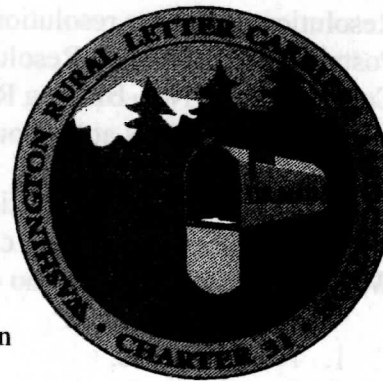


WASHINGTON RURAL CARRIER



Official Publication of the Washington Rural Letter Carriers' Association

April 2004

Where Service Begins With a Smile

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PRESIDENT AND ASSISTANT STATE STEWARD REPORT Patrica Alexander

AREA OFFICERS' MEETING MARCH 27-28, 2004



Clifford Dailing, National
Secretary-Treasurer, leads the
Area Officers' meeting

Elected State Officers and State Stewards from Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Wyoming met with NRLCA Secretary-Treasurer Clifford Dailing in Spokane on March 27-28, 2004, to discuss pending legislation, membership recruitment efforts, strategic planning for future needs of the Association, and negotiation issues. Thank you to those of you who attended the District Meetings and/or sent messages to me on what you would like to see in our contract. As you know, our contract expires in November 2004, and

negotiations will begin in earnest in September 2004, although I would imagine that our National Officers have been talking unofficially for several months with USPS Headquarters about issues.

Since the last contract, there have been 224 Non-Binding Resolutions passed at National Conventions. Non-Binding

Resolutions are those resolutions that must be agreed upon by two parties, such as the Union and the Postal Service. Binding Resolutions are those resolutions that can be acted on alone by the Union. Copies of these Non-Binding Resolutions will be on hand at our county meetings, as there is no need to present resolutions at the county level that have already been passed at the National level.

The 224 Non-Binding Resolutions needed to be prioritized, and fortunately, Washington State had plenty of feedback from rural carriers in our State. Let me list in prioritized format the items that Washington rural carriers who contacted your Board would like to see in our next contract:

1. No give backs.
2. No count without a contract.
3. Better standards for letters, flats, and parcels.
4. Opt Out should take two people agreeing one year, and only one agreeing the following year so that rural carriers would have a chance every other year to either count or not count, at their option, rather than management always being able to opt in our routes.
5. Mail count not in February-March, as even Western Area Vice President Sylvester Black has stated that February-March is a time of lower mail volume.
6. EMA increased. With gasoline prices edging toward \$2/gallon, and already reaching over \$2/gallon on the islands, 40 cents a mile is not enough.
7. Regular rural carriers should be allowed to work all the days of the mail count. Immediately after the mail count is over, the rural carriers will take all X days accrued during the mail count so that their leave replacements will be paid for these days. Reasoning: Leave replacements are often bullied during mail count. Some routes got only two mark ups when their leave replacements worked, and some loading time was only two or three minutes.
8. An increase in pay, and better medical and dental benefits.
9. Two 15-minute paid breaks each day. We are told we are 19 minutes under evaluation each day, and often the reason is that we are not paid for our breaks.
10. A leave replacement for every route.
11. Time worked as an RCA should count toward retirement.
12. Mail Count should be a snapshot of what we do, not a chance to take legitimate time away from our evaluations.
13. Go hourly as a last resort.
14. Retain our COLA.
15. NDCBU and CBU boxes should have the same credit as regular boxes.
16. Re-negotiate all time standards currently utilized and negotiate all "new" work that has evolved with the changes in mail and volumes (unloading, unwrapping, cutting plastic and plastic straps, withdrawal takes longer).
17. We need a true no-lay-off clause.
18. National standard for Edit Book time, including maintenance, similar to the 20 minute stamp stock allowance.
19. De-couple sick leave usage from the manager's Merit Pay.
20. RCAs should be hourly year round, since they are utilized so much for auxiliary assistance.
21. Counters need to be better trained.
22. The State Steward or an Assistant State Steward should attend every management count training. Without the Union's presence, there is a perception of the possibility of cheating by management.
23. J routes should be able to have days other than Saturday as their day off every other week.

24. Closed shop: Every rural carrier should be required to join the Union. In this way, our dues would be less.
25. Non-Union members should have to pay for representation.

You can see from the above list that Washington rural carriers thought long and hard about contract negotiations, and we were prepared for the Area Officers' Meeting. Clifford broke us into groups by states, and we were tasked to look through the 224 resolutions to prioritize them. The problem was that we were to choose a maximum of five items from each of the following eight categories: Economics, Leave Replacements, Work Rules, EMA, Vehicles, Mail Count, Time Standards, and the Evaluated System. We had two hours to accomplish this task. Listed below are the eight categories, and within those categories the Non-Binding Resolutions in priority order that the Washington State Board selected:

ECONOMICS

1. BE IT RESOLVED, That rural carriers receive Level 6 pay.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, That the rural carrier schedule be revised to eliminate Steps A, B, and C.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, That no disciplinary action be taken against a carrier involving approved sick leave.
4. BE IT RESOLVED, That in addition to the 30 minutes allocated for lunch, the rural carriers be given two (2) 10-minute paid breaks per day.
5. BE IT RESOLVED, That a rural carrier have the option after any mail count and at the beginning of the guarantee period to choose to be compensated under FLSA 7(a) or FLSA 7(b)(2).

LEAVE REPLACEMENTS

1. BE IT RESOLVED, That leave replacements receive any lump sum payment and/or rolled-in COLA at the same time as regular carriers.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, That RCAs be considered career employees by the USPS and therefore receive credit for time worked for retirement and leave.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, That newly-hired relief carriers be paid their actual hours worked or evaluated hours, whichever is greater, for the first 90 calendar days.
4. BE IT RESOLVED, That when an auxiliary route goes to six (6) or more hours per day for at least a year, the assigned leave replacement be eligible for the same health insurance benefits to which regular rural carriers are entitled.
5. BE IT RESOLVED, That during the Christmas period, RCAs will be compensated for actual hours worked or evaluated hours of the auxiliary route, whichever is greater.

WORK RULES

1. BE IT RESOLVED, That the USPS will fully compensate all stewards who handle grievances at Step 1 and Step 2.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, That all carriers shall receive a minimum of one (1) hour auxiliary assistance for every ten (10) hours of route evaluation for changing the complete set of case labels.

3. BE IT RESOLVED, That the Postal Service requires all management who deal with rural craft employees to attend forty (40) hours of initial training with sixteen (16) hours of annual training.
4. BE IT RESOLVED, That carriers will always have the option to case their DPS mail provided they will meet the last dispatch.
5. BE IT RESOLVED, That any 8127, or payroll adjustment processed, be itemized, and accompany the pay stub.

EMA

1. BE IT RESOLVED, That the NRLCA negotiate to increase EMA.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, That EMA be based on the daily average miles driving during a representative mail count, including to-the-door deliveries and attempted deliveries.

VEHICLES

1. BE IT RESOLVED, That the RHD vehicle incentive amount be increased and include the past three (3) model years, the incentive to include vehicles bought by any rural craft employee.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, That all rural carriers should have the option to choose a postal vehicle provided by the USPS.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, That the NRLCA shall request whenever the USPS negotiates nationwide price reductions and/or discounts for postal vehicles, that the same reductions and discounts shall be passed on to all rural craft employees who operate their own vehicles when delivering the U. S. Mail.

MAIL COUNT

1. BE IT RESOLVED, That any non-rigid article that does not fit in the letter or flat separation (where flat separations are used) with other mail without damage to the article or to other articles in the separation shall be considered a parcel.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, That all future National mail counts be conducted in September and consist of 24 working days, including the day after Labor Day.
3. BE IT RESOLVED, That extra time be allotted at mail count to perform removal of any shrink-wrap and bands.
4. BE IT RESOLVED, That all mail counts are conducted over a period of no less than four (4) weeks.
5. BE IT RESOLVED, That the NRLCA shall conduct a mail count in different parts of the country during the first two weeks of each month throughout the year for comparison purposes.

TIME STANDARDS

1. BE IT RESOLVED, That the carriers be compensated for redistributing, reloading, and unloading the vehicle, and returning equipment to the workstation or designation location.
2. BE IT RESOLVED, That the time standard for parcels be substantially increased

3. BE IT RESOLVED, That all centralized boxes be given 75 percent of the same time standard as regular boxes.
4. BE IT RESOLVED, That boxholders consisting of more than five (5) inserts or boxholders which have inserts larger than the outer cover are credited at 150% of the standard boxholder rate.
5. BE IT RESOLVED, That the time standards be returned to those used in the 2001 count.

EVALUATED SYSTEM

1. BE IT RESOLVED, That we maintain the evaluated pay system, but only as long as evaluations reflect a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.

As you can see, your State Board listened to you and recommended to the National Board those resolutions that we felt would help all of us the most.

The National Board should and does take direction from the resolutions that are passed by the delegates to National Conventions. The problem is that resolutions, as you can see from the greatly pared-down prioritized list from your State Board, come in a huge variety of subjects and scope. Some of the original 224 resolutions your State Board was tasked with thinning out and prioritizing would affect the entire craft, while others only dealt with narrowly defined issues. The National Board learned from the last arbitration that it is counterproductive to come to an arbitrator with too many issues. A much sounder strategy is to select a handful of wide-reaching issues which can be vigorously pursued and justified in negotiations and/or arbitration. It's not that the smaller issues are not important, but rather that if the National Board can only champion a limited number of issues, those issues need to be BIG ISSUES. All of us would be better served to craft BIG ISSUES to push up through the local levels to the National Conventions. If we want to have an effect on the future direction of NRLCA negotiations with the Postal Service, we need to think BIG and formulate resolutions that, if actually achieved in negotiations or arbitration, would have the maximum positive affect on as many rural craft employees as possible.

