

WIRLCA NEWS



WISCONSIN RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION

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WIRLCA OFFICIAL WEBSITE-WWW.WIRLCA.ORG



RELIEF CARRIER APPRECIATION WEEK IS FEBRUARY 3-9, 2024

Take the time to show the RCRs, RCAs, PTFs, and ARCs in your office
that they are not "Just a Sub"



It's Spring Conference Time!

Get your leave slips in now!

March 9th and 10th, 2024 at the SureStay Plus-
Best Western in Black River Falls.
DOUBLE OR KING ROOMS ARE AVAILABLE
BOOK NOW! \$96.00 + tax PER NIGHT.
CALL 715-284-9471 REFERENCE WIRLCA
FOR THE SPECIAL ROOM RATE

Tentative Schedule

Saturday, March 9th: Local Officer Training (open to all)
Saturday Evening: PAC Hospitality Event
Sunday, March 10th: **Guest Speaker– Melissa Tarlton,**
USPS RRECS Facilitator (see below)
Board presentation: "Back to Basics"-watch
www.wirlca.org for the agenda

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Melissa Tarlton started her postal carrier in 1989 as an RCA at the Krakow Post Office. She became a Rural QWL-EI facilitator along with a full time rural carrier in 2001. From 2004-2008 she was appointed as QWL Coordinator for the Lakeland District Joint Steering Committee. Starting in 2002 Melissa held various OIC assignments including Leopold, Neopit, Shiocton, Pulaski and Marinette. In 2005 she received her first Postmaster appointment in Townsend and subsequently in Gillett, Coleman and Oconto. Melissa is currently the Postmaster of Shawano and the United Postmasters and Managers of America Wisconsin Chapter President. In 2020 she was appointed the Wisconsin District RRECS Point of Contact.

STATE OFFICERS 2023-2024

If you have a contract or discipline issue, please use the contact information located at the end of this publication, under “District Representatives & Assignments”

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Letters to the Editor-

Note; Letters to the editor are limited to 150 words. Libelous or slanderous letters will not be accepted. Letters to the Editor will be printed on a “first-come” basis, depending on available space. All letters to the editor must be signed.

Anonymous will not be accepted. The WIRLCA Association and State Board are not responsible for the content of letters to the editor and take no position on their content.

The WIRLCA News is published at a minimum of 4 times per year using a “Non-Profit Periodical Permit –Portage, WI”. Printed at O’Brion Agency in Portage, WI. Members in good standing will receive each edition of the paper. A recruitment issue will be published and mailed to all members and non-members once per year. Full General Standard Operating Procedures are printed in Appendix H of the WIRLCA Board Policies.

Spring Conference

Greetings to you, my fellow brother and sister Wisconsin Rural Letter Carriers, and happy 2024! My wishes for you are to have a healthy and very happy 2024! Thank you for all of your hard work in another successful holiday delivery season!

The 2024 convention/conference/seminar season is about to officially kick in starting with our Spring Conference scheduled for March 9th and 10th in Black River Falls.

Spring Conference is your opportunity to learn and grow as rural carriers!

On Saturday, March 9th, we will be conducting local officer training to prepare for your local unit's annual meetings. This training is for local unit Board members, but anyone may attend. If you are thinking about running for your local board, this is the place to see what these positions are all about! All will learn what their responsibility is to this Union and their role in ensuring our future.

Training on Saturday will start with learning about the requirements of "The Duty of Fair Representation"; a principle that is followed by all union officials. This will be followed with education for our local presidents. Presidents will learn how to create an agenda and how to run a proper meeting based on Robert's Rules and the constitutions of this association. A mock meeting will be held, starring your state board members, so you may see the proper process in action.

Secretary/Treasurers will learn their responsibilities, such as;

- the Department of Labor's requirements for LM-4 filings

KIM MACDONALD
PRESIDENT



- Understanding what a "990" is
- Financial reporting
- Requirements for bonding

Participants will also receive training on how to record proper meeting minutes.

Our Secretaries/Treasurers are the backbone of this association, ensuring all union funds are accounted for and all business of this association is managed with the utmost integrity.

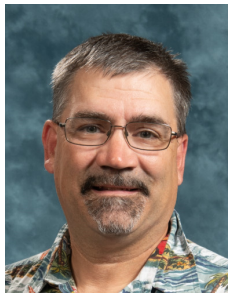
Saturday evening, we will be hosting a PAC (Political Action Committee) social hour. Our PAC representative, Bob Lueck will be there to host. Bob is amazing and brings extensive expertise in the legislative corner of our organization.

On Sunday morning, Melissa Tarlton, the USPS RRECS facilitator, also known as the "go-to" person your manager reaches out to for answers to their questions, will be doing a presentation about RRECS and will have the most up-to-date information ADJUSTMENTS...yes, I said it! ADJUSTMENTS!

Melissa is a rural letter carrier at heart as her initial position with the USPS was in the rural craft. After Melissa's presentation, she and our District Representative, Greg Dietzler, will be on hand for a Q&A session. This conference is the perfect chance for you to ask all of those questions and get the CORRECT answers!

Immediately following Melissa's presentation and the Q&A, we plan to have some really great educational content. Your state board intends to show how to write an effective resolution or

(Continued on page 10)



JASON JOHNSON
VICE PRESIDENT

Ready.... Set.... Retirement!!!

As I begin this article, we've all hopefully survived another crazy and hectic holiday season at the Post Office. For this issue, I've decided to focus on Retirement and what you must begin to think about as you steadily inch closer to that day in your future when you won't have to set an alarm, worry about the weather, contemplate delivering packages in the dark, worry about working 12-14-hour days or dealing with management. As I begin my 30th year at the post office (19 full-time), I would hardly claim to be the expert when it comes to retirement, but I would like to mention a few of the basics, just to get you thinking about what you need to do down the road to be prepared yourself!

Whether you believe it or not, your retirement plan starts the moment you're able to start contributing to Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The Postal Service will do a match, and you would be silly to not take advantage of this by contributing at least 5%...but not everyone has or will have that luxury. I've been there myself... four kids, vehicle breakdowns, LIFE Happens!! Get back on track, and do what you can do. The more you invest early, the more you will have when you retire. Do some research on the different investment options and choose what is best for you. Consider attending a Thrift Savings seminar at a state, regional, or national event, or consider online webinars which are now offered!

Another major item to consider before you retire is your health insurance. You need to be enrolled in a Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan for five years before you retire (or for the entire time for which you were eligible to be enrolled and retire on an immediate annuity) to be eligible to continue overage into retirement.

Believe it or not, I've heard of a few circumstances where people didn't realize this and ended up delaying their retirement because they had to work another year or two to get to the five-year requirement.

There are many things that will be required of you when you get close to retiring. Things that you will need to become familiar with.... LiteBlue offers. Many of the tools you will need... LiteBlue will help greatly. You will need to be familiar with your Form 50, and your RTR Report (Retirement, Thrift & RIF employee detail report.) You will need to be in contact with USPS Shared Services and the Office of Personal Management (OPM)—they will be processing your retirement. Don't reach out to them 30 days before you plan to retire and expect them to magically make it all happen! They are usually very busy and have a backlog of retirements to process, so you should probably reach out to them as soon as you have an idea of when you want to retire. At least six to nine months in advance is a good idea.

Retirement can be a very scary and confusing topic, with lots of confusing dates and numbers. Some people choose to do it on their own, while others get help. One of those people who can help is Joni Montroy. Joni has more than 20 years of federal service with the US Postal Service and spent 12 years as a USPS Retirement Counselor before starting her practice. Over the years she's performed many seminars across the nation at rural carrier conventions and seminars. Her wealth of knowledge is invaluable. She's helped guide countless rural carriers through their retirements, giving them advice, their options, and some tips. ***Does she charge a fee?*** Yes, she does, but I've never heard one person say it wasn't worth it. Many of them say, "I only plan on retiring once, so I want to do it right"! Sure, there are others, but please be careful. They could be trying to get you to buy something you don't need or want! Talk to others who have recently retired and find out who they talked to, and who helped them most. Ask around and get multiple

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Membership Analysis

What better way to start the calendar year, also known as the end of our 6-month fiscal year, than with an article about our membership history?

When looking over the data below, you will notice that our 14-year average is 3,319 members. We currently have 313 members below our 14-year average, which is 745 below the members from just 2011, which was our peak membership in history I have access to.

Wisconsin's average for regulars peaked in 2013, with 1,620 regular carrier members. We are down 74. Note that the association sits at 156 PTF members. When you factor in PTFs to this dues category we are ahead of our 14-year high at 1705 career members. We have seen a tremendous drop in RCAs, going from our 14-year high of 1188 to our 14-year low of 461 RCA members (currently). This means we have seen a 61.19% loss. Again, we need to note we have

ERICA KRAGNESS
SECRETARY /TREASURER



gained 27 ARC members, which offsets what the PTFs have for the regulars.

Within our retiree group, we peaked in 2011 with 928 total retired members, and currently, we stand at 784 retired members, which is a 15.52% decrease.

