMPLOYEES FROM
WORKING MORE
THAN SIX DAYS
IN A ROW.

Route Bidding: RCAs who have completed one year of employment are eligible to bid on all routes when a vacancy occurs. If there are multiple routes simultaneously open for bidding, I recommend that you select your most desired routes in order of preference but be certain you bid on all routes - even the ones that are less than desirable. Once you become a career employee, there is no waiting period to bid on another regular route in your office.

Discipline/PDIs: Sometime in your postal career you may be in trouble. If management calls you into the office and wants to discuss something with you that you think could lead to discipline, then ask for a rural craft union steward.

Unlike police officers reading an arrested person their Miranda rights (You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law...) Management does not have to inform you of your Weingarten rights.

Weingarten rights guarantee an employee the right to Union representation present during an investigatory interview. I recommend you ALWAYS utilize your Weingarten rights and request a steward BEFORE the meeting starts. No magical phrase needs to be said. Simply request a steward. If you need help remembering, cut out the Weingarten Rights card under the steward directory on page 12 and keep it with you; perhaps with your wallet or postal ID badge.

If management ever issues you a disciplinary letter, you **must** take it seriously. File a grievance on **all** disciplinary letters. This includes letters of warning, 7-day suspensions, 14-day suspensions, and removal notices. Don't toss disciplinary

letters in the trash or misplace them with non-related material.

In most cases, discipline is progressive. If you let disciplinary letters go unanswered, they can progress to a removal notice. I recommend to always contact your steward for help as we are more than willing to help you start the process. You have 14 days from the date you receive the disciplinary notice to file a grievance, but getting with your steward well before that 14th day is *always* the best move, and potentially gives your steward more time to investigate, plan, and handle your case.

Leave Earning Status: An RCA may be placed in a leave earning status if they serve full time on a vacant route or in the absence of the regular carrier for more than 90 calendar days *provided* their Form 50 shows they are the assigned primary carrier. Approved days off or management requiring the carrier to serve another route will not break the continuity towards that 90 days. On the 91st day, the RCA will be put in a leave earning status and be credited with the leave earned over those 90 days.

The RCA will earn one leave hour for every twenty hours worked at a maximum of four hours per pay period. This formula applies to both sick and annual leave. When an RCA is no longer in a leave earning status, the RCA remaining annual leave balance will be "cashed out" as a lump sum. The RCA's earned sick leave will be retained but will not be accessible until the RCA returns to a leave earning status. If the RCA does not return to a leave earning status within three years of losing their leave earning status, the earned sick leave is forfeited.

I hope everyone has a safe and healthy Fall Season.
Your Union Sister, Cathy Funderburgh

Cost-of-Living Raise Effective August 29, 2020

Pursuant to the release of the July 2020 Consumer Price Index - Urban Wage and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), and in accordance with Article 9.1.E, the fifth COLA adjustment of the 2018-2021 National Agreement will result in a \$187 increase for eligible rural carriers. This COLA adjustment will be effective August 29, 2020, (PP 19-2020). All COLA adjustments are based on a 40-hour evaluation with proportional application to those route evaluations over 40 hours. The increase should appear in paychecks dated September 18, 2020.

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

NOTE: All leave replacement employees will now receive an additional 1% salary adjustment annually in lieu of COLA adjustments. Those leave replacement employees on the rolls prior to August 11, 2012, will now receive the additional 1% salary adjustment annually, rather than waiting for a COLA roll-in at the end of the agreement.

Updated pay schedules will be posted at www.nrlca.org when available and will also be included in a future edition of the National Rural Letter Carrier Magazine.



OHIO NRLCA STEWARD DIRECTORIES

(September 2020)



Ohio Valley District Steward Directory

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Representative of Batavia, College Corner, Franklin, Hamilton-Fairfield, Harrison, Lebanon, Maineville, Milford, Monroe, Okeana, Oxford, Springboro, Trenton, and West Chester

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Area Steward Jason Zedaker - Phone: (419) 367-2834

Representative of Bellevue, Bowling Green, Curtice, Fremont, Genoa, Holland, Huron, Millbury, Maumee, North Baltimore, Port Clinton, Sandusky, Vermilion, Walbridge, and Waterville

I REQUEST UNION REPRESENTATION

Whenever talking to management, if the conversation starts to indicate disciplinary action OR you believe disciplinary action could result, STOP the conversation and ask:

"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined, terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my union representative or steward be present at this meeting. Without representation present, I choose not to participate in this discussion"

THE STATEMENT ABOVE COULD SAVE YOUR JOB!