I wish that I could say that we shall achieve all of the resolutions listed above, but the process is called "negotiations" for a reason. The Postal Service has an agenda, and so do we, and agreeing is not always easy or even possible. Be assured, though, that our National officers will do their best to pursue the BIG ISSUES. After all, they are rural carriers, too, and after their terms are up as National officers, if they do not retire, then they will go back to their routes.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Alexander
Washington State President



Vice President's Report

Monte Hartshorn
Assistant State Steward



Participation Pays: The How and Why

I recently attended the District 2 meeting that was held to give our state's opinions on what is really important to rural carriers concerning our upcoming National negotiations. The really sad part was that only 25 carriers were there in a district with almost 600 members. That means only 4% of the members were speaking for all the members and non-members in the District. If you were not there, was your view point discussed? Were the issues concerning your pay and work life communicated to our National Officer? How would you know? With that opportunity now in the past, what can you do to make sure that your voice is heard?

Your next opportunity is your upcoming county meeting. These meetings are really critical because this is when we elect our State Convention delegates. We also submit, discuss and vote on resolutions and constitution/bylaws changes. These can have a direct impact on how we, as a union, do business. Resolutions are also submitted to the National board that control what they bargain with the Postal Service for. You must be elected at your county unit to have a vote at the State Convention. This year, the State Convention is being held in Bellingham during June. Do you think that going hourly might be discussed? The time credit for NDCBUs? The time credit for parcel delivery?

This year there is a change. Each and every elected delegate that attends the entire State Convention will receive some reimbursement for convention expenses. It is hoped that more members will attend and let their voices be heard. Some things that are commonly done at the state convention are:

- Election of State Officers.
- Setting of Dues.
- Labor Relations questions and answers.
- Networking between carriers. How are things done in other offices?
- District-Union discussions. What is the hot news?

The State Stewards and State officers are your union representatives to the Postal Service and National officers. Are they saying what you think? Do you know? The State Convention is one of the best opportunities to find out. You will have an opportunity to talk to your stewards, your State officers and a National officer on a one-to-one basis. Can you really afford to pass up this opportunity?

Another opportunity be heard is in the election of national convention delegates. Whether you run for a delegate spot or not, you need to know what each person you vote for believes. Did you know that only a quarter of our membership returns ballots for the election of National Delegate? At the National Convention, National dues, all the State resolutions and National officers are voted on. This year our National Agreement (contract) with the Postal Service expires in November. Resolutions that are passed at both the state and national conventions WILL BE part of the negotiations process. What is passed now could affect you personally for several years.

I know that many carriers are busy with family and other obligations and that attending union meetings can be difficult. Unfortunately, I have seen these same carriers get in to trouble because they did not know the “rules” (ELM, F-21, etc) that they were being held accountable to. In a few cases, there were removals that a little bit of knowledge would have prevented.

By not having your voice heard, and by not taking the opportunity to keep informed on matters concerning our craft, you are indeed putting your career at risk. Remember, we are all stronger together, and with the changes coming our way (DPS-flats, DPP, loss of federal benefits, loss of arbitration bargaining, PARS) we need to all be standing together. *If you did not know what DPP or PARS meant, can you afford to stay uninformed???*

Monte Hartshorn
Vice President
Assistant State Steward

State Secretary/Treasurer Rebecca Wendlandt's Report



Time to Mail In Your National Convention Delegate Nominating Ballot

If you want to be on the ballot for National Convention Delegate you need to mail me your National Convention Delegate Nominating Ballot (found in the February 14, 2004 issue of the National Rural Letter Carrier – and will be sent out again in the first issue of the month of the National Rural Letter Carrier for March, April, and May.)

Once I receive your nominating ballot I will send you a confirmation letter. If you don't receive this confirmation letter notify me immediately as I might not have received your ballot! On May 13, 2004 at 4 PM two members, whose name are not on the ballot, will draw for the order of listing on the ballot. This will take place at 4210 S Sunderland Drive, Spokane Valley, WA. Anyone is welcomed to attend and observe. The ballots will be mailed 20 days before State Convention and will be tallied at State Convention by the Tellers Committee.

Changes in Reimbursement of County Credentialed Delegates to State Convention

At the 2003 State Convention the delegates voted for a change in reimbursement for County Credentialed delegates to State Convention. The delegates still need to be credentialed by their respective counties, however the counties will no longer fund the delegates to attend State Convention. Here is how it reads now from our State Constitution and Bylaws:

ARTICLE XII (STATE CONVENTION MILEAGE AND ALLOWANCE)

SECTION 1 The WRLCA shall pay round trip mileage at 33 cents a mile to each county

credentialed regular delegate that attends all 3 days of the State Convention, provided that this shall in no way increase the total number of delegates to which each county unit is entitled, and also in compliance with section 3 of Article XII of the State Constitution and By Laws concerning mileage and allowance. The mileage will be computed using a current door-to-door computer mileage program.

SECTION 2 The WRLCA shall pay a State Convention allowance of \$250 to each county credentialed regular delegate that attends all 3 days of the State Convention, provided that this shall in no way increase the total number of delegates to which each county unit is entitled, and also in compliance with section 3 of Article XII of the State Constitution and Bylaws concerning mileage and allowance.

SECTION 3 The Board will set a total dollar cap at the first budget Board meeting of the year for the following State Convention allowance and mileage expense reimbursement. If the number of county credentialed regular delegates' reimbursement for State Convention allowance and mileage exceeds that set total dollar cap, each delegates' reimbursement will be reduced by an equal percentage to comply with the cap.

The board has set the cap at \$20,000 this year, so depending on how many county credentialed delegates attend will be how much the percentage is – if any. This was done so that all county credentialed delegates will receive a fair reimbursement to attend, not just the delegate at large and a few other delegates. This is your union, so come and vote, and voice your opinions and concerns.

Membership:

Comparing last year's membership to this years, shows about the same total members however a good jump in total of regular members!

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
Cash Pay Members:	63	69
Regular Dues Withholding	931	909
PTF Dues Withholding	6	4
Relief Dues Withholding	471	479
Retired Dues Withholding	267	280
Associate Dues Withholding	12	8
Membership in WA	1750	1749



Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca Wendlandt, Secretary/Treasurer

CHANGE OF ADDRESSES: If you have a change of address – please cut the label off of your paper and send it to me. Include with it your telephone number and email address if you have one. All of this information is being added to the new database. Be sure your employer has your correct mailing address on file for this is where we get our information. If it is not correct, please fill out a PS Form 1216 and ask your Postmaster to have the form sent, or ask your PM to use the office computer and do it on the USPS intranet.

Washington Rural Letter Carriers Association
Statement of Activities
 July 2003 through January 2004

	<u>Jul '03 - Jan '04</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>% of Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
400000 · Dues Income	244,280.50	320,000.00	76.3%
410000 · National General Insurance	23,229.00	30,000.00	77.4%
420000 · Reimbursements & Refunds	10,969.67	12,020.00	91.3%
Total Income	<u>278,479.17</u>	<u>362,020.00</u>	<u>76.9%</u>
Expense			
500000 · Per Capita Expenses	11,027.66	20,500.00	53.8%
520000 · Meetings and Conventions	25,551.93	57,500.00	44.4%
530000 · Equipment Fund	243.50		
550000 · Other Expenses	19,374.35	29,100.00	66.6%
610PA · President - P. Alexander	753.02	3,420.00	22.0%
620MH · Vice President - M. Hartshorn	757.58	1,100.00	68.9%
630RW · Sec/Treas. - R. Wendlandt	15,540.02	33,100.00	46.9%
640SH · Editor - Susie Hill	1,723.07	2,600.00	66.3%
645000 · Washington Rural Carrier (WRC)	2,787.05	4,450.00	62.6%
650RP · District 1 - R. Pike	1,037.42	1,900.00	54.6%
660AL · District 2 - A. Lamm	1,223.48	2,050.00	59.7%
670CF · District 3 - C. Freeman	757.58	1,900.00	39.9%
680DR · District 4 - D. Reppe	757.58	1,750.00	43.3%
691LW · Ret/Car PAC - L. Walker	0.00	200.00	0.0%
700CA · State Steward - C. Alexander	22,580.81	40,600.00	55.6%
705000 · Steward Training Expenses	7,090.10	5,700.00	124.4%
710JP · Senior Asst. Stew. - J. Peck	20,022.15	35,876.00	55.8%
730SJ · Asst. Stew. - S. Johnson	18,654.89	30,126.00	61.9%
740MH · Asst. Stew. - M. Hartshorn	6,391.28	11,368.00	56.2%
750PA · Asst. Stew. - P. Alexander	15,242.39	28,110.00	54.2%
770JP · Asst Stew - J. Patteson	17,343.86	26,750.00	64.8%
780PP · Asst Stew - P. Pitts	15,771.73	22,526.00	70.0%
880LS · Local Steward	245.33	1,000.00	24.5%
Total Expense	<u>204,876.78</u>	<u>361,626.00</u>	<u>56.7%</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>73,602.39</u>	<u>394.00</u>	<u>18,680.8%</u>
Other Income/Expense			
Other Income			
450000 · Interest Income	354.81	600.00	59.1%
Total Other Income	<u>354.81</u>	<u>600.00</u>	<u>59.1%</u>
Net Other Income	<u>354.81</u>	<u>600.00</u>	<u>59.1%</u>
Net Income	<u><u>73,957.20</u></u>	<u><u>994.00</u></u>	<u><u>7,440.4%</u></u>

Washington Rural Letter Carriers Association

Statement of Financial Position

As of February 29, 2004

Feb 29, '04

ASSETS**Current Assets****Checking/Savings**

101000 · Chkg - WA Trust Bank

809.88

102000 · Svgs - APCU

64,412.34

103000 · Chkg - Atlanta Postal Credit Un

1,137.86

Total Checking/Savings

66,360.08

Total Current Assets

66,360.08

Fixed Assets**150000 · Fixed Assets**

151000 · Office Equipment

18,451.19

159000 · Less Accum. Depr.