I also looked back to see how many 1187 membership forms were processed. In fiscal year 2019-2020, there were 617 processed. In the previous fiscal year, the state had 472 membership forms processed. Currently, the state sits at 243 processed with the remaining 2nd half of the fiscal year left.

– Erica Kragness



Membership Analysis History

2014 - Jan 1st, 2024

Year	Total RTS	D/W Reg	Cash Reg	D/W PTF	D/W Rel	Cash Rel	D/W ARC	D/W Ret	Cash Ret	D/W Assoc	Ret Cash Assoc	Total Members
<u>2011 *</u>	<u>2033</u>	<u>1603</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1187</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>866</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3751</u>
<u>2012 *</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>1562</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1117</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>817</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3593</u>
<u>2013 *</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>1620</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>968</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>808</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3490</u>
2014	2024	1600	9	10	889	1	0	791	65	8	1	3374
2015	1998	1595	7	5	888	1	0	807	65	4	1	3373
2016	1998	1590	4	13	851	0	0	777	78	5	1	3319
2017	1998	1594	6	22	789	0	0	767	83	4	1	3266
2018	2007	1604	4	21	804	0	4	768	94	5	1	3305
2019	2048	1606	4	35	728	0	4	765	101	4	1	3248
2020	2089	1614	2	41	803	0	11	753	105	2	1	3333
2021	2089	1612	1	26	753	0	13	734	105	4	1	3250
2022	2089	1586	0	42	714	0	10	690	105	2	1	3174
2023	2089	1548	0	104	486	0	18	681	111	2	1	2980
2024	2089	1546	0	159	461	0	27	675	109	3	0	3006

** From previous records, not Jan1st of listed year*



BETH MONTEJANO
ASSISTANT SECRETARY/
TREASURER

Retiring and maintaining membership

Happy New Year!

I hope everyone had a fun and safe Holiday. December goes by so fast and there is not enough time to stand still between work, our family and children's holiday concerts, and family gatherings. I now have the time to sit and think about what I want to write for my next article. While I was thinking, I started pulling up recent retirees lists who will need their 1187R to rejoin the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association (the union). It has been brought to my attention a couple of times this month about how to stay in the union and to keep your health benefits after you retire, so that helped me with my subject.

Some may not know that once you retire you need to rejoin the union as a retiree, you don't automatically rejoin the union. You do have 90 days after you retire to rejoin the union before it affects your benefits. Now how do you get an 1187R form to rejoin the union? Well at the end of every month, I go through the database and pull up all the recent retirees and I have a letter and an 1187R printed out and I mail them out to you. If you want your dues automatically

withdrawn, you fill out your 1187R and mail them back to me to process. If you want to pay in cash every year you mail a check to our Secretary/Treasurer. Whichever way you elect, we will need your **CSA number**. Erica and I cannot process anything without that number.

Now when do you get your CSA number? This is a very common question I get and that is okay. I would be asking the same question too. Now I have not been through the retirement process and will not be for a long while, but I have been told that it can take up to 30 days to come in the mail from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). ***Remember your benefits will be fine for 90 days.***

I know going through change can be scary and you definitely want to make sure that you "cross your T's and dot your I's."

Being concerned about your health insurance is completely understandable since it is a very important benefit to have for secondary insurance.

Rejoining the union at retirement, is a straightforward process, but it can also be stressful at the same time. I am here to help you through the process to ensure everything goes smoothly. So don't be afraid to pick up the phone and call me. If I don't know the answer I am surrounded by people with good resources so I can get you the correct answer. Again I hope everyone had a safe Holiday and Happy New Year.

Relief Carrier Appreciation Week is February 3-9, 2023

Coming out of the Christmas season, the importance of a well-staffed office is more apparent than ever. One of the most vital positions in the rural craft is that of our leave replacements. They give relief and assistance to regular carriers throughout the year.

LISA RITTENHOUSE
CHAIR-EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEEPERSON



At the 2018 National Convention, a binding resolution was submitted and passed, that a week during the year would be designated as Relief Carrier Appreciation Week.

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"Recognizing the important role Rural Carrier Relief Carriers are to the rural craft, the National Board has designated the first full week in February as Rural Carrier Relief Appreciation."

Over the last year, many offices have experienced a crucial shortage of Relief Carriers. This has put more pressure on both Regular Carriers and Relief Carriers to cover more routes becoming overworked by severely understaffed offices. It's important to remember we are a TEAM, even more so now with RRECS. Having well-trained Relief Carriers placed on routes when the Regular Carrier is absent is important to ensure the route evaluation is accurate. The route's pay affects everyone who works the route.

We can show our appreciation all year long to Relief Carriers. A simple "Thank You" goes a long way. If they're struggling on a route, is there something you can do to help? Become an

advocate for new Relief Carriers. If you see something management is doing that shouldn't be done, talk to the leave replacement, and consult with your steward over your concerns. If your office is short on leave replacements check the [USPS.com/careers](https://www.usps.com/careers) website to see if they (management) are posting vacancies. When searching the website, only 100 positions will be listed at a time-Please ensure you are entering your office in the search field.

To all the hard-working Relief Carriers... we appreciate you, not just this week but every week all year long. Many times, I hear RCAs say I'm just an RCA.

I also want to give a shout-out to Denise and Marie from my office, you rocked it this year. Thank you!

Stay Safe,
Lisa Rittenhouse



Are you ready?

Happy New Year everyone! Now that the Christmas period is over, it is time to start preparing for the spring local meetings. I know everyone is busy and you may not want to hear this but your union needs you. Thanks to everyone who is involved. If you haven't participated in any union events and are not sure where to start, I would suggest your annual meeting. This is also a good opportunity for carriers to return to the union if they haven't been active for a while.

Your local annual meeting will be held sometime between the end of March through the first of May. It is a good place to start. You get to meet other carriers from local offices, hear from a state board member and a district-level steward. There will be a presentation of current and future WIRLCA/NRLCA events and usually a question-and-answer session. It's definitely worthwhile for carriers to attend.

JESSE HANSON
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEPERSON
NGIC REPRESENTATIVE



If you are looking to get more involved, you will learn about upcoming events. You can also run to be a delegate to the state convention. As a delegate, you would represent your local unit. Ask your local officers at the meeting what that involves. You may not be interested at all and that's okay. I just ask that you attend your local meeting.

I am sure there are carriers that will tell you not to bother. Ignore them. Go to your meeting and judge for yourself. If you haven't been active in a while, come and give it another chance. Look for your invitation in the mail.

STAY UNION STRONG!

Jesse Hanson
Executive Committeeperson



KAYLA KASTENSON
EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEEPERSON

Academy

The Wisconsin District currently conducts academy training for new hires in five locations: Milwaukee, Madison, Menasha, Chippewa Falls, and Wausau. Academy instructors educate our newly hired RCAs and ARCs on the expectations of their new positions. They are given a real feeling of things they will encounter when in the office and out on the road while delivering. When our new hires walk in the doors of our academies, our facilitators strive to make them feel welcome and supported.

Academy instruction spans four days where the vital teachings of how to properly handle mail, correct casing methods, the different classes of mail, and how to endorse undeliverable mail. Most importantly, they are given the tools to accurately and safely perform their job. New hires are also given mock training in the actual performance of delivery itself. Scanner use is taught throughout each day, emphasizing RRECS proper scanning. You also get to give them some tips on how to be a proficient carrier.

Facilitators are expected to provide information to our new carriers regarding the benefits of union membership and their roles as members. In most cases, the Academy is where our new hires learn about the NRLCA for the first time. For most it may be their first introduction to a union. To ensure our future, instructors must understand how vital their role is in this education.

Our District Representative, Gregory Dietzler works in conjunction with a USPS designee to select qualified candidates for our facilitators. The expectation for our facilitators is to be in the classroom, on a rotational basis, with other facilitators. Scheduled classes are always new hire dependent. Your commitment to taking this position is not binding as there is an easy opt-out if you choose teaching is not for you. If you have any questions about what is all involved in the academy, don't be afraid to reach out to me as well.

If you have a passion for the rural craft and feel you can bring something to the table by teaching and encouraging new hires, we want to hear from you! Please reach out to Greg or any one of your state board members to express your interest in the position, or simply to ask questions.

As a reminder, our new hires need to be supported by all of you! Their real-world experience and education in the office setting are dependent on your mentorship. You set the tone for their future! I hope everyone had a safe and fun holiday season.