PLEASE USE THE DIRECTORY NUMBERS LISTED.

CALLS MADE TO A STEWARD'S PERSONAL CELL PHONE WILL NOT BE RETURNED.

PLEASE DO NOT TEXT AS TEXTING IS NOT RECOGNIZED AS AN OFFICIAL FORM OF COMMUNICATION

And now, the moment you've all been waiting for! Happy Retirement!

Elizabeth AltizerOak Hill
 Kelli Bear.....Oakwood
 Rita BeedySaint Paris
 Catherine Bradshaw Hicksville
 Ernest Castle Chillicothe
 Douglas Cramer.....Bucyrus
 Ruth Garringer.. Washington Court House
 Pearl Guseman..... Lancaster
 Kimberly Hawkins.....West Salem
 Dana Hines.....Bellaire
 Brent Ingram.....Bethel
 Vickie LambrightMansfield
 Amanda Leggett.....Vincent
 Virginia Linton.....Aurora

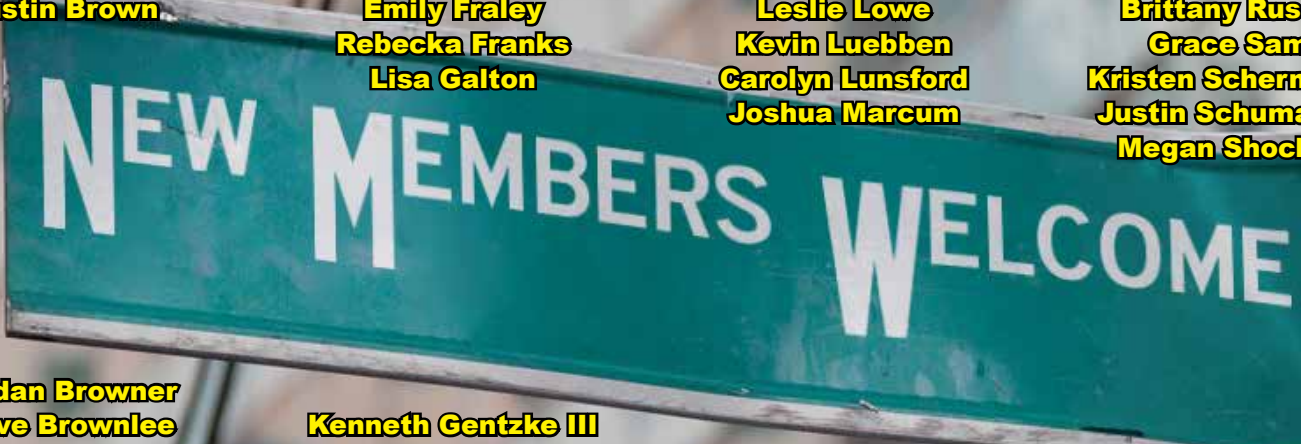
Beth McCance.....Johnstown
 Linda Miller.....Circleville
 Randall NicholsFreeport
 Joseph Perry.....Bluffton
 Sandra Pertner.....Millbury
 Patricia Rachford.....Lucasville
 Mary RankinFreeport
 Stephen Roediger.....Albany
 Phyllis Seavolt.....Utica
 Thomas Stanwick.....Scio
 Brenda ThompsonNavarre
 Yvonne TylerRussell Point
 Nyla Watton.....Nashport

Brandon Adair
Dominick Andreozzi
Glenda Bailey
Kytayia Becraft
Dustin Brown

Alisha Fields
Joey Figueroa
Darcey Firsdon
Victor Foh
Emily Fraley
Rebecka Franks
Lisa Galton

Jean King
Diana Lane
Heidi Lefevre
John Lovins
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Carolyn Lunsford
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Samantha Pope
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Grace Sams
Kristen Schermbeck
Justin Schumacher
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Jordan Browner
Steve Brownlee
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Stacey Callahan
David Childers
Dominic Cioffi
David Cowgill II
Megan Cox
Maria Cross
Bethany Crumpler
Dakota Davis
Andrea Delong
Ashley Dotson
Donald Durham
Shawna Estep