-14,273.00

Total 150000 · Fixed Assets

4,178.19

Total Fixed Assets

4,178.19

TOTAL ASSETS

70,538.27

LIABILITIES & EQUITY**Liabilities****Current Liabilities****Other Current Liabilities**

210000 · Payroll Tax Liabilities

210100 · 941 Employee Withholding Taxes

1,662.91

210200 · 940 (FUTA) Federal Unemployment

-41.46

Total 210000 · Payroll Tax Liabilities

1,621.45

250000 · Retirement Plan Payable

251000 · 401K Employer's Portion

315.04

252000 · 401K Employee's Portion

945.12

Total 250000 · Retirement Plan Payable

1,260.16

Total Other Current Liabilities

2,881.61

Total Current Liabilities

2,881.61

Total Liabilities

2,881.61

Equity

390000 · Unrestricted Net Assets

6,628.40

Net Income

61,028.26

Total Equity

67,656.66

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY

70,538.27

RESOLVING ISSUES WITH POSTAL MANAGEMENT

In a perfect world, there would be little need to worry about resolving issues or disputes. Rural carriers need not be told that the USPS is not a perfect world. With top level managers constantly predicting financial ruin from the continuing E-business erosion of the Postal Service's bottom line, and mid-level managers knee-jerking ever more severe hourly budgets, the fallout from the higher levels of the Company inevitably works its way down to those who touch the mail. From mail count base-lining, to leave denial, to discipline for accidents, conditions have never been better for disagreements between craft and management.

Every rural carrier needs to realize that when management gives an order, as long as that order is not patently harmful or dangerous to the employee or the people who will be affected by the employee's compliance with the order, the employee needs to follow the order first, and attempt to reverse and/or restore losses at a later date. **Every employee, not just stewards and Union officials, needs to understand the process for resolving disputes that inevitably occur in the workplace.** The responsibility for ensuring that management conforms to the rules and regulations set forth in the contract and relevant Postal manuals starts with each one of us as individuals. Stewards are facilitators of dispute resolution; they are not the personal servants or supervisors of either craft or management.

The five steps below should provide you with a procedure for dealing with conflicts and/or complaints between yourself and management. It is suggested that every rural craft employee keep a copy of these instructions in an accessible location at the Post Office. It is a rare individual indeed who will never have the opportunity and/or inclination to resolve an issue of contention with management.

DISCUSSING THE ISSUE AND/OR FILING A GRIEVANCE:

1. **Prior to meeting with your immediate supervisor to discuss your issue, it is suggested that you thoroughly review the attached "ISSUE RESOLUTION WORKSHEET"** This worksheet will walk you through the process of issue resolution and, if necessary, the filing of a grievance.
2. **If you are able to resolve your issue(s) through discussion with your immediate supervisor, that settlement should be documented on the attached "SETTLEMENT FORM."**
3. **Should the filing of a grievance become necessary, remember that the National Agreement requires that:** "Any employee who feels aggrieved must discuss the grievance with the employee's immediate supervisor within fourteen (14) days of the date on which the employee or the Union learned of its cause.
4. **If the issue remains unresolved, and you wish to file a grievance, verbally state to your immediate supervisor:** "Please consider my previous discussion of this unresolved issue as the beginning of Step 1 of the grievance process." **To make sure that your immediate supervisor understands that you are filing a grievance, it wouldn't hurt to state:** "I am hereby filing a grievance on the issue we just discussed and were unable to resolve."
5. **Once a grievance has been filed, your Steward Representative only has ten (10) days to complete the Step 1 process. It is therefore essential that the "ISSUE RESOLUTION WORKSHEET" be completed and given to your Steward Representative as soon as possible after a grievance has been filed. The information you provide on the "ISSUE RESOLUTION WORKSHEET" will help your Steward Representative complete the necessary paperwork for the Step 1 of the grievance process. Be sure to keep a copy of the "SETTLEMENT FORM" and/or the "ISSUE RESOLUTION WORKSHEET" for your own records.**



NATIONAL RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION

STEP 1 SETTLEMENT FORM

☐ Step 1 Discussion

☐ Step 1 Meeting

Grievant: _____ S.S.# _____ - - - Office: _____

Nature of Grievance: _____ Date: _____ - - -
Of Incident

☐ Postmaster ☐ Designee: _____

Union Steward: _____

☐ State Steward ☐ Assistant State Steward ☐ Area/Local Steward ☐ Grievant

Grievance is settled as follows:

_____ Date: _____ - - -

Postmaster/Designee Signature

_____ Date: _____ - - -

Union Steward Signature

CC: File



It Does Not Matter Where You Live

WASHINGTON RURAL LETTER CARRIERS' ASSOCIATION

ISSUE RESOLUTION WORKSHEET

(Page 1 of 2)

CRAFT EMPLOYEE'S NAME _____ SOCIAL SECURITY # _____

CRAFT EMPLOYEE'S TITLE _____ DESIGNATION CODE _____ ROUTE # _____

CRAFT EMPLOYEE'S MAILING ADDRESS _____
(NUMBER & STREET OR PO BOX)

CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE _____

CRAFT EMPLOYEE'S HOME PHONE _____ LATEST TIME TO CALL _____

POST OFFICE _____ BRANCH/STATION _____ PO PHONE _____

NAME OF LOCAL STEWARD (IF ANY) REPRESENTING YOUR PO _____

NAME OF ASSISTANT STATE STEWARD REPRESENTING YOUR PO _____

IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW, PLEASE DESCRIBE THE ISSUE YOU DISCUSSED WITH YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR. IN YOUR DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE, BE SURE TO INDICATE WHAT HAPPENED, WHEN IT HAPPENED, WHEN YOU FIRST BECAME AWARE OF WHAT HAPPENED, AND WHAT YOU SAID WHEN YOU DISCUSSED THE ISSUE.

TO THE BEST OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE, PLEASE DESCRIBE IN THE SPACE BELOW YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSE TO THE ISSUE YOU DISCUSSED WITH HIM/HER?

ISSUE RESOLUTION WORKSHEET

(Page 2 of 2)

DID YOU RESOLVE THE ISSUE WITH YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR? _____

NAME OF IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR _____

NAME OF POSTMASTER OR ACTING POSTMASTER _____

WAS A SETTLEMENT FORM COMPLETED? _____

IF NO RESOLUTION WAS REACHED AND YOU WISH TO FILE A GRIEVANCE, YOU NEED TO VERBALLY STATE TO YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: "PLEASE CONSIDER MY PREVIOUS DISCUSSION AS STEP 1 OF THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS."

DID YOU VERBALLY STATE THE ABOVE UNDERLINED PHRASE, OR SOMETHING SIMILAR? _____
IF YOU ANSWERED "NO" TO THE ABOVE QUESTION, A GRIEVANCE HAS NOT BEEN FILED.

IF YOU FILED A GRIEVANCE AS DESCRIBED ABOVE, PLEASE IMMEDIATELY GIVE THIS WORKSHEET TO THE STEWARD REPRESENTING YOUR OFFICE, AND KEEP A COPY FOR YOUR OWN RECORDS. THE STEWARD REPRESENTING YOUR OFFICE ONLY HAS TEN (10) DAYS TO COMPLETE STEP 1 OF THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS, SO IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU GIVE HIM/HER THIS WORKSHEET AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

NAME OF STEWARD RECEIVING THIS FORM _____

DATE YOU DISCUSSED YOUR ISSUE WITH YOUR IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR _____

DATE THIS FORM WAS GIVEN/MAILED TO THE STEWARD REPRESENTING YOUR OFFICE _____

PLEASE INCLUDE OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION (IF ANY) IN THE SPACE BELOW

YOUR SIGNATURE _____

DATE WORKSHEET SIGNED _____

Workplace Environment

"Let there be no mistake that we mean what we say ..." That's according to the **Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace**, a document signed by the United States Postal Service and the National Rural Letter Carrier's Association, among others. **"We will enforce our commitment to a workplace where DIGNITY, RESPECT, AND FAIRNESS ARE BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS ..."**

This Joint Statement is CONTRACTUAL LANGUAGE, and is as binding as any right afforded by the National Agreement! There is no question that the Postal Service needs to serve the public efficiently and productively. And I will be the first to say that all employee's need to give a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. But ... **"Making the numbers is not an excuse for the abuse of ANYONE!"**

How do you treat others in your workplace? How do others (management and craft alike) treat you? **"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 position."**

For a moment, I would like to speak to you concerning how you "should" be treated by your manager. **Management of Rural Delivery Services, Methods Handbook Series M-38, Section 229.1** states in part *"The delivery manager must make a reasonable effort to correct a situation before resorting to disciplinary measures ..."* I believe that you would agree that yelling at an employee, or using intimidation, threats of disciplinary action, harassment or verbally bullying an employee would/should not be considered a "reasonable effort."