Kayla Kastenson-Committeeperson

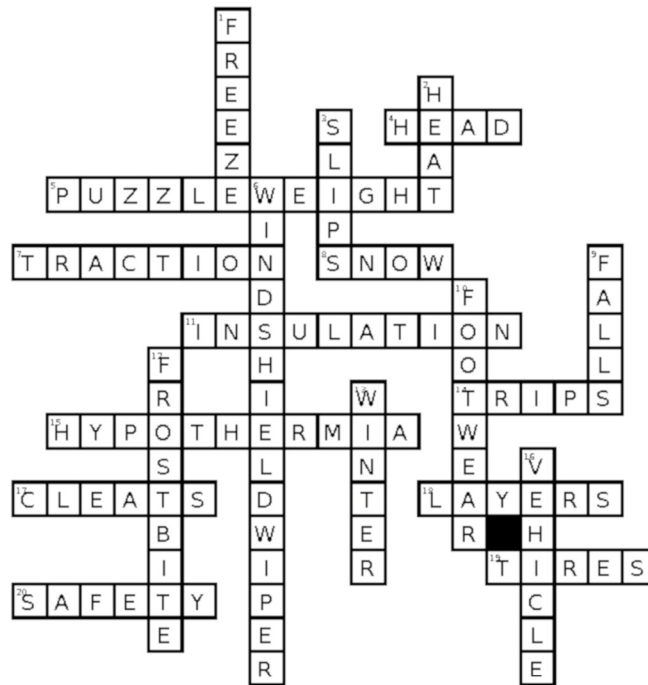


Teach
Learn
Mentor
Repeat

*It's up to all of us and we all
can do it.*

Safety Crossword Puzzle

(answers to puzzle in last issue)



Down:

1. to be turned into ice or another solid as a result of extreme cold
2. opposite of cold
3. an act of sliding unintentionally for a short distance
6. used for a clear view
9. lose one's balance, and collapse
10. covers your tootsies
12. injury to body tissues caused by exposure to extreme cold
13. the cold season
16. the key tool for a rural carrier

Across:

4. what holds your hat
5. interlocking containers of sand used for traction
7. the grip of a tire on a road
8. white precipitation
11. the process of keeping heat, sound, or electricity from spreading
14. catch one's foot on something and stumble or fall
15. the condition of having an abnormally low body temperature
17. projecting pieces of metal on the sole of a shoe
18. a sheet or one of several, covering a surface or body
19. rubber rings filled with air, around the wheel of a vehicle
20. the condition of being protected from danger, risk, or injury

(Continued from page 3)

constitution submission; the initial step in having your voice heard in the change you would like to see. There will also be some really great information regarding what you (leave replacement) need to know about converting to a career position, such as the election of benefits, understanding your salary and overtime rate, and how to read your paycheck (for both regulars and leave replacements).

**Ultimately each
and every craft
employee is the
union**

Your assigned District Representative, Greg Dietzler will be there to educate you about the grievance process and your vital role when filing one. He is also working on some tentative not-to-miss topics such as: How to read and understand RCA and PTF contractual entitlements, the ins and outs of the Relief Day Work List, and addressing hostile work environments. Following his presentation, Greg will be available for another Q&A session.

This is the perfect event for you to meet your District Representative. (While there will most likely be additional district-level stewards at this meeting, they will not be "on the clock", but I know they would love to meet you!)

Please watch the WIRLCA website (wirlca.org) for more concrete information and schedule. We look forward to seeing you!

-Kim

(Continued from page 4)

opinions. If you have never seen Joni, I strongly encourage you to attend one of her seminars. You learn something new every time. You will have that opportunity this summer at the Wisconsin Rural Letter Carriers' State Convention in Fond Du Lac Wisconsin on Friday, June 21st. Get your leave slips in now and plan to attend! While I may still be a long way away from retiring myself, I love hearing what she's got to say, so I can be prepared for what's to come.

Thank You all for your hard work this past Holiday season. Thanks for being involved in your Union, and thanks for reading my article! Stay safe out there, and good luck to you all in the New Year. I hope to see you at a Union event soon!!

Yours Truly, State VP Jason Johnson

LONGEVITY AWARD

50+ YEARS OF NRLCA MEMBERSHIP

Are you or do you know someone that has been a member of the NRLCA for 50 plus years? Submit their name to the WIRLCA Assistant Secretary/Treasurer



BOB LUECK
PAC CHAIR

Amazing & Awesome

As you may or may not recall, **Amazing** is how I titled my article after our state convention and now I have added awesome as well. Because so many of you chose to contribute to PAC this past year, Wisconsin's total contributions for 2023 were \$27,241.31. This exceeded what I had expected after our very successful convention. That total put WI in the top ten nationwide and also earned us per capita honors at the National Convention at \$9.08 for states with 2,000-2,999 members.

Thank you to all who have taken the time to contribute to our PAC. Remember every dollar counts. Just think if each member gave just one dollar every month, my math says we would be looking at an even larger number approximately \$36,000.00. Now that would be truly spectacular! But, in reality, it is only 5% of the membership that choose to support the NRLCA PAC either by participating in a drawing at the Spring conference or at you local county spring meetings. By far, the most popular and fun way to contribute is by attending the state convention auction. By all means, don't forget the fall seminars where you can usually have a chance to win a pie or gift card from Kwik Trip with a contribution.

A special thank you goes to our sustaining donors. These carriers have elected to make that contribution every month by EFT from their checking account or by signing up for payroll deduction through LiteBlue. As of this writing, about 20 individuals have taken that step. Although it may not be as entertaining as bidding on an item at a state convention it is the most convenient. This past year the sustaining donors accounted for approximately \$5000.00 of the total contributions.

So enough about 2023 as we now have moved into 2024, and as always, we would like to

improve on our past performance. This is going to be a challenge, but I have to put it out there... \$30,000.00 in 2024. Still short of that one dollar per member per month that I mentioned earlier (actually about 0.83 cents).

There it is. That's the challenge. Ask yourself, "Do I have .83 cents to invest in preserving the hard-fought benefits won in the past and ensuring that we will continue to have our voices heard in Washington DC in the future?"

So here is where we are now. With a little over one-third of the PAC year already gone, the total stands at approximately \$6,500.00. Yes, it will be a challenge, but I believe together we can do it.

As I close, I want to remind everyone to make plans now to attend the Spring conference this March, being held at the Big Orange Moose in Black River Falls.

Plans are in the works for the return of the March Madness arcade basketball tournament plus other events for PAC night activities. Once again, if you contribute \$5.00 and fill out the contribution receipt you will be entered into a drawing to be held at the 2024 state convention. The winning name drawn will receive a prize with a value of 250.00 dollars. Just a reminder if you are a sustaining donor, you are automatically entered into this drawing and are eligible for a bonus drawing of a Yeti Tumbler.

One last note, for individual totals please check the website around mid-January for the updated YTD numbers.

I want to wish everyone a very happy New Year and I'm hoping to see you at the spring conference in March. Bob the WIRLCA PAC Guy



LOCAL UNIT SPRING MEETING DATES

<u>County</u>	<u>Board Member</u>	<u>2024 Schedule</u>
Oconto	Beth	4/24/2024
Cal-Man-She	Kim	4/9/2024
Tri-County	Beth	3/28/2024
Dodge	Kayla	4/17/2024
Grant/Iowa	Jason	3/27/2024
Price/Taylor	Jesse	4/18/2024
RWLG Stateline	Lisa	4/9/2024
Winnebago	Kim	TBA
Fond du Lac/Green Lake	Kim	4/11/2024
Marathon/Clark	Jesse	4/3/2024
Lincoln/Langlade	Beth	4/23/2024
Northern Waters	Erica	4/13/2024
Dane	Lisa	4/7/2024
MAC Unit	Kayla	4/9/2024
Wood/Portage	Lisa	4/18/2024
Crawford	Jason	4/17/2024
Marinette	Beth	4/18/2024
Vernon	Jason	4/25/2024
Outagamie	Beth	4/19/2024
Dunn	Erica	4/17/2024
Barron/Washburn	Erica	4/4/2024
Pierce/Pepin	Jesse	4/14/2024
Jefferson	Lisa	4/2/2024
Waupaca	Kim	4/16/2024
Ozaukee/Washington	Kim	4/18/2024
Brown/Shawano	Beth	4/10/2024
Driftless	Jason	TBA
St Croix	Erica	4/16/2024
Buffalo/Tremp/Jackson	Jesse	4/24/2023
Door/Kewanee	Kim	4/17/2024
Waushara	Kim	TBA
Racine/Kenosha	Kayla	4/4/2024
Polk/Burnett	Erica	4/10/2024
Sauk/Richland	Jason	4/23/2024
Milwaukee/Waukesha	Kayla	4/24/2024
Chippewa/Eau Claire	Jesse	4/9/2024