Kenneth Gentzke III
Gina Gillfillan
Shannon Green
Justin Grooms
Kayela Hale
Austin Hill
Danielle Hoover
Jami Hutchinson
Cheryl Johnson
Antoinette Johnson
Jonathan Jones
Austin Joseph
Michael Kabat
Gagandeep Kaur

Haley Martin
Brandy Martin
Stacey Matthews
Kelli McCarty
Erin Meyer
Sierra Millirons
Dale Mitchell
Adam Murch
Erick Nelson
Desiree Olivarez
Beau Oliver
Zackary Palmer
Bhavinkumar Patel

James Shreves
Cameron Slaughter
Aaron Taylor
Zachary Valerius
Matthew Vanderhoff
Morgan Vanderpool
Rachel Warren
Diana Welch
Dean Whitt
Jessica York



Vickie Wells
Retired Member

Vickie Christine (Lint) Wells, 77, died Saturday, July 11, 2020 at Sharon Brook Assisted Living in Newark.

She was born April 6, 1943 in Monroe Township, Coshocton County to the late Dallas W. and Mary M. (Coudret) Lint.

Vickie was a 1961 graduate of Warsaw High School. She worked for 32 years in the U.S. Postal service, retiring as Postmaster from the Dresden Post Office. She was a member of the Coshocton Nazarene Church where she was a former member of the church board, and a small group teacher. She was also a member of the former Warsaw Emergency Squad.



Carlton Riley
Retired Member

With heavy hearts, we announce the death of Carlton C. Riley of Utica, Ohio, born in Newark, Ohio, who passed away on September 7, 2020 at the age of 87.

Carlton was a member of the Utica United Methodist Church, National Rural Letter Carriers Association, Utica Historical Society and Sertoma and lifetime member of the American Legion Post #92 and NRA. He served honorably in the U.S. Army during the Korean Conflict. He was a volunteer for the blood mobile,

former Utica Council Member and served on the Boy Scouts Board.



Robert Kline
Retired Member

It is always difficult saying goodbye to someone we love and cherish. Family and friends must say goodbye to their beloved Robert Kline of Kenton, Ohio, who passed away at the age of 77, on August 29, 2020.

Gordon worked as a rural mail carrier for 25 years, serving the people of Dunkirk and Dola. He was a family man who shared great joy with his children and grandchildren.



Rachelle Campbell-Wilkes
Bargaining Unit Member

Rachelle A. Campbell-Wilkes, of Masury, Ohio, was called home on Sunday, September 6, 2020, while a patient in the Sharon Regional Hospital, Sharon, Pennsylvania, following a sudden illness at work just two days before. She was 50.

Rachelle was born on March 7, 1970, in Warren, Ohio, a daughter to Ralph E. and Ruth (Abplanalp) Gosnell.

She was a 1988 graduate of Joseph Badger High School and a member of the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association. She worked as a rural letter carrier for 22 years with the United States Post Office, at both the Masury and Brookfield, Ohio locations.

Rachelle will be remembered for her infectious laugh and her always smiling face. She blessed everyone in her life and never expected anything in return. She had a beautiful soul that displayed a constant warmth around her. She could always brighten the darkest of days.

In her spare time, she enjoyed going to yard sales, collecting Sesame Street memorabilia and vinyl records. Her absolute favorite holiday was of course, Halloween. However, spending time with her family gave her the most joy.



Lois Loveless
Retired Member

Lois Jean Loveless 69 of Mechanicsburg, peacefully entered Heavens gates Saturday, May 23, 2020 surrounded by her loving family. She was born October 28, 1950 in Urbana, Ohio the daughter of Roscoe and Edna (Thompson) Rodgers. Jean was a 1968 graduate of Mechanicsburg High School and a member of the Mechanicsburg Church of God of Prophecy.

Jean retired from the United States Postal Service after a successful career as a rural carrier for more than thirteen years.