Memorandum of Understanding Between the United States Postal Service and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association .14 states in part *"We must take individual responsibility for our actions, and our words, and we must help instill a sense of pride in every employee who works for our organization."* **MOU .14** goes further, stating *"We all invest a large amount of time at work and the workplace environment is important to us all. That's why each and every one of us is responsible for building a work environment that is healthy and successful ..."* **M-38, Section 229.2** provides direction in that *"Managers can accomplish their mission only through the effective use of people. How successful a manager is in working with people will, to a great measure, determine whether or not the goals of the Postal Service are attained."*

What if the language above does not accurately reflect your workplace? You may ask yourself, "what can I do ... what power do I have over a manager who is abusive, intolerant, demeaning or just plain rude." You may wonder "what can you do when you're intimidated, harassed, or treated with less than dignity and respect at work." I'll tell you what power you have; **YOU HAVE AN ENFORCABLE CONTRACT BEHIND YOU!**

National Arbitrator, Professor Carlton Snow found that "The grievance procedure of the National Agreement may be used to enforce the parties' bargain, and arbitrators have available to them the flexibility found in arbitral jurisprudence when it comes to formulating remedies, **including removing a supervisor from his or her administrative duties.**" Other Regional arbitrators have also found and imposed discipline on supervisors who treated craft employees improperly.

San Antonio, Texas, Arbitrator Bajork **“restricted a supervisor from any position which included the core activity of dealing or working with carrier employees.”** Boston, MA, Arbitrator Wooters found the Postal Service in violation of the Joint Statement and **ordered the supervisor to apologize to workers for “abusive and disrespectful conduct.”** Seattle, WA, Arbitrator McCaffree found that the Postal Service acted in a disrespectful manner to a worker and **ordered the Postmaster to apologize.** Riverside, CA, Arbitrator Hales **ordered the Postal Service to take corrective action against an abusive supervisor.** These are just a few of the many instances where arbitrators have instructed the Postal Service to take disciplinary action against a manager for treating craft employees improperly.

So what constitutes an improper workplace environment? It may be helpful to have a clearer definition of what constitutes the kind of non-physical violence for which a supervisory employee may be disciplined. And keep in mind that these are not my definitions but language taken directly from a decision rendered on November 1, 2000 by Arbitrator Bernice L. Fields. **“Because the relationship between supervisor and employee is inherently unequal, an employee confronted by a supervisor with behavior that a reasonable person would find offensive such as yelling, name-calling, profane, sarcastic, belittling, or other inappropriate language is a victim of workplace intimidation and bullying ...”** **“Such behaviors constitute threats to an employee even if no direct threatening language is used. The threat is implied in the nature of the relationship ...”** The arbitrator goes further in stating **“... the supervisor will be held to a higher standard of review in supervisor-employee confrontations. The offense is aggravated if it occurs in front of co-workers or third persons such as Postal customers.”**

Now I realize that one or two of you may be skimming this article to find information relevant to your workplace environment. This is the point where I would like each of you to **FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION AND TAKE NOTES!**

“Angry shouting, abusive or other inappropriate language demeans and humiliates an employee, and has no place on the workroom floor. Such behavior violates the Joint Agreement and will subject a supervisor to discipline EVEN FOR A SINGLE INCIDENT.”

Now keep in mind, the arbitrators comments were tempered somewhat in that ... ***“there should be no witch-hunting in complaints about supervisors. The focus must be kept strictly on behavior, rather than suspicions, psychiatric diagnoses, or off-putting personal characteristics. The important question must remain, “Has there been intimidating, demeaning, or humiliating behavior toward the employee?”***

“There is no excuse for and will be no tolerance of harassment, intimidation, threats, or bullying by anyone.”

It is my position, as Steward for the WA-RLCA that it is not appropriate for a manager to yell at an employee, either in private, or on the workroom floor. It is not appropriate for a manager to embarrass, degrade or demean an employee in private, nor in the presence of other employees. I cannot allow, nor will I tolerate a workplace environment where any employee is treated with less

than dignity, respect, and fairness. Such an environment negatively impacts not only the employee but any employee who is witness to such treatment, as well as having a negative impact on the productivity of the employee and the office.

If I may paraphrase from the Joint Statement on Violence and Behavior in the Workplace, it is my intention to make the workroom floor a safer, more harmonious, as well as a more productive workplace. I pledge my efforts to these objectives and encourage you to ensure that each and every manager in Washington does the same.

Respectfully,
Patrick Pitts
WA-RLCA
Assistant State Steward

District 1 Hosts State Convention



Convention committees for our State Convention in Bellingham June 21, 22 and 23 are working to make this a great time for all who come. The committees can still use more people to help with planning so please call me (360 354 3386) or e-mail me (rpikes@comcast.net) and I will get you connected to a committee you'd like to work on. We really need "fillers" for the ditty bags everyone gets when they register. If you know of any businesses with promotional items they share, we'd appreciate hearing from you. Our hospitality room will need snack items to share at breaks.

The registration form can be found in this issue of our paper. Activities begin on Sunday with the Labor-Management/Current Issues meeting at 10 AM and a fun evening of bingo and an ice cream social at 6 PM to kick start the convention which begins on Monday morning. You'll notice we've planned one banquet this year and since it's a buffet, there will be something for everyone's taste. We'll be honoring the retirees, so everyone come and join us for a fun evening.

Remember every delegate will go home with some reimbursement money and a lot of you will go home with a door prize. Come and be part of our convention and participate in decisions that will affect our union and our jobs.

Becky Pike, District 1 Representative

HOW CAN WE SAVE MONEY?

The best way I know of for this Union/Association to save money is to have a local steward in every office. The Post Office has to pay for the time spent on grievances, investigation interviews, and any time a member of the rural craft needs union representation.

The duties of a local steward are very important. Some of these duties are:

- A-DUTY of FAIR REPRESENTATION
- B-Appeal Step 1 grievances to Step 2 to the appropriate Postal Manager as directed by the State Steward
- C-Comply with Federal/State/Local laws
- D-Attend required meetings
- E-Be a certified representative in your local installation/Branch and responsible to the State Steward
- F-Meet with Installation Head to develop facts and joint Step 1 file
- G-Be knowledgeable of legal procedures
- H-Keep carriers informed
- I-Promote local membership in the NRLCA
- J-Maintain union bulletin board



These are just some of the things required of you. And know that you are not going to be very popular when things do not go the way people think they should. However, there are actually some offices that do have management that care about this craft. With some communication between the union and management, most differences can be settled before going to the grievance procedure. That is when I feel the local Steward is most needed. You are there to help protect the rural craft and workplace environment keeping everyone on the same page, so to speak, in order for everyone to work together.

It is not an easy task. It is rewarding when you can see results and it didn't cost the Union/Association anything. Think about it.

On a different note:

I want to Thank everyone for allowing me to be your District 2 Representative for the past 5 years. Being on the board helping to make sound decisions for you has been a pleasure. Mostly, I enjoyed meeting all of the concerned members at the county meetings, spring and fall boosters, and district and state meetings. I hope to see everyone at the State Convention in Bellingham. Remember; we need each other.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Lamm

Your District 2 Representative

DISTRICT 2 MEETING

Mail count standards have to be improved, rural mail carriers from District 2 declared this month. About 30 carriers from the Columbia County, Mutual Counties and Kitsap County organizations gathered Sunday, March 14, in Olympia to conduct District 2 business and to look ahead to pending labor negotiations.

In a discussion monitored by Monte Hartshorn, Castle Rock, assistant state steward and state vice president, the rank-and-file carriers identified, discussed and shaped issues to send on up the line to give the NRLCA leaders guidance in negotiating the new National Agreement.

As Royella Jaynes, Bainbridge Island, wielded the colored magic markers on the rip chart, those present listed almost 35 areas of concern. Each issue was then discussed separately and, in the process, some related issues were combined.

Eventually, by vote of those present, the issues were narrowed down to eight prime areas, which were then ranked in order of importance.

With the recently completed mail count fresh in their minds, a call for better mail count standards was ranked the number one issue which the carriers believe the national board should address.

Carriers talked about the need for better standards for such mail count areas as DPS, parcels, "pill bottle"-type packages, markups, and letters and flats.

In discussing the issue, assistant state steward Patrick Pitts said, "The problem is not the evaluated system. For decades, it's been adequate and fair. But," he added, "over the last several years, we have seen the USPS looking on it with a fine tooth comb. (The mail count) used to be a snapshot of what a rural carrier does. It has become: How much can (management) limit a rural carrier's pay?"

Mr. Hartshorn said, "If the USPS comes to the upcoming negotiations and makes some effort to put some juice back in, then I'm for keeping the evaluated system." Otherwise, he indicated, the hourly pay system might be the avenue to pursue.