***WATCH YOUR MAILBOXES FOR INFORMATION
FROM YOUR LOCAL SECRETARY***

NEW MEMBERS

10/26/23-1/1/24

ANDREW, JEREMIAH	GREEN BAY	HICKS, MICHAEL	PEMBINE	ROSE, THOMAS J	EAU CLAIRE
ANTONUK, ADAM M	MADISON	HOEFT, JONATHAN R ^	STOUGHTON	ROSENDAHL, SCOTT A	
ARNHART, DEVLIN C	MOSINEE	HUSTON, MICHELE J	MERRILL		WINNECONNE
ASHMORE, DAVID	LAND O' LAKES	JOHNSON, CHRISTOPHER T	HURLEY	ROSKOS, LETA K	INDEPENDENCE
BABCOCK, DANIEL C	TOMAHAWK	JOHNSON, RENEE M ^	IOLA	RUPLINGER, KEVIN P	MARATHON
BALTHAZOR, JASON J		KALMON, MARK A	MEDFORD	SCHLUETER, JEFFREY H	HUDSON
	WISCONSIN RAPIDS	KANNEBERG, DANA L	PITTSVILLE	SCHNEIDER, KEVIN K	COTTAGE GROVE
BARTIZAL, DAVID #	HUDSON	KAROW, LACEY E	HAYWARD	SCHROETTER, ROCHELLE M #	
BERNETZKE, JANET L	CRIVITZ	KASENO, CHRISTOPHER A ^			DOUSMAN
BIONDO, MARGARET KAT	DOUSMAN		CHIPPEWA FALLS	SCHWAB, DANIEL LAKE	GENEVA
BLUMENSCHNEIN, DANIEL I	MAUSTON	KNAPP, HELEN	SAUK CITY	SHAW, ZACHARIAH R	CLINTONVILLE
BOSTROM, SHARLA K ^	EAU CLAIRE	KOEHNKE, LAURA J	RANDOLPH	SKATTEBO, KEVIN L ^	MANITOWOC
BUCKINGHAM, JANICE	MAZOMANIE	KOLONICK, DANIEL J	WAUPACA	STAMMEN, ALEXANDRA L	COLOMA
BUR, COLLEEN	APPLETON	KRAEMER, DIANN L	MAZOMANIE	STEINBERG, JAMES R	OSHKOSH
BURMEISTER, WAYNE	DE PERE	KREKLOW, ZACHARY D *	PORTAGE	STELLMACHER, ASHLEY J	SUAMICO
BURT, JESSICA R	GREEN BAY	KRUEGER, SUSAN J #	OREGON	STEVENSON, CHARLOTTE E	
BUSKE, ALICIA	WATERTOWN	KUDRICK, WANDA J	SURING		PEWAUKEE
BUSS, AARON	MUSKEGO	LAKE, BRANDON H	DE PERE	SWANSON, VICTORIA M ^	CHETEK
CANNON, TIMMY A	HAYWARD	LARSON, RYAN	SOMERSET	THAO, CHENG	KAUKAUNA
CARNES, LISA M	NEW RICHMOND	LASCO, QUINN	MANITOWOC	THEBO, LANCE J	APPLETON
CARRASCO, ANTHONY J	OCONTO FALLS	LEHNARTZ, ABRAM J	COLFAX	THIBEDAU, NATHAN R ^	EAU CLAIRE
CIZMAN, CARRIE E	PULASKI	LYNUM , ANTHONY P	BALDWIN	THOMPSON, COLIN M ^	RIPON
COLE, ALICIA	OWEN	MACKEY, HEATHER L	MC FARLAND	THOREN, JEFF #	WAUTOMA
CONDE, BRUCE R	LUCK	MADLON JR, GREGG A ^	CHETEK	TRAVIS, AARON J	OSHKOSH
CONRAD, TIM R	MILTON	MAGGI, CHAD	RICE LAKE	TRICKER, DANIEL K	GRANTSBURG
DAGEL, MICHAEL	MOSINEE	MALSH, SCOTT D	MUSKEGO	TURNER, KENNETH M	OSHKOSH
DAVIS, DONNA M	SCHOFIELD	MCALOON, RYAN D	HUDSON	VAN HEERTUM, DAVID R	GREEN BAY
DELANEY, DANIELLE L *	BALSAM LAKE	MCCARVEL, MIKE	RICHLAND CENTER	VANDER ZANDEN, TANNER M	
DEVRIES, BRITTANY	PHILLIPS	MCGINITTY, ANTHONY	PULASKI		KAUKAUNA
DRONE, DAN J	SPRING GREEN	MICHIELS, MARK	WOODRUFF	VICKERS, PATRICIA L	STANLEY
DUCHOW, BRYANT	PULASKI	MOREY, DYLAN	STEVENS POINT	VISHAWAY, MEGHAN R	LADYSMITH
DUROVY-MEEKER, JULIE	HAYWARD	NEUMAIER, KARENA	MADISON	WARREN JR, SHAWN M	MARSHFIELD
EGGER, MEGAN E	MONROE	OLINGER, MICHELLE L	HAYWARD	WILSON, COURTNEY R	
EMERSON, MICHAEL	RACINE	ORTIZ, JOSE L	INDEPENDENCE		OCONTO FALLS
ENDTHOFF, JARED M	WAUPUN	PARNHAM, KUMIKO	LODI	WILSON, JOSH	OSHKOSH
FALSTAD, ANDREW P	SPOONER	PAURA, JEFFREY	KENOSHA	WILSON, WILLIE R	GERMANTOWN
FORRESTAL, SHERRY A	LUCK	PENNINGTON, MARTHA		XIONG, VONG	WAUSAU
FRANK, DANIEL C	HAZEL GREEN		COTTAGE GROVE		
FREDERICK I, RACHEL A	WILD ROSE	PETERS, JEFFREY T	DURAND		
GODBOUT, REESE E #	SUPERIOR	PISCITELLO, DIXIE L	PLOVER		
GOEBEL, HEATH N	MONROE	PORTER, BROOKE M	NEILLSVILLE		
GROSS, ALISA	COLEMAN	PROSKI, JAKE J	GREEN BAY		
GUEx, MICHAEL S #	CLINTONVILLE	RACKOWSKI, JOHN	MANITOWOC		
GULTCH, CHRISTINA	DELAVAN	RASNICK II, CARL S	STEVENS POINT		
HAYS, JAIME	ANTIGO	REHBERG, GLENN ^	CHIPPEWA FALLS		
HELFRICH, MICHAEL W	DELAVAN	RIES, BERNADETTE	CEDARBURG		

*=REGULAR CARRIER

#=ARC

^=PTF

ALL OTHERS=RCA

OH, how time flies! Moving from the year 2023 AD into the New Year 2024 AD time can be for or against us, it can be not long enough or too long depending on the situation at hand.

I was once told by an elderly person, ***"Time goes by faster the older you get."*** As I progress in getting older I'm starting to believe those words. So as the New Year starts out, do we feel content with what happened in the old year 2023 AD or still struggling with the past; relationships, our work, our life in general, etc.?

There are a few quotes about being content, I found, that I'd like to share with you throughout this article:

"To be content doesn't mean you don't desire more. It means you're Thankful for what you have and patient for what's to come."

Tony Gaskins

"True contentment is not having everything, but in being satisfied with everything you have."

Oscar Wilde

Contentment should bring Peace of Mind and Positivity that encourages Growth and Self-Improvement. Such as:

- Happiness; While happiness is typically characterized by a more intense and fleeting emotion, contentment is a long-lasting, more stable sense of peace and satisfaction.
- Stronger Relationships; *"Blessed is the influence of one true, loving human soul on another."* **George Eliot**
- Distinguishing wants and needs. Are our wants bigger than our needs?
- Even Simplicity, to name a few. *"Enjoy the little things in life, for one day you may look back and realize they were the Big Things."*

Robert Breault

**CARLA FREYMILLER-
CHAPLAIN**



Do we feel Grateful and Content?

In an old book, I once read: *"I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or want. I can do all this through the One who gives me strength."*

By being content we are accepting whatever situation we are in by being in an emotional state of satisfaction, or by being at ease in body and mind with what we have.

Enjoy every moment and cherish each day!

Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for.

Being content with what we have, can only bring value and less stress to your life!

Let's be more content with having a less stressful life, by adding much more value to our lives in the 2024 New Year!

May God Richly Bless All Rural Letter Carriers and their Families in the 2024 New Year!!!!!!
STAY SAFE AND HEALTHY!

Recently deceased carriers "Gone but not forgotten"
OUR SYMPATHIES TO THE FAMILIES AND CO-WORKERS

SANDRA LAMBRECHT	6/25/2023	ROBERT HAHN	11/14/2023
NANCY AMDAHL	9/17/2023	LOIS RIEMER	11/19/2023
BRAD FLANAGAN	9/27/2023	ROBERT MUNGER	11/20/2023
COLLEEN WAGNER	10/17/2023	WILLIAM MECHENICH	11/23/2023
HAROLD GULLICKSON	10/24/2023	JANET BELONGIA	11/27/2023
JOHN LENZ	11/3/2023		

WISCONSIN DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE– Greg Dietzler



It appears that the USPS has set another record for parcel delivery over the holidays.

It is hard to fathom how it was accomplished with the depleted workforce and a leave replacement shortage of epic proportions. The massive number of hours worked has not only presented a safety issue but has also created conflict in the workplace.

The number of carriers that have shared stories of harassment, intimidation, bullying, and threats is upsetting to hear. There has been increased hostility in the offices over the holidays and the work environment has reached new lows. The lack of workforce and the push to 'make the numbers' does not give management a pass to treat carriers unprofessionally or abuse their authority. Both the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace (J-4.40) and the Postal Service's Policy on Workplace Harassment signed by Louis DeJoy on July 1, 2021, are contractually enforceable agreements that are cited through Article 19.1.