She was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother who enjoyed spending time with her grandchildren; attending many sporting events, dance recitals, 4-H shows, and school musicals. Besides spending time with her grandchildren, Jean had a true passion for traveling and the adventure of being a free spirit. Jean will be remembered for her bright and energetic personality and amazing sense of humor.



Sara Ann Ketola
Retired Member

Sara Ann (Taggart) Ketola, 79, of Jefferson, passed away peacefully on Monday, August 31, 2020 in her home surrounded by her family: Denise, Chris and his son David, her Cousin Carol, close friends Joann, Brenda and the Bella Care team. She suffered a massive stroke requiring hospice care in her home.

Sara was a Rural Letter Carrier for over 26 years, mostly on Rural Route 2 out of Jefferson until her retirement in 2003. She enjoyed life and anything to do with others, bowling, playing Bingo with her sisters and cousins, or walking her little man Beau. Sara was proud of her grandsons David A Ketola and Zane A Ketola.



David Welty
Bargaining Unit Member

David Franklin Welty, 54, passed away suddenly at his residence on September 15, 2020. David was born on June 24, 1966, at Bluffton Hospital to Franklin and Bonnie (Radabaugh) Welty.

David was a 1984 graduate of Pandora-Gilboa High School. He was employed as a rural mail carrier for the Pandora Post Office and also worked for Riley Township. He was a member of the First Lutheran Church in Leipsic.

David enjoyed farming, reading and talking with family and friends.



Sandy Schwartz
Auxiliary President

Ohio Auxiliary News

Hello,

I'm hoping this finds you all healthy and happy! It is hard for all of us to accept that this pandemic is still controlling our lives! We must all make the best of it and keep ourselves and our loved one's virus-

free by following recommended health recommendations in our homes, schools, and on the job. Please try to stay positive too; try to keep making "lemonade out of lemons"!

I and your State Auxiliary Board members have missed seeing all of you at state, national, spring, and fall district meetings! As I stated in the last newsletter, we are continuing our project of supporting the Postal Employee's Relief Fund (PERF). This is a program that supports YOU our carriers. Thank you for your continued support!

I am also very happy to announce the following names of applicants that have been chosen for the 2020 Auxiliary Book Grants. Each student will receive a \$500 stipend towards their college expenses.

Shaelyn Anderson from Freeport will attend Kent State University-Tuscarawas Branch this fall and major in the Registered Nursing program. She is the granddaughter of Patsy

Anderson. We are proud that Shaelyn was an active member and officer of our Juniors program for 12 years.

Rayan Frey from Fort Loramie will attend the University of Toledo. She plans to continue her education with her major in Nursing and then to continue to work towards her Nurse Practitioner License. Her mother, Pamela Frey, is a carrier at the Fort Loramie office.

Luke Zeinmer from Goshen will attend the University of Cincinnati and study mechanical or electrical engineering. His grandmother, Linda Mider, is retired from the Goshen Post Office.

CONGRATULATIONS to all of our applicants and winners for this years' book grant. We are very proud of the accomplishments that you have all worked towards and earned!

Stay Healthy and Miss You All,

Sandy Schwartz
Ohio Auxiliary President

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UPCOMING EVENTS

All Scheduled Events
Have Been Cancelled

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Dominic Crooks
State Editor

A Word from the Editor

A union's constitution is like a computer program that drives the officers and mechanisms within our Association. The members are individually (and collectively) the writers of this program.

Members have varying degrees of ability in constitutional writing skills. Some are more skilled in finding and pointing out bugs in the program. Some are more skilled in drafting (and installing) new beneficial mechanisms or accessories to what currently exists. Still, others are great for thinking outside of the box and crafting a new strategy for combatting long-standing problems with innovative ideas and solutions. What is your best skill?

Try this bug-removal exercise the next time you open your constitution; think of a way you could use its articles and sections to yield unintended results while still staying within the boundaries of its rules. These are "bugs" in the system. Once you find one of these bugs, consider what would have to be changed to eliminate this bug and ensure this unintended result could never really happen. Please practice this exercise and send us your findings.

Our constitution is our law. Suspending our law (or its bugs) is often impossible. We must manually pluck discovered bugs out of our system. Removing bugs ensures continued functionality within our Association. Never thought of yourself as a programmer? Well, comrade, you are one now!

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