Mr. Hartshorn asked the carriers to pare the ideas down to several "rubber meets the road" issues. So, they narrowed it down to eight areas of concern that were deemed the highest priority. After better mail count standards, the other issues, in order of priority ranking, were: changing to an hourly pay system (only as a last resort, if other issues are unsuccessful), better EMA compensation, continued COLA raises, improved NDCBU and L route credit standards, RCA benefits, unloading time, and a "no layoff" clause if the rural carriers should change to an hourly pay system.

Mr. Hartshorn said the list will be presented at the state convention this summer, where the items will be debated, along with the items brought up by carriers from other districts. Eventually, the top issues from around the state will be presented to the National Board.

In other business, Joanne Blackburn was elected as the group's nominee for District 2 representative. Her nomination will be presented at the state convention. Ann Lamm, present District 2 representative, who conducted the meeting, said she was not seeking re-election.

It was also noted that Ann Lamm will be rotating off of the District Joint Steering Committee for the QWL/EI process, and Patrick Pitts will be joining the group. Joanne Blackburn announced that she still has the QWL/EI project library files if anyone needs information from them.

In a voluntary collection, carriers donated \$151 to the NRLCA PAC fund, used to pay for lobbying in Congress on behalf of rural carrier issues.

Several carriers, who are seeking to be delegates at the National Convention, made brief presentations, as well as those seeking state offices.

Mr. Hartshorn urged each member of the group to "Please come to the state convention." Mr. Pitts, added: "The state convention is very important" and said involvement starts with the county level

meetings, where carriers can be elected as delegates. "Ideas start at the county level," he said. "That is how things get changed."

It was also announced that, due to a change made at the national convention, elections for local stewards would need to take place July 1, instead of in January.

John Martin
District 2 member

District 3 Report 3-17-04

We have survived another count. Some of us did better than others, but on the whole it looks like we gained more than we lost this time around. It's been a long time since we could say that - a very long time. But before we can catch our breath we are faced with the upcoming contract negotiations. And that my friends, puts the blood pressure right back up to the top again. At all of the District meetings we went over suggestions for our National Officers and tried to pick out the top favorites we want our negotiators to focus on. We also added several ideas that came up from the floor. My hope is that people feel they are being listened too but I also hope that everyone realizes that as a union we must pick and choose our battles. We cannot give equal attention to all ideas even though they all have merit. When we consider what we lost last time around, this time I hope we can stay focused on maintaining what we have, while fighting hard for the areas that would be the most benefit to us all. My fear is that in our different views on what we want in our contract we will be disappointed if our 'pet objective' doesn't make the final cut. Frustration in the membership can tear apart a union. We cannot let this happen! We need the power of us all to fight the upcoming battles.

I am encouraged by the current cooperation among the NRLCA, NALC, APWU and NPMHU. We all work for the Postal Service. It is to our advantage work with each other. We have similar relationships with management and with our combined voices our chances of being heard can only be increased. Sometimes I wonder if management remembers that we all work for the same business - The United States Postal Service, and that it is in all of our best interests to see that business thrive and grow. We should be part of a team working together!

I hope to see everyone at Convention! It's a time for education, making friends, and having Fun!

Respectively submitted:
Cheryl (Cheri) Freeman



District 4 Spring Meeting

The annual spring meeting for District 4 carriers was held on March 21, 2004, at the Richland Shilo Inn. This is the same site that the WRLCA State Convention will be held in 2005.

EAP consultant Bob Lavigne spoke on the USPS Employee Assistance Program. His presentation resulted in a good number of questions to him from the carriers attending the meeting.



One of the major topics on the agenda was the upcoming contract negotiations and what the carriers felt was important to negotiate for.

Lively discussion and debate generated a short list to send to the area officers meeting which was held at the end of March.

Carriers need to look for the upcoming announcements of the Spring County Meetings that precede state convention and make plans to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Reppe
District 4 Representative

\$\$\$\$\$ P A C Needs you \$\$\$\$\$

Hello All,

I'd like to take this opportunity to bring you up to date with PAC donations and pending legislative concerns. Total PAC donations are \$3,305. from monies collected at the National Convention from our state delegates, monies carried over from our 2003 State Convention and county contributions thus far. Our county contributions are down to date compared to last year. K-S leads but the rest of the counties are behind. There still is an opportunity to increase our contributions at our upcoming county meetings and State Convention. At our State Convention I will present a plaque to the county with the most contributions as well as to the county with the highest per capita for the 2003-2004 PAC year. This is an election year and a very important time for us of the rural craft and the entire postal service.

We all have a real concern and interest in the commission that was appointed by President Bush to study the future of the Postal Service. The commission issued their report in July, 2003 and Congress will be acting on this shortly. If it were to be adopted by Congress in its entirety, it could cost every retiree and working employee thousands of dollars in lost pension COLAS and a larger share of health care premiums. Adoption of this commission's recommendations could cause a change to collective bargaining that would be tilted against the unions to a pro-management stance. The commission proposes to separate postal employees and retirees from the Federal Pension System

and create a Postal Pension System and Postal Health Insurance program. These programs would be subject to collective bargaining. Does anyone think the USPS wouldn't propose to reduce or eliminate retiree COLAS and want all employees to pay a larger share of their health insurance? The cost of family plan health care is about \$6000 annually, according to the Federal Insurance statistics. As a retiree, we pay approximately \$2000 to \$2500 annually plus Medicare premiums if you carry Part B. We could be bargained into a cost share of any amount including full cost. If retirees were bargained into a 50% increase, how can anyone afford these benefits, which we all assumed would be sustained and honored by the Federal Benefits Program? This would also affect current employees and future retiree's benefits and health insurance.

In a February 3, 2004 article, the New York Times stated that a growing number of the largest companies are saying that retirees can only retain health benefits if they are willing to pay full cost. Postmaster General Potter testified that he believes all benefits should be collectively bargained for. You can bet that the USPS would quote articles like the New York Times to make the case for reducing or eliminating the contribution that the USPS would make toward all benefits. As your PAC chairman and Retired Representative, I seriously urge all of you to actively be involved in our efforts to inform Congress of our concerns with this commission's recommendations and our opposition to them. Without active involvement of union members, there is absolutely no doubt that in this present political and revenue climate "on the Hill" that Congress will not adopt these recommendations of this commission in their entirety. Any attempt to move benefits from Federal to USPS bargaining would be considered a 'give back'. We as a union, have a long history of opposing 'give backs'. Again, I ask you all to bear this in mind when you consider your 2003 and 2004 PAC donations as this is the only way we have of combating negative legislation and securing the future of all of us whether regular, RCA or retired.

WA-RLCA President Patricia Alexander will be in Washington, D.C. in the near future to attend the State Presidents' conference. She assured me that she will be contacting as many of the Washington State congressmen as possible to express our concerns regarding the adoption of the Commission's recommendations.

Hopefully the hearings of the Commission's recommendations will be held after our State Convention in June. I encourage you to write your Congressmen stating our concerns on this issue.

At our State Convention, the Retirees banquet will be held in conjunction with the annual banquet this year. This was a board decision due to the fact that several committees were scheduled to meet on Monday evening. The door prizes given at the Retirees banquet will still be given.

We hope to see you at the State Convention in Bellingham.

Lynn Walker
Retired Representative
PAC Chair

Send your check, made out to NRLCA PAC, to:

Lynn Walker
2485 Highline Road
Chewelah, WA 99109

Do it now!
Thanks.

WRLCA STATE CONVENTION REGISTRATION**BEST WESTERN LAKEWAY INN****JUNE 21-23 2004**

714 Lakeway Drive Bellingham WA 98226

Reservation Phone: 1- 360- 671- 1011 *** 1- 888 -671- 1011

Room Rates include hot breakfast buffet

Double/King \$84, Poolside \$119, Suite \$129, Poolside Suite \$139

Room block held until May 24*Make your reservations now****PLEASE PRINT:**

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

HAVE YOU ATTENDED STATE CONVENTION BEFORE? () YES () NO

PLEASE CIRCLE POSITIONS CURRENTLY SERVING: Ad Hoc Trainer, DJSC Member, AJSC Trainer/
Member, Facilitator, State Officer, County Officer,
Retired & # of Years with PO _____**I WILL ATTEND THE FOLLOWING FUNCTIONS:****SUNDAY, JUNE 20**

Labor-Management/Current Issues Meeting 10 A.M.-4 P.M. () YES () NO

ALL ARE WELCOME Due to elections of local stewards in July, no reimbursement for certified local stewards will be paid at this meeting.

ICE CREAM SOCIAL MIXER 6:00 P.M. FREE () YES () NO

NUMBER ATTENDING _____

MONDAY, JUNE 21

FIRST TIME CONVENTION ATTENDEES MEETING 7:30 A.M. () YES () NO

COUNTY PRESIDENT, V.P. AND SEC/TREAS. LUNCHEON () YES () NO

FREE FOR NEWLY ELECTED 04/05 COUNTY PRES., V.P., SEC/TREAS

Northwest Cobb Salad w/chicken, salmon, egg, tomato & avocado coffee & tea

NUMBER OF GUESTS ATTENDING: _____ (\$12.00 EACH) \$ _____

TUESDAY, JUNE 22

ANNUAL BANQUET BUFFET 7 P.M. () YES () NO

This year we're combining the retirees and annual banquets into one evening. Come and honor the retirees.