These documents are included in this issue and **need** to be posted on your bulletin board and should be referenced when issues occur. How successful a manager is in working with postal workers goes a long way in determining whether the goals of the Postal Service are attained. In section 229.4 of the USPS Management Manual—M-38, it says, *"The National Agreement is a contract that governs management and employees in their dealings with each other. However, it is the front-line manager who controls management's attempt to maintain an atmosphere... Which assures mutual respect of each other's rights and responsibilities."*

Knowing this, what exactly constitutes an

improper workplace environment?

Since the relationship between the supervisor and employee is inherently unequal, an employee confronted by a supervisor with behavior that a reasonable person would find offensive, is the victim of workplace intimidation and bullying. Examples of this may include but are not limited to—yelling, name-calling, profanity, sarcasm, belittling, spreading malicious rumors, gossip or innuendos that are not true, inappropriate language, undermining or deliberately impeding a person's work, or even constantly changing work guidelines or expectations (including withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information). The offense is aggravated if it occurs in front of co-workers or a third person, such as a postal customer. Such behavior violates the joint agreement and can subject a supervisor to discipline.

If this is occurring, there are some things you should do.


- ⇒ Firmly tell the person that his or her behavior is not acceptable and ask them to stop. You can ask a steward or witness to be with you when you approach the person.
- ⇒ Keep a factual journal of daily events and record: The date, time, and what happened in as much detail as possible; the names of witnesses, and the outcome of the event. It is not just the nature of the incidents, but the number, frequency, and especially the pattern that can reveal the bullying or harassment.
- ⇒ **Do not retaliate.** You do not want to risk being seen as the perpetrator and it will most certainly cause confusion for those responsible for evaluating and responding to the situation.

(Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

⇒ If you believe that you have been subject to improper treatment in the workplace, contact your local steward for help. If you do not have one, please consider running to become one.

The joint statement can be enforced by filing a grievance. No one should be scared to go to work.



JOINT STATEMENT ON VIOLENCE AND BEHAVIOR IN THE WORKPLACE

We all grieve for the Royal Oak victims, and we sympathize with their families, as we have grieved and sympathized all too often before in similar horrifying circumstances. But grief and sympathy are not enough. Neither are ritualistic expressions of grave concern or the initiation of investigations, studies, or research projects.

The United States Postal Service as an institution and all of us who serve that institution must firmly and unequivocally commit to do everything within our power to prevent further incidents of work-related violence.


This is a time for a candid appraisal of our flaws and not a time for scapegoating, fingerprinting, or procrastination. It is a time for reaffirming the basic right of all employees to a safe and humane working environment. *It is also the time to take action to show that we mean what we say.*


We openly acknowledge that in some places or units there is an unacceptable level of stress in the workplace; that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of violence or any threats of violence by anyone at any level of the Postal Service; and that there is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats, or bullying by anyone.


We also affirm that every employee at every level of the Postal Service should be treated at all times with dignity, respect, and fairness. The need for the USPS to serve the public efficiently and productively, and the need for all employees to be committed to giving a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, does not justify actions that are abusive or intolerant. *"Making the numbers" is not an excuse for the abuse of anyone.* Those who do not treat others with dignity and respect will not be rewarded or promoted. Those whose unacceptable behavior continues will be removed from their positions.

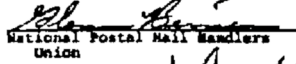
We obviously cannot ensure that however seriously intentioned our words may be, they will not be treated with winks and nods, or skepticism, by some of our over 700,000 employees. But let there be no mistake that we mean what we say and we will enforce our commitment to a workplace where dignity, respect, and fairness are basic human rights, and where those who do not respect those rights are not tolerated.


Our intention is to make the workroom floor a safer, more harmonious, as well as a more productive workplace. We pledge our efforts to these objectives.



D.C. Nurses Association



Federation of Postal Police Officers

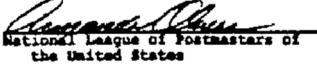

National Association of Letter Carriers

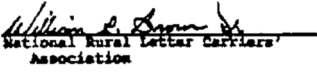

National Postal Mail Handlers Union


United States Postal Service


National Association of Postal Supervisors


National Association of Postmasters of the United States


National League of Postmasters of the United States


National Rural Letter Carriers' Association

Dated: February 14, 1992

PLEASE POST ON BULLETIN BOARDS IN ALL INSTALLATIONS



July 1, 2021

Postal Service's Policy on Workplace Harassment

The United States Postal Service® (Postal Service™) is committed to providing a work environment free of harassment based upon race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity including transgender status), national origin, age (40 or over), mental or physical disability, genetic information, uniformed (military) service, or in reprisal for an employee's or applicant's complaint about, or opposition to, discrimination or participation in any process or proceeding designed to remedy discrimination. The Postal Service's workplace must be one in which all employees are treated with dignity and respect by supervisors, subordinates, and coworkers. Supervisors and managers will take prompt action to prevent, address, and remedy workplace conduct that is contrary to this policy.

Prohibited Activities

Harassment is unwelcome verbal or physical conduct, which is so severe or pervasive that it interferes with or changes the conditions of one's employment by creating a hostile, intimidating, or abusive working environment. Examples may include, but are not limited to, making offensive or derogatory comments or engaging in physically threatening, intimidating, or humiliating behavior based upon race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity including transgender status), national origin, age (40 or over), mental or physical disability, genetic information, past, present, or future uniformed (military) service, or in reprisal for an employee's or applicant's complaint about or opposition to discrimination or participation in any process or proceeding designed to remedy discrimination. These activities are prohibited by the Postal Service's policy and may amount to harassment in violation of federal antidiscrimination laws. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. The Postal Service is committed to providing its employees a safe, productive, and inclusive workplace and will tolerate nothing less.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature such as, but not limited to, making or threatening to make employment decisions based on an employee's submission to, or rejection of, sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; deliberate or repeated unsolicited remarks with a sexual connotation or physical contact of a sexual nature that is unwelcome to the recipient; or behavior that creates a sustained hostile or abusive work environment so severe or pervasive that it unreasonably interferes with or changes the conditions of one's employment.

Although not every instance of inappropriate behavior may fit the legal definition of harassment, such behavior in the workplace undermines morale and violates the Postal Service's standards of conduct. Disciplinary action may result even if the conduct does not constitute harassment under the law.

Management Responsibility

All managers and supervisors are responsible for preventing harassment and inappropriate behavior that could lead to illegal harassment, and must respond promptly when they learn of any such conduct. Any manager or supervisor who receives a complaint must see that a prompt and thorough investigation is conducted. Investigations of all forms of harassment must be done in

accordance with the "Initial Management Inquiry Process (IMIP)." Materials are available in Publication 552, *Manager's Guide to Understanding, Investigating, and Preventing Harassment*. When harassment or inappropriate conduct is found, managers must take prompt and effective corrective action.

Employees' Rights and Responsibilities

Postal Service employees who believe that they are the victims of harassment prohibited under this policy (i.e., harassment based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity including transgender status), national origin, age (40 or over), mental or physical disability, genetic information, uniformed (military) service, or in reprisal for an employee's or applicant's complaint about or opposition to discrimination or participation in any process or proceeding designed to remedy discrimination) or who have witnessed such harassment or inappropriate conduct, should bring the situation to the attention of a supervisor, a manager, or the manager of Human Resources. Refer to Publication 553, *Employee's Guide to Understanding, Preventing, and Reporting Harassment* for further information. In accordance with this policy, supervisors, managers, managers of Human Resources, or the next higher level manager (HQ and HQ-field units) are responsible for ensuring that direct and prompt action is taken to investigate and, where appropriate, remedy such misconduct when brought to their attention. The Postal Service will protect the confidentiality of harassment complainants to the fullest extent possible.

Employment discrimination or reprisal for engaging in an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)-protected activity is prohibited. Employees may request pre-complaint counseling through the online Postal Service EEO efile application at <https://efile.usps.com> or in writing by providing their name, Social Security or employee identification number, address, and telephone number to: National EEO Investigative Services Office-EEO Contact Center, Post Office Box 21979, Tampa, FL 33622-1979. In addition, bargaining unit employees may seek relief through the relevant grievance-arbitration procedures, and if applicable, non-bargaining unit employees may use the grievance procedures described in Section 652.4, *Employee and Labor Relations Manual*.

Allegations involving any possible criminal misconduct should, at a minimum, be reported to law enforcement authorities as follows: any physical misconduct relating to workplace harassment (i.e., any physical assault, threat of a physical assault, or stalking) should be reported to the United States Postal Inspection Service® (USPIS®); use of any electronic device, computer, or Internet to transmit threatening or harassing communications, obscene or indecent images and materials, should be reported to the Office of Inspector General (OIG).

Reprisal against employees who raise a claim of harassment, report inappropriate conduct, or provide evidence in any investigation is illegal and can result in disciplinary action, and should be referred to the USPIS or OIG, as appropriate.