NUMBER OF GUESTS ATTENDING: _____ (\$30.00 EACH) \$ _____

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 23

BOX LUNCH (NO BREAK SCHEDULED)

Hoagie w/turkey, ham & beef & salad _____ Chicken Croissant & salad _____

NUMBER OF LUNCHESES _____ (\$13.00 EACH) \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____**BANQUET TICKETS PURCHASED AT CONVENTION WILL BE AN ADDITIONAL \$5.00 PER MEAL****MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: "WRLCA 2004 CONVENTION"****SEND COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM & CHECK TO:****Becky Pike 100 Bender Rd Lynden WA 98264-1665****Please return this as soon as possible, but no later than June 1, 2004**

MEMBER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

Eligibility:

1. Any member of the Association may be nominated as a candidate for the Member of the Year Award.
2. State Association Officers should not be arbitrarily selected for the Award, not should they be prohibited from consideration. Officers have been chosen to lead and serve, but it is frequently demonstrated that their services go far beyond the routine duties of the office, and thus, may be worthy of selection.
3. Nominations may be made directly from the membership.
4. Local, county, or district units may select candidates.

Method of Selection:

1. Selection Committee will be all Board members not nominated for the Member of the Year Award.
2. Nominations must be postmarked no later than fourteen (14) days prior to the convening of the State Convention.
3. Nominations must be sent to the Vice-President of the Association.
4. Decision is to be made at the Board meeting prior to State Convention.
5. Recipient must receive more than 50% majority of votes cast.

Criteria for Selection:

1. The primary consideration of the selection committee shall be:
 - a. The service rendered by the candidate to the NRLCA.
 - b. Attendance and participation in local, state and national meetings.
 - c. Willingness to accept responsibilities and dedication in performing those duties.
 - d. Fraternal attitude to others in the rural carrier craft.
2. The Selection Committee should consider, as a secondary matter, other service such as civic and community activities which reflect favorably upon the rural craft and the USPS.

MEMBER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM

NAME: _____

PLEASE GIVE A RESUME OF THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE ABOVE NAMED NOMINEE:

any bill is referred to a committee, and then returned by the Government to the House of Commons. The bill is then debated in the House of Commons, and if it is passed, it is sent to the House of Lords. The House of Lords may also pass a bill, or it may reject it, or it may amend it. If the House of Lords rejects a bill, the Government may choose to ignore the rejection, or it may choose to amend the bill and reintroduce it in the next session. If the House of Lords amends a bill, the Government may choose to accept the amendments, or it may choose to reject them and reintroduce the bill in the next session. If the House of Lords passes a bill, the bill is then sent to the Royal Assent, and becomes law.

PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY OTHER SERVICE, SUCH AS CIVIC AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES THE ABOVE NAMED NOMINEE PARTICIPATES IN WHICH REFLECT FAVORABLY UPON THE RURAL CRAFT AND THE USPS.

When the report has been received from the subcommittee, the full committee will conduct an investigation and issue a report to the House of Representatives.

*****PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE VICE-PRESIDENT (Monte Hartshorn 141 Alder St. NE Castle Rock, WA 98611-9040) NO LATER THAN FOURTEEN (14) DAYS PRIOR TO THE CONVENING OF THE STATE CONVENTION.*****

Short review of the Legislative Process

By Daniel N. Schrup

If you are like me, the following information is something that we all learned in Government Class, but that was a quite some time ago for most of us, and if your memory is anything like mine it certainly does not hurt to refresh our memories on the process.

Anyone may draft a bill; but, only members of Congress can introduce legislation, and by that action become the sponsor(s).

Basically there are four types of legislation: bills, joint resolutions, concurrent resolutions and simple resolutions. The legislative process begins when a bill or resolution is numbered – H.R. signifies a House bill and S. a Senate bill – referred to a committee, and then printed by the Government Printing Office.

Let us follow a bill through its inception to final action.

Referral to Committee

With some exceptions, bills are referred to standing committees in the House or Senate according to rules of procedure.

Committee Action

When the bill reaches a committee it is placed on the calendar. It may be referred to a subcommittee or considered by the committee as a whole. It is in this stage that the bill is examined carefully and the chances for passage are determined. If it is not acted upon by committee, the bill is basically killed here.

Subcommittee Review

The bill may be referred to a subcommittee for study and hearings. The hearings provide the opportunity to put on record the views of the executive branch, experts, other public officials as well as supporters and opponents of the legislation. Testimony may be in person or in writing. (This is an opportunity for you and me to make our views known in correspondence with members of the subcommittee.)

Mark Up

When all the hearings have been completed the subcommittee may meet to “mark up” the bill, that is, make changes and amendments before recommending the bill to the full committee. If the bill is not reported to the full committee, the bill dies.

Committee Action to Report a Bill

When the report has been received from the subcommittee, the full committee may conduct further studies and hearings or vote on the subcommittee’s recommendations. The full committee then votes on its recommendation to the House or Senate. This is called “ordering a bill reported.”

Publication of a Written Report

When the committee has voted to have a bill reported, a written report is prepared. This report describes the intent and scope of the legislation, how it may impact on existing laws and programs to include the position of the executive branch and the views of dissenting members of the committee.

Scheduling Floor Action

When the bill is reported back to the chamber where it originated, it is placed in chronological order on the calendar. In the House – where there are numerous legislative calendars - the Speaker and majority leader will determine if, when and in which order the bills come up. The Senate has just one legislative calendar.

Debate

When the bill reaches the floor of the House or Senate, there are rules governing debate. These rules determine the conditions and time allowances for general debate. (If you watch CSPAN you may observe these debates and follow a bill.)

Voting

After the debate and approval of any amendments, the bill is passed or defeated by the members voting.

Referral to Other Chamber

When the bill is passed by the House or the Senate it is referred to the other chamber for consideration. Generally it will then follow the same route through committee and floor action. This chamber may approve the bill as received, reject it, ignore it or make changes.

Conference Committee Action

If the bill has only minor changes made to it by the other chamber, it is common for the bill to go back to the original chamber for concurrence. But if there are major differences, a conference committee may be formed to resolve the differences between the House and Senate versions. If agreement cannot be reached the legislation dies. If agreement is reached, a report is prepared describing the committee members' recommendations for change. Both chambers must approve the report.

Final Action

After approval by both chambers in identical form, the bill is sent to the President. He may approve the legislation if he signs it, and it then becomes law. Or, he may take no action for ten days while Congress is in session and it automatically becomes law. If the president opposes the legislation he may veto the bill; or, if he takes no action after Congress has adjourned its second session, it is a "pocket veto" and the bill dies.

Overriding a Veto

If the President has vetoed a bill, Congress may "override the veto". This requires a two thirds roll call vote of the members who are present in an adequate number for a quorum.

This process may seem complicated, but in fact is more lengthy than confusing, and the process does allow us ample opportunity to voice our opinions to our elected representatives. President Patricia Alexander will be going to Washington D.C. in early May for the President's Legislative Seminar and your input to our Congressmen and Senators I am sure would be appreciated by her as she tries to convince our representatives that the Rural Craft has issues with proposed legislation that will affect the Postal Service. To view the position of the NRLCA on the Presidents Commission on Postal reform go to <http://www.nrlca.org> and check legislative updates, and then **write** your representatives.

BOOK EXCHANGE AT CONVENTION

Have you listened to your Books on Tape story more times than you can count? Do you have a grocery bag of paperback books sitting in a corner gathering dust? Bring them with you to the State Convention in Bellingham and trade them in at the Hospitality Room.

AUXILIARY NEWS

Country Store Donations Needed!!

The scholarships for the Juniors are supported in part by the donations to the Country Store at Convention. Please remember to bring or send your hand crafted items or other what-nots. Thanks for all of the wonderful support in the past.

In Memory

The Auxiliary is mourning the loss of our District 3 Representative – Donna Walker. She served the organization in many ways besides being willing to be an officer. Her positive spirit and encouragement were priceless. We miss her very much.

Please Join In---

Dear WRLCA members:

We need the active participation of at least a minimum of 12 more spouses – guys and gals – in the Auxiliary organization. Several times in the past few years there have been requests for more assistance from the “family” to help keep the activities going. The folks who have responded to the need have been really wonderful, but the need continues to be very acute. Our tasks include regular organizational business, humanitarian project, convention activities for the Juniors and scholarship administration. The Junior organization is sponsored through the Auxiliary. We are also a fraternal type of organization which assists the Association in its over all objectives. If you can make a commitment to work with us please call one of the members of the Auxiliary Board soon.

Thank you.

Ruth Ryan Aux V-Pres

District 1 Auxiliary Report

This year's program is dedicated to John Jewell's parents. He is in the National Auxiliary. A pin will be this year's fundraiser. It will be a mailbox with an anchor in front of the box for a \$10.00 donation. The anchor is the symbol of the Program of Hope.

A sun catcher with the NRLCA logo will be \$10.00 also. We have a limited supply of potholders that have been made by people in my state. They will be \$5.00. Animal bookmarks will be a Junior item and they will sell for \$5.00 each. I ask that each of you participate and support the Auxiliary Program of Hope. Let's all buy some items.

Delores Robb

Convention Memorial Service

The Memorial Service for convention will be held Tuesday morning before the opening of the regular session. Everyone is encouraged to attend and spend some quiet time together in honor of members who have passed away. This service gives the WRLCA family an opportunity to reflect on the contributions made to the history of rural mail delivery and the organization in our state.

Auxiliary Scholarships

Just a quick note about the scholarships. The deadline has passed for the National scholarships, but the Gene Del Polito and the Washington State scholarships are still available. Their deadlines are May 15, 2004, and are to be sent to me. There hasn't been very many apply this year. I hope the word is getting around the State about the scholarships.