The Postal Service does not tolerate any type of harassment, inappropriate conduct, or reprisal in the workplace.



Louis DeJoy

WISCONSIN ASSISTANT DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE- LOUAN FRIEND



Hiring and Retention

We are exhausting our current employees, both regular and relief.

We have routes being split daily or not being delivered but every three days or worse. Routes are overburdened like never before, many well beyond the 57:36 hours of a 48-hour evaluation, and with peak season it is worse than ever right now. The Postal Service has a new adjustment process to go with RRECS that will be deployed after the first of the year. It has been tested throughout the nation and our engineers are reviewing the formulas being used to ensure the accuracy. 'Right-sizing' our routes will lighten our days and help our newly hired replacement carriers who are learning to carry our routes, too.

The hiring system is not what any of us think it should be but it is not a negotiated item in our contract. It is what we have to work with. It is management's job to hire!

It is our job to hold management accountable for hiring.

During our last contract negotiations an LOU (Letter of Understanding) was signed regarding the proper measures to be taken to fulfill the obligations outlined in Article 30.2.A.2, *"The Employer shall make every effort to expeditiously fill leave replacement vacancies when they occur. Regular rural carriers shall have a right to require that a leave replacement be assigned to their route."*

How do we hold management accountable for hiring?

One—Officially request a leave replacement be hired/assigned for your route. A sample form is located on the "[Wisconsin District Representative](#)" page of the wirlca.org website. Remember, as with all documents given to management, KEEP A COPY FOR YOURSELF.

Two—After the nationally agreed-to 120 days, if no leave replacement was hired, file a grievance on the failure to hire. An example of line 4 (issue) of the grievance form: *Did management violate the National Agreement when failing to fulfill the 120-day letter?*

Remember to properly have a step 1 discussion with management to initiate the grievance. Have management initial 3b to verify the discussion took place and make two copies of the grievance form. Leave a copy with management, keep a copy for your records, and mail the original to your representative.

The results of both of the above steps is to hire leave replacements. If management fails to hire and the grievance is filed, we then have good language at Step 2 to create a(nother) PTF position for the office, if applicable. This is not a perfect fix. We all want a relief carrier on our routes so we can all get a day off. At least a PTF position requires the Postal Service to pay a benefit package. The PTF begins their career and their retirement. This is at a cost over and beyond what it would cost the Postal Service to simply hire more relief carriers.

(Continued on page 20)

Other grievance issues that can be filed would be;

Did management violate the National Agreement when failing to make every effort to fill leave replacement vacancies?

Did management violate the contract when not maintaining an active hiring list in eCareers for vacant relief carrier positions?

While hiring leave replacements is entirely on management. Retention of these newly hired relief carriers is an effort that both management and craft can influence. Our current contract has multiple articles to retain/protect the new relief carrier, such as:

- Article 9.2.I.1 states that a newly appointed relief carrier will be paid the greater of the actual hours worked or the evaluation of the route (up to 40 hours) for the first 5 pay periods of employment.
- A new clause, Article 9.2.I.2 states that a newly appointed leave replacement will work only in the assigned office for the first two pay periods in that office. The leave replacement will serve only the primary assignment and may also deliver parcels on any rural route, on Sundays and holidays in the assigned office during these pay periods. This is to prevent our newly appointed relief carriers from being bounced from one route to another let alone one office to another.
- Article 9.2.I.3 allows for newly appointed craft employees or leave replacements assigned to more than one route to be allowed a reasonable period with pay to become familiar with the route and proficient.
- Article 9.2.I.4 allows a leave replacement being utilized on a route which he/she is serving for the first time or has not served in the past 12 months will be paid the greater of the actual hours worked or the evaluation of the route.

During this Christmas season, a regular carrier can provide Christmas assistance. This is

assistance provided by the regular carrier on his/her relief day while a replacement carrier is assigned to work the full route. This allows a regular carrier, with management's approval, to help a relief carrier get out on the street timelier and complete the route earlier.

Currently, there is also an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding), in place through March 8, 2024, that allows a regular carrier to volunteer to perform services on Sundays or provide auxiliary assistance on other routes in the office.

As regular carriers who would like our relief days off and leave requests approved and relief carriers who simply want relief, it is to all of our advantage to help as much as we can to make every day a positive experience for the newly hired relief carrier. A simple 'good morning' or 'hang in there it'll get better every day' may be the difference in them returning for another day or not. As more seasoned employees, we can help them organize and deliver more efficiently and know their contractual rights. How to best keep track of their time at work and read their paycheck to be sure they are paid correctly and what to do if they are not.

I honestly don't know which one; hiring or retention, is our biggest problem. When we finally get a new replacement carrier in the office, they are overwhelmed with too many hours and do not stay. Then the next one doesn't get enough hours and takes a job somewhere else.

As much as I want to say this is totally a Postal problem, we must understand this is our society today. People can make good money from home on their computers or phones. They simply don't want or need to go to work in all weather for an undetermined amount of time. Not everyone is meant to be a rural carrier. It is not an easy job but it is a good career. We all can do our best to educate them and make it a positive experience so that they want to stay and make a career with us as rural carriers.

Respectfully submitted,
Louan Friend, ADR

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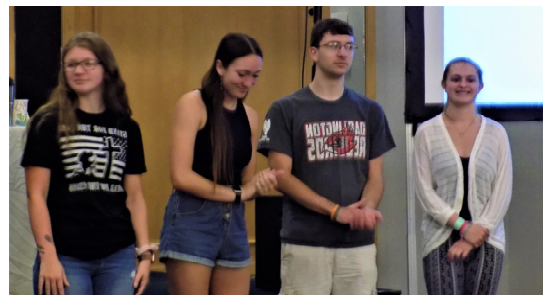
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Jasmine Pingel
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608-344-8989



National Auxiliary Program – 2023-24 – Julie Houston, President Auxiliary NRLCA

A PROGRAM OF PATRIOTISM

Humanitarian Project: THE HERO COMPANY

Symbol: Eagle with Flag Holding Envelopes

Americanism: Exercise your right to vote

Safety: PTSD Awareness

Song: "Stand by Me" by Ben E. King

Flower: Peonies and Hydrangeas

Inspiration: Patriotism is not short, frenzied outbursts of emotion, but the tranquil and steady dedication of a lifetime. – Adlai Stevenson II

A Program of Patriotism

Our NRLCA Auxiliary President, Julie Houston is dedicating this year's "Program of Patriotism" to our own Armed Forces Veterans Club of the NRLCA.

"THE HERO COMPANY" pairs shelter dogs and rescue dogs with veterans and first responders battling with PTSD. After 9/11, many veterans returned home with serious trauma from war. PTSD drastically changed their lives and way too many have even taken their lives. With no VA funding for service animals, many cannot afford the cost of the trained dogs that they need.

"THE HERO COMPANY" funds service and companion animals for these veterans suffering from PTSD at ZERO cost to them. Julie hopes that you will join her and the Auxiliary in raising funds for this very worthy company. We believe that our rural carrier family can make a difference in the lives of these heroes. <https://theherocompany.co>

If you would like to donate to this very worthy project, contact any WIRLCA Auxiliary Officer.

***** If a service dog without a person approaches you, it means the person is down and in need of help.***

Information for the Poster and Essay Contests for the Juniors is in this newsletter. We encourage your children and grandchildren to participate in these contests. The Wisconsin Auxiliary judges the entries and awards cash prizes. The posters and essays are then taken to the National Convention and judged there as well with another chance to win!

National Auxiliary Scholarship

Applications for the National Auxiliary Scholarships are due **postmarked no later than March 1, 2024**. Application forms and requirements for the eight available National Scholarships are available at www.NRLCA.org.

Under "menu", click on National and State Officers, click on NRLCA National Auxiliary, scroll past the list of Officers, and all available scholarships are listed. Click on each one individually for more specific details. These scholarships are not just for graduating high school seniors, those already in higher education may also apply. Read through the Eligibility Requirements and the Application Requirements Checklist for each available scholarship. Please completely fill in all requested information and include all other requested items listed. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

The Wisconsin State Scholarship Application Form is on the next three pages.

Applications for this scholarship are for graduating seniors and will be due June 1, 2024

Mail to: Tana Zeich Treasurer/Secretary

10828 W. Beloit Newark Rd. Beloit, WI 53511-8106

**WISCONSIN RURAL LETTER
CARRIERS AUXILIARY**

Tana Zeich, Secretary/Treasurer
10828 W Beloit Newark Rd.
Beloit, WI 53511

(Applicant's Name)

**SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FOR WIRLCA JUNIOR MEMBERS
ENTERING HIGHER EDUCATION AS A FRESHMAN**

Dear Applicant:

The WIRLCA Auxiliary is pleased to offer scholarships in the amount of \$500. Also, \$750 scholarships will be awarded to active (those participating at the State Convention) WIRLCA Juniors.