We are doing fine after some sadness in the family. Neil just lost his brother Lyle (just older than he is) along with having a little surgery of his own. The doctors found cancer on his tongue from a bit that wouldn't heal. Everything looks good now and he is back to work and off all medicines.

State Convention will soon be upon us. The Auxiliary will really miss one of our own. Donna Walker passed away a few weeks ago and has gone on to a better reward. She will sure be missed as an officer and a friend.

Hope to see "ya'll" in Bellingham.

Myrtle Buchanan
Scholarship Chair

YOU'RE INVITED!

NEIL & MYRTLE BUCHANAN will be celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary May 30, 2004 in Chewelah, WA. They were married May 30, 1954 at her parent's home in a lawn ceremony in Rice, WA.

Their 4 children: Jean Bowen, Boulder, CO; Debbie Starkey and husband Bob of Creston, WA; Jim Buchanan and wife Sandy of Davenport, WA; and son Marc of Graham, WA along with their grandchildren are hosting an Open House from 2 - 5 p.m. at the American Legion Hall in Chewelah.

They invite their mail carrier family to come and enjoy some long ago stories.

Junior Convention Program

Sunday June 20, 2004

9:00-4:00 Misc. activities will be available to Juniors with a lot of extra time on their hands. We will also be needing Junior volunteers to help with Bingo Sunday evening at the Ice Cream Mixer.

Monday June 21, 2004

8:00 Parents/Guardians and Juniors **MUST** meet in the Auxiliary Convention Room to be able to participate in Junior activities

It is desirable to have one or two (Auxiliary) personal vehicles to ensure that individuals can be transported separately from the group if necessary. These individuals have not currently been identified.

Parents will be expected to sign an injury waiver.

Although the Auxiliary pays for all meals and events, it is recommended that you send your junior with some cash for refreshments. Please remember that expensive cameras and other items can easily be lost and encourage your juniors to travel lightly.

8:30-9:00 Juniors will meet to decide on their Americanism Program. The Junior President will have ideas, please bring ideas with you to this meeting. Juniors will practice their program until opening ceremonies.

9:00 Juniors will participate in opening ceremonies.

10:30-3:30 The Juniors will set out for a fun-filled day at Birch Bay Waterslides in Birch Bay, WA. Remember to bring a swimsuit, towel, sunscreen, flip-flops, etc. Lunch will be provided at Birch Bay Waterslides. Bring extra cash if you will want extra snacks during the day.

4:00-4:30 Juniors will be returning to Junior Convention Room for Pickup by the parents. There will be activities for the Juniors in case they get back early and have extra time.

Tuesday June 22, 2004

8:30-9:00 Juniors meet in Junior Room for Americanism Program practice.

9:00-9:15 Juniors perform Americanism Program.

9:15-10:00 Joint meeting with Auxiliary, or other activity

10:00 Juniors depart for Lynden Pioneer Museum in Lynden, WA.

1:00 Juniors are provided lunch at deli next-door to museum.

2:00 Juniors will get a couple rounds at Laser Tag at Laser Storm Laser Tag Arena in Ferndale, WA.

3:00 Juniors leave Ferndale for return trip to the convention hotel.

3:30-4:00 Juniors will be returning to hotel for pick-up by parents and to get a break before banquet.

6:30-10:00 Junior Banquet. Luau Theme. Dress in your favorite Hawaiian clothes. Ex: Hawaiian print shirts, dresses, etc. Party games, door prizes, lots of fun & food!

Wednesday June 23, 2004

9:00 Juniors meet in Junior Convention Room.

9:00-10:30 Juniors will conduct Junior Convention Final Day Activities. 2004-2005 Junior Officers will be elected. Junior Minutes will be completed. Juniors will discuss the next years T-Shirts, things they liked at Convention, things they disliked, what they would like to see changed, etc.

Joint Meeting with Auxiliary.

10:30-2:30 Juniors will spend the day at Larrabee State Park, flying kites, outdoor games, etc. Bring a kite and/or Frisbee. Juniors will be given Subway for lunch. Back-up Plan in case of rain: Lunch at Subway and Bowling at 20th Century Bowling Lanes.

2:30-3:00 Juniors return to convention hotel.

This ends the 2004 Junior Convention. Hope you had fun! See you next year!!

Transportation for all 3 days will be provided by bus. All events are within a half hour drive from the convention hotel.

A Note from the Junior President

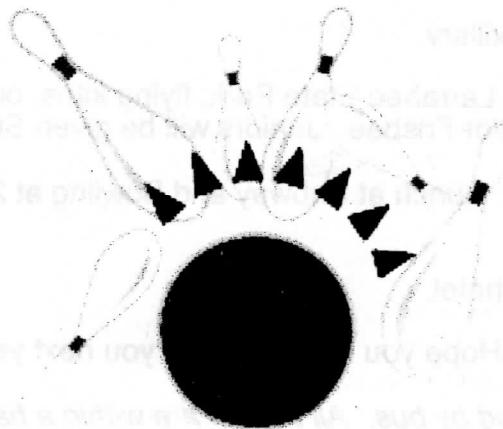
Convention is fast approaching and I'd just like to say how excited I am to see everybody again. I miss getting to see everybody at all of the meetings I haven't been able to attend this year. This year's convention is going to be really fun. We've got a bunch of fun stuff planned for our tours and banquet. We'll be going to Birch Bay Waterslides, the Lynden Pioneer Museum, to Laser Storm for laser tag, and Larrabee State Park. Banquet this year is kind of a "luau" theme so bring your Hawaiian clothes (Hawaiian print shirts, dresses, etc.) and be ready to have some fun!

Our fundraisers this year will include: "cookies/meals in a jar" jars and some other goodies. Don't forget to join us for Bingo on Sunday evening for your chance to win some awesome prizes and have a great time! All profits from our fundraisers this year will go towards NARSAD (National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression) so come out and help us raise some funds for this worthy cause.

Remember to send in your registration forms and I'll see you at convention!

See you soon!

Hillary Faulkner
JWRLCA President



JWRLCA Pre-Registration/T-shirt Order Form

2004 Junior Convention

June 21st - June 23rd

Bellingham, WA

Ages
6-20

Please
send in
ASAP

Members: \$30 (\$20 registration + \$10 T-shirt)

Non-Members: \$50 (2 x \$20 registration + \$10 T-shirt)

(Cost Includes: all admissions, lunch each day, banquet and T-Shirt)

Junior Name: _____ ☐ Member ☐ Non-Member

Member Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

_____ T-Shirt Size: _____

Junior Name: _____ ☐ Member ☐ Non-Member

Member Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

_____ T-Shirt Size: _____

Send NO money now. Please pay at convention.

Send completed Registration/T-Shirt Order Forms to:

Hillary Faulkner
7702 284th St NW
Stanwood, WA 98292

CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCEMENTS

I, **Carol Halverson**, would be honored to represent you at the 2004 National Convention. I was a delegate at the last two National Conventions and served since 2000 at our State Conventions. I have been in the Rural Craft for 14 years, serving as steward in Gold Bar for over 6 years. I am also a trainer at the Rural Academy. I attend K-S County meetings, District meetings and Steward's trainings to keep abreast of what our union is doing. This will be an important convention with our leadership preparing for contract negotiations. I am always available for your questions or comments and want to truly bring the concerns of the Washington State carriers to the convention floor. Feel free to contact me at carolhalverson@juno.com Thank you for the opportunity to represent you.

Washington rural carriers,
I am asking for your vote as a delegate to National Convention. I am an active union member that attends my county, district and state meetings. I will represent your interests as I vote on issues that are important to all of us. Thank you for your consideration.
Becky Pike

Hi – My name is Melvin Walker and I would like to have the privilege of representing the WRLCA members as a delegate to the 2004 National Convention and therefore would appreciate your vote.

Many of you know me from County, District, Steward's training, and State Conventions. I have been a Regular for 19 years after being a sub for 4 years and the local steward for the past 12 years. I have been privileged to attend 6 of the last 7 National Conventions (4 as a voting delegate).

I believe that we need to be an active, involved membership to become a strong union. If elected, I will keep an open mind and listen to your concerns, then make my vote accordingly. Feel free to contact me at melvinfromwa@aol.com if you have any questions or concerns about my candidacy.

Please vote for me as one of your delegates to the National Convention. With our contract expiring in November 2004 and negotiations beginning in earnest in September 2004, the National Convention in August will be even more important. I promise to represent your interests and to listen to what you have to say.

Patricia Alexander

I'm Marc McIntosh. I would appreciate your vote for delegate to the National Convention. This could be our last chance to get our union to face issues like our almost meaningless "no lay off clause." With dps flats in our future this must be dealt with now. In our craft we could be economically bankrupt while working full time at 12 hours a week. Did you know this is the minimum for a Regular Carrier? As a past Assistant State Steward and State Officer, I am very aware of National and State issues. I would appreciate your vote. Thanks.

.....
 I'm Linda McIntosh. I would appreciate your vote for delegate to the National Convention. I have been carrying mail since 1984. In those years I have served as a Local Steward, QWL Facilitator, County Secretary/Treasurer, and Rural Ad Hoc Trainer. I have served in the Trainer position for many years—two extended assignments in Spokane and substitute trainer in Pasco. Many of the people I have trained are serving us now as Regular Carriers, Stewards, Local County Officers and dues paying members. One of my major concerns is with our new standards for casing flats, letters and strapping. Our **bump** is disappearing if not totally gone. Many carriers are experiencing 2080/2240 concerns. If we cannot work under 2080 then we do not qualify for the high option. I believe this issue needs to be met head on. Management's response can be to cut us back to 40/42 H routes. Please vote for me. I will speak up for you. I will ask questions and try to find answers.