Eligibility for these scholarships is determined by parents/grandparents having membership in good standing in the NRLC Association and/or Auxiliary.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **Include an official transcript with Notary Seal** beginning with Grade Nine through the first semester of the Senior year. The grade point average must be 2.5 (C+) on a 4.0-point scale.
2. All spaces on the application **must be filled in.**
3. All applications **must be typed or neatly and legibly hand-printed in ink** to be considered.
4. All applications **must be postmarked no later than June 1, 2024.**
Any Application received with a postmark **later than June 1 will not be considered.**
5. **Mail your completed application (and all requested information) to:**
Secretary/Treasurer, WIRLCA Auxiliary
Tana Zeich
408 N. Pine St.
Orfordville, WI 53576
6. Applicant may include a recent photograph or high school senior picture of the applicant with this application. By including this photograph, the applicant is authorizing the WIRLCA to use this picture in our State Newsletter.

Scholarships will not be paid until the student has successfully completed the first semester (with a grade point average of 2.5 (C+ or higher on a 4.0-point scale) and enrolled for the second semester. **A letter including grades received for the first semester and a schedule of classes for the second semester must be sent to the Auxiliary Secretary/Treasurer by February 15, 2025.**

**SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FOR WIRLCA JUNIOR MEMBERS
ENTERING HIGHER EDUCATION AS A FRESHMAN**

Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip +4: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name of Rural Carrier Parent/Grandparent: _____ Postal ID or SS# _____

Check one: Regular Carrier___ Retired___ Substitute___ Widow(er) of Carrier___

Post Office where your Parent/Grandparent is/was employed: _____

Are your Parent/Grandparents members in good standing in: WIRLCA – Association Yes___ No___
WIRLCA – Auxiliary Yes___ No___

In what county are membership dues paid? _____

School of higher education you have been accepted into as a freshman: _____

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS COMPLETELY AS POSSIBLE

1. Have you participated in the WIRLCA Junior organization at State Conventions? If so, in what way?
2. Did you receive any academic honors or awards during high school? If so, please list.
3. Did you participate in school-sponsored activities such as clubs, organizations, sports, etc.? If so, please list.
4. Have you participated in non-school sponsored activities? If so, please list.
5. Please list any hobbies, special interests, or talents you have.

**SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FOR WIRLCA JUNIOR MEMBERS
ENTERING HIGHER EDUCATION AS A FRESHMAN**

On a separate sheet of paper, please submit the following information:

1. Your career goals.
2. Why you wish to pursue the career you have chosen.
3. Experiences you have had to date that might be relevant to your career goals.
4. Any other information about yourself that might be relevant to this application.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Father's Name (Please print): _____

Signature of Applicant's Father: _____

Mother's Name (Please print): _____

Signature of Applicant's Mother: _____

Date of Application: _____

Attach
Picture
Here

(Optional – Refer to #6
application instructions)

Thank you! Good Luck with Your Future!

Auxiliary of the National Rural Letter Carriers Association Junior Contest

All essays and posters must be on, or attached to a letter-sized manilla folder.

There is no requirement as to how many sides of the folder you use, but you must be able to fold the folder. Each entry must have the following information legibly written on the back of the folder:

- Name and address
- Date of birth, age as of 8/1/24
- Name of parent or grandparent
- State in which dues are paid

Entries with incomplete or incorrect information will be disqualified.
All entries will be judged on originality, neatness, grammar, and spelling.

AGE 6-7: Design a Poster
How police officers and firefighters help us.

AGE 8-9: Design a Poster
How service dogs can help veterans and first responders.

AGE 10-11: Design a Poster
How we can support our military.

AGE 12-14: Design a Poster
What the Eagle stands for in the United States.

AGE 15-17 Essay:
What does the phrase "Never look down on anyone, unless you are helping them up" mean to me?

AGE 18-20 Essay:
How my vote can make a difference.

SPECIAL NEEDS: Design a Poster. Service and Shelter Dogs

These entries can be brought to the State Convention or sent to:

Tana Zeich

10828 W Beloit Newark Rd.

Beloit, WI 53511

ARMED FORCES VETERANS' CLUB

Hopefully, everyone had an enjoyable holiday season. The lack of ice and snow for the most part should have made delivering the mail easier. The best Christmas delivery season I ever had was a year like this with no snow or ice. Compare that to years when I would get stuck, have to dig myself out, and continue on. Sometimes I would have to trek through knee-deep snow to deliver parcels.

The [Wreaths Across America](#) event was held on December 16th and was also easier this year because of the lack of snow, although a coating of snow does make the wreaths stand out a lot more.

AFVC members, shown in the picture on the right, attended the ceremony at the Northern Wisconsin Veterans' Memorial Cemetery located near Spooner, Wisconsin.

Another venue was the South New Hope cemetery in Portage County. Four veterans (including AFVC President-Roger Dobbe), attended the event and are pictured in the archway to the church and cemetery, below. The four wreaths above the arch and the two on each side have miniature flags featuring the US flag, POW/MIA flag, and the flags of the six armed forces branches, including the newest, the Space Force.

Again we would like to invite any WIRLCA members who are not currently Armed Forces Veterans' Club members to consider joining our club. You do not have to be a veteran; spouses are also eligible to join. Information about joining is provided in the box, below right.



Pictured L-R: Back row-Jimmy Brenenstall, Jim Loenser. Middle row-Sandy Henkel, Marilyn LaPorte-AFVC Secretary/Treasurer, Sue Lindenfelser, Grace Lindenfelser. Front-Drew Brenenstall.

Photo courtesy of Marilyn LaPorte.



L to R: President- Roger Dobbe, Vice President- Donald Koch, Secretary/Treasurer- Marilyn LaPorte

Note: Donations to the AFVC scholarship fund are accepted year-round!

Make your checks out to;

WI Armed Forces Veterans Club

Mail your check to;

Marilyn LaPorte, AFVC Secretary/Treasurer

PO Box 591

Spooner, WI 54801-0591

715-520-0352

Recent Retirees

CONGRATULATIONS

ANDERSON, DANE R
ANDERSON, KEVIN D
ANDERSON, ROSE M
ATWOOD, RUTH E
BISHOP, CATHY L
BOHNEN, JODI A
BOPP, CONSTANCE M
BOWELL, TIM J
EBERT, DALE V
ERTL, CHRISTINE M
FILBER, PAUL A
FISCHER, DAVID F
GROTEGUT, KIM M
HALL, RICHARD L

ELLSWORTH
WOODVILLE
CLINTONVILLE
BRISTOL
LODI
EAGLE RIVER
BELOIT
SPRING VALLEY
SPARTA
OWEN
GERMANTOWN
OSSEO
CLEVELAND
DE FOREST

HERZOG, MICHELL R
JULSON, BEVERLY M
KOPPLIN, WILLIAM J
KREBSBACH, KEITH E
KVALHEIM, EILEEN A
MCCABE, MARK G
PETERSEN, DEBRA L
REIMER, LINDA T
ROZEK, CAROL I
SVEUM, DONOVAN J
TAYLOR, JAMES E
WESTRICK RADTKE, SUSAN M
WYMORE, SUSAN E

LAKE GENEVA
OSSEO
WATERTOWN
ABBOTSFORD
MUKWONAGO
MADISON
FREDERIC
ANTIGO
GREEN BAY
STOUGHTON
WAUNAKEE
WATERTOWN
CORNELL

CONGRATULATIONS

So you're thinking about retiring?

First and foremost – **CONGRATULATIONS!!!!**

Please take note: There can sometimes be a difference between when you actually stop reporting to work and actually “retire” on paper.

Please wait until you have received your final “Form 50” with your retirement date.

Next (and this is important): To sign up for dues withholding from your annuity, you must **FIRST** provide us with your newly assigned “CSA” number. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) assigns this number during their processing of your retirement. We cannot process your application for dues withholding without it.

IF you should choose to pay “Cash” dues:

Regardless of when you start paying, it is an annual payment of \$109.00, payable by July 1st each year.

KeepingPosted.org
FOR RETIRED USPS EMPLOYEES

<https://www.keepingposted.org/>

USEFUL WEBSITES

LiteBlue	www.liteblue.usps.gov	Postal Regulatory Commission	www.prc.gov
USPS home	www.usps.com	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	
Office of Personnel Management	www.opm.gov		www.eeoc.gov
Thrift Savings Plan	www.tsp.gov	Government Accountability Office	www.gao.gov
USPS Office of Inspector General	www.oig.gov	National General Insurance	www.nationalgeneral.com
eOPF-Find your electronic personnel folder		Keeping Posted-website for retirees	
www.eopf.usps.gov/eOPF/jsp/essLogin.jsp			www.keepingposted.org
Department of Labor	www.dol.gov	Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	www.eap4you.com
Social Security Administration	www.ssa.gov	Rural Carrier Health Benefit Plan	www.rcbphealth.com
House of Representatives	www.house.gov	Wisconsin Rural Letter Carriers' Association	
United States Senate	www.senate.gov		www.wirlca.org
Congressional Record Resource	www.congress.gov	Ready.gov-Disaster Preparedness	www.ready.gov

CLASSIFIEDS

**Do you have a route vehicle to sell? Do you want to make a mutual transfer?
THEN ADVERTISE IT HERE!**
SEND REQUESTS TO editor@wirlca.org by the deadline listed on the back page

*Our personal and work life can become difficult
at times.*

*EAP-Employee Assistance Program
"it's more than you think"*

www.EAP4YOU.com

USPS EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
A Program You Can Trust



800-327-4968

(800-EAP-4-YOU) TTY: 877-492-7341
www.EAP4YOU.com

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

The WIRLCA uses the same address that you have on file with the USPS. Therefore, if you need to change your address, you have three options; **in addition to FIRST contacting the WIRLCA Assistant Secretary/Treasurer:**

1. Use PS Form 1216, Employee's Current Mailing Address. Send it to: HRSSC, Benefits/Compensation, PO Box 970400, Greensboro, NC 27497-0400.
2. Call the HRSSC at 877-477-3273, option 5. Validate your identity with your Employee ID number or USPS Pin, then option 9 to speak to a service representative who will assist you.
3. For carriers with PC access: Log on to Lite Blue using your EID and USPS Password Click on the Change of Address/Phone/Emergency Contact link under Employee Resources. Your current information will be displayed. To update your information, click the edit button, and you're on your way. Follow the prompts to review, confirm and save your changes.



WHO DO I CALL?



District Representatives (Stewards) & Assignments WISCONSIN DISTRICT

FULL-TIME DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE

Greg Dietzler
PO Box 101
Marshfield, WI 54449-0101
Phone: 715-533-0132
Email: Gregory.Dietzler@nrlca.org
All Zip Codes
Primary: 541, 543, 544

FULL-TIME ASSISTANT DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

Billie Jo Brieese
PO Box 692
Cushing, WI 54006-0692
Phone: 715-255-7754
Email: Billie.Brieese@nrlca.org
Assigned Zip Codes: 540, 545,
547, 548

Louan Friend
PO Box 33
Endeavor, WI 53930-0033
Phone: 608-745-2481
Email: Louan.Friend@nrlca.org
Assigned Zip Code Areas: 530,
535, 537,
539, 542

PART-TIME ASSISTANT DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

Amy Dorner
PO Box 2
Union Grove, WI 53182-0002
Phone: 262-853-1118
Email: Amy.Dorner@nrlca.org
Assigned Zip Code Areas: 531,
532, 534

Jonathan J Moore
PO Box 309
Reedsburg, WI 53959-0309
Phone: 608-851-0893
Fax: 844-425-1100
Email: Jonathan.Moore@nrlca.org
Assigned Zip Code Areas: 538,
546, 549

AREA STEWARDS

Brian Feltz
Phone: 715-254-9858
Email: BFeltz@tds.net
APO clusters assigned: Amherst,
Iola, Mosinee, Nekoosa, Plainfield,
Plover, Stevens Point, Waupaca

Debra Kalies
Phone: 920-842-2556
Email: debra.kalies@nrlca.org
Offices assigned: Bonduel,
Clintonville, Coleman, Crandon,
Keshena, Marinette, Niagara,
Oconto, Oconto Falls, Pembine,
Peshtigo, Pulaski, Shawano,
Suamico, Suring, Wittenberg

Kayla Kastenson
Phone : 262-822-1005
Email: kayla.kastenson@nrlca.org
Offices assigned: Burlington,
Delavan, Dousman, Kenosha Main,
Kenosha Annex, Lake Geneva,
Twin Lakes, Whitewater, Williams
Bay

YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION ON
WWW.WIRLCA.ORG/STEWARDS PAGE

THE NRLCA NATIONAL BOARD IS SEEKING QUALIFIED AND MOTIVATED MEMBERS INTERESTED IN THE
POSITION OF AREA STEWARD AND/OR ASSISTANT DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE NATIONAL
STEWARD SYSTEM-LOCAL STEWARDS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED

WIRLCA & NRLCA UPCOMING EVENTS

***SPRING CONFERENCE: March 9th and 10th, 2024**

THE BIG ORANGE MOOSE – BLACK RIVER FALLS

DOUBLE OR KING ROOMS ARE AVAILABLE TO BOOK NOW! \$96.00 + TAX PER NIGHT.

CALL 715-284-9471 AND REFERENCE THE WIRLCA FOR THE SPECIAL ROOM RATE

Saturday: Local Officer Training

Saturday Evening: PAC Hospitality Event

Sunday: Melissa Tarlton– USPS RRECS Facilitator

Watch www.wirlca.org for additional information and registration forms.

***LOCAL MEETINGS: March & April, 2024**

WATCH FOR NOTICES MAILED FROM YOUR LOCAL SECRETARIES

Meetings to be held in March and April

Plan on attending! This is the event to be nominated as a delegate to our State Convention. All members may attend the State Convention, but ONLY delegates may vote on business brought to the floor.

Don't forget to bring motions to your county unit meeting to designate funds to assist your members wishing to attend

Mid-States and conventions! A PERFECT WAY TO PAY YOURSELF!

Remember, local units that fail to have a full board may be in jeopardy of a merge with nearby units, resulting in meetings being further away from you!

***MID-STATES CONFERENCE: May 3rd – 5th, 2024**



DELTA MARRIOTT & MUSKEGON CONVENTION CENTER, MUSKEGON MI

ROOMS ARE OPEN NOW! USE THE QR CODE OR CALL 833-999-0181. USE CODE "MRL" TO RECEIVE THE DISCOUNTED RATE. ROOMS START AT \$139.00 + TAX/NIGHT.

This is the place to meet our National Board, receive updates, and attend various seminars.

The last day to book at convention rates is April 2, 2024!

Watch upcoming editions of the WIRLCA and national magazine for information and registration.

Remember, a maximum of \$5,000.00 will be shared equally among those members, who are not state officers, to attend at the Mid-States conference, with a maximum of \$250.00 to any individual.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER!

Mark your calendars!

Dates are set for 2024 NRLCA and WIRLCA-sponsored events.

Book hotel rooms early as they fill up fast!

It is highly recommended to get your leave slips in today!

DO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH:

- *EDITING NEWSLETTERS
- *AUDIO/VISUAL
- *INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
- *WEBSITE DESIGN
- *PARLIAMENTARY RULE
- *PUBLIC SPEAKING/LEGISLATIVE
- *CLERGY

IF SO, WE WOULD **LOVE** TO SPEAK WITH YOU!
OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE TO WIRLCA MEMBERS
EACH YEAR!

Contact President Kim Mac Donald
Email-kmacdonald@wirlca.org

***WIRLCA STATE CONVENTION: JUNE 21ST – 23RD, 2024**

RADISSON HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER, FOND DU LAC

ROOMS ARE AVAILABLE TO BOOK NOW! \$96.00 SINGLE/\$116.00 DOUBLE + TAX PER NIGHT. CALL 920-638-4175 TO RESERVE.

MENTION YOU ARE WITH THE WIRLCA FOR RATES

THIS IS WHERE CHANGE STARTS! WRITE YOUR RESOLUTION AND CONSTITUTION SUBMISSIONS NOW TO BE DEBATED ON THE FLOOR! DON'T KNOW HOW? ASK YOUR BOARD MEMBER OR STEWARD FOR HELP!

Interested in being on one of our numerous committees? Contact a board member now!

*WIRLCA will pay a maximum of \$15,000 to be shared equally among each delegate attending the State Convention for both days with a maximum of \$100 to any delegate seated by the credentials committee by the start of the business section. Delegates seated from the floor will receive a maximum payment of up to \$50. This is in addition to any reimbursements paid by your local unit.

**LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU
AT THE NEXT MEETING!**

Erica Kragness
PO Box 194
Colfax, WI 54730-0194

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ATTENTION– MEMBER PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS

The **NRLCA National Auxiliary** offers several college and graduate scholarships to spouses, children, and grandchildren of NRLCA members.

Scholarship applications for 2024 are available for download at

<https://www.nrlca.org/Content/NRLCANationalAuxiliary>

All applications must be postmarked by **March 1, 2024**.

Please read instructions for each scholarship carefully, as requirements differ for each one.

Deadline for next issue: February 21, 2024

If you have a vehicle for sale, transfer request or a story/picture you would like to share, please do so and we will gladly publish them, space permitting. Send to editor@wirlca.org

COMING EVENTS

Jan. 15 (H) —Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Jan. 15 —National Freedom Day

Feb. 2 —Groundhogs Day

Feb. 2 —Groundhogs Day

Feb. 14—Valentines Day

Feb. 15 (WI observed)—Susan B. Anthony's B-Day

Feb. 19 (H)—Presidents Day

Mar. 1—Employee Appreciation Day

Mar. 9 & 10—Local Officer Training/Spring Conference

SureStay Best Western-Black River Falls

Upcoming Board Meetings

Mar. 8—SureStay Best Western-Black River Falls

***Please check website for most up to date information as dates /times and/or locations may be changed as needed.