I am again seeking your votes for the office of Vice President of the WaRLCA and for National Delegate. I have been fortunate in serving as a National Delegate for the past four years and this year as your state Vice President. I look forward to continuing to serve the rural carriers of this state.

I urge any member who can attend the state convention in Bellingham this June 21st-23rd to attend and let your voice be heard. We discuss and vote on issues that affect our daily work lives. It is also a great opportunity to meet other rural carriers and find out what is happening elsewhere. And while at the state convention, I hope that you will consider voting for me as your 2004-2005 state Vice President.

Sincerely yours,

Monte Hartshorn

I would appreciate your consideration for a second term as your President. I have enjoyed representing you at the National and State level, and as we come near to negotiating a new contract, I feel that several items are of utmost importance to us as rural carriers: We need our standards back. We need better EMA for those of us who drive our own route vehicles. We need medical insurance for our leave replacements. We need to look forward to a continuation of our COLA, to affordable health insurance, and to a continuation of our current earning rates of annual and sick leave.

Thank you for your vote for me as President in 2004-2005.

Patricia Alexander

I would appreciate your support and vote for delegate to National Convention. I have represented Washington State Rural Carriers and made their voice heard at past National Conventions. I would appreciate your support again this year! Please contact me and let me know what is important to you and where you stand on the issues.

Judith Peck

Please consider me when you receive your ballot for the election of delegates to the National Convention. I have been active on all levels of the Association for many years but there is always something new to learn at each meeting. Attend your next County meeting and see what you can learn. Please contact me to let me know your concerns about the future of our Association.

Thank you,
Susie Hill

MARCH 28-29, 2004 MINUTES FROM WRLCA BOARD MEETING**Oxford Suites, Spokane, Washington**

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Patricia Alexander, President; Monte Hartshorn, Vice President; Becky Wendlandt, Secretary/Treasurer; Susie Hill, Editor; Becky Pike, District One; Cheri Freeman, District Three; Dave Reppe, District Four; Lynn Walker, Retired Carrier; and Charles Alexander, State Steward. Absent: Ann Lamm, District Two. Clifford Dailing, NRLCA Secretary/Treasurer joined the board on Sunday afternoon, March 28, 2004.

AGENDA:

- Positive Go Around & Review Agenda
- Ground Rules
- Minutes
- Board Policy
- Joint meeting with Auxiliary
- PAC Update
- Secretary's Update & Budget Review
- Correspondence
- State Conventions: 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007
- Western States Conference
- Steward Program Update
- District Meetings Feedback
- Future Meeting Dates and Details
- WRC
- DJSC Updates
- National Convention
- Next Board Meeting Date
- Evaluation

After a positive go around and reviewing the agenda, the meeting started at 1:30 PM.

GROUND RULES:

The ground rules were waived by consensus.

MINUTES:

The minutes from the December 29-30, 2003 board meeting were approved as read.

BOARD POLICY:

The board reviewed the board policy and made the following update.

Under Carrier of the Year: Change to Read "Member of the Year".

JOINT MEETING WITH AUXILIARY:

Joe Horlacher, President; Ruth Ryan, Vice President; and Myrtle Buchanan, Secretary/Treasurer; Neil Buchanan and Johnna Horlacher joined the board meeting. They asked for membership labels to send a letter out asking for auxiliary members to become active in order for the auxiliary to continue to function. After the board reviewed the letter, consensus was reached to give the auxiliary labels. Also the board suggested contacting the local county presidents and secretaries asking for them to announce it at the annual meetings. Next was discussion on the Junior Patriotism Program that will be after the Memorial Service on Tuesday morning.

PAC UPDATE:

Lynn reported that so far donations for PAC have totaled \$3,296 for 03/04 year.

SECRETARY'S UPDATE AND BUDGET REVIEW:

Becky reported on membership. As of this time we have 1747 members.

The 698 (down from 707 from last board meeting) Non Membership Totals at this time are:

Regulars – 209 (Gained 6 regular members from last board meeting)

RCA on Vacant Routes – 10

PTF's – 4

RCA's – 443

RCA Assigned to Aux Routes – 32

Task: President to add brainstorming membership drive for one hour, as well as future equipment needs to the first board meeting of the year.

The board talked about equipment needs and decided to give Lynn \$75 from the silent auction at State Convention to reimburse him for half of the purchase price of the State's computer.

Also the board reached consensus to have Becky either repair or replace the portable printer, based on what is best economically. The board was pleased with the LCD purchased and Becky is to mail in the rebate for it.

Task: Becky to mail in the rebate for the LCD and either repair or replace the portable printer. Also, Becky to check on getting a spare lam

Task: Monte to set up a silent auction at State Convention of any WRLCA equipment to be sold, with monies to be given back to the general fund after reimbursing Lynn \$75.

Becky reported that we have two 50-year members, Chuck Robinson and Jean Webb. National has supplied a letter and pin, and the board autographed NRLCA history books to be given to the 50-year members.

Task: Monte to present Chuck Robinson with his 50 year award and Becky to mail Jean's 50 year award to her.

Next the board reviewed the reimbursement for the counties that qualified as per the State Convention minutes on the finance committees report and passed motion. Lower Columbia will receive \$372, Mutual \$632, Island Skagit San Juan \$230, King Snohomish \$694, and Northeast \$354. Discussion on what needs to be addressed at this year's state convention.

Task: Each board member to have a proposal for the finance committee concerning the reimbursement to the counties by May 10 and E-mail it to the board.

The board then reviewed the budget, financial statements, and ADOP usage. Also reviewed was the reimbursement for the area officers meeting and board meeting, as well as the next board meeting. Local Steward Elections will start in July and after elections the board will need to set up trainings. Since this will not be until the next budget year, the 2004-2005 board will decide the arrangements.

Consensus reached on the following:

- 1. No paid enhancement training at State Convention. There will be a Labor Relations training available to all members but no local stewards will be paid to attend.*
- 2. Suggest that a paid steward training be held in conjunction with the 2004 Fall Booster, to be decided by the 2004-2005 State Board.*
- 3. No mileage will be paid for the board meeting on Saturday before the State Convention. Any other expense will be reviewed at the board meeting.*

CORRESPONDENCE:

A memorial thank you card was received from Lynn Walker. We will all miss Donna greatly!
Letter from Richard Buddrius, retired member, concerning cost of health care.

STATE CONVENTIONS:

2004: Becky Pike said Best Western Lakeway Inn guest room rates are \$89 single and double. For pool suite it is \$139 and poolside double is \$119. Phone number is (360) 671-1011. Once we reach 50 rooms we get some meeting rooms complimentary, until then it is sliding scale depending on rooms used. They also have a complimentary breakfast. Room block will be held until May 24. Donnie Pitts will be our National representative.

Consensus items for 2004 State Convention and Labor Relations Seminar:

- 1) Have a separate mailing (postcard) to invite members to the labor relation's seminar on Sunday. (This increased attendance at 2003 convention)*
- 2) Get group picture of County Presidents, Secretary/Treasurers, First Timers, Retirees, Juniors, Carrier of the Year, Auxiliary Board and Association Board for Convention Issue of the WRC.*
- 3) Use 2 stopwatches for resolutions and constitution and bylaws. One for each speaker's time and one for total debate time.*
- 4) President should instruct delegates that they must state their name and county before speaking.*
- 5) Add in standing rules how many times a delegate can speak to the same issue.*
- 6) Auxiliary and Pac drawings can be done earlier and posted in the country store.*
- 7) For the question and answer sessions, delegates must put their question and their name on a 3 X 5 card (cards handed out earlier) and at the microphone they should state their name, county, and then ask their question. The card should then be given to the steno so that the question is clear in the minutes.*
- 8) The use of the 2 Sergeant of Arms (the 2 district rep's not running for election) was real helpful. Suggest a written duties for the Sergeant of Arms that would include keeping sidebars down,*

making sure attendees outside of meeting room are aware when convention is back in session, handling any announcements and notes for the President/Secretary, etc.

- 9) Have a short 2-minute presentation on Tuesday for those nominated for office then a regular presentation on Wednesday for those running for office.*
- 10) Need more room in classroom setting to get up and get to microphones and to move around.*
- 11) LCD Projector was well liked but needs to be in bigger font to be seen well.*
- 12) PAC Auctions and yard sale well received.*
- 13) Monte to hold silent auction for WRLCA equipment to be sold.*
- 14) Juniors will have their own function and not be at the WRLCA banquet, but will give their Patriotism Program after Memorial Service.*

2005: Dave reported that the contract has been signed for the 2005 State Convention in Richland. The dates are June 27, 28, 29, 2005. We will be at the Shilo Suites. Prices are \$89 for 1 King or 2 Queen beds, or \$79 for 1 Queen only. The block will be held till 5/24/05. Cost for board meeting room on Saturday is \$50. All other meeting room fees (except microphones) are waived as long as food and beverage are at least \$4,200 from Sunday through Wednesday. Charges for 2 wireless microphones each day are currently at \$45.00

2006: Ann has a signed contract for 2006 in Vancouver with Red Lion Inn at the Quay. Room rates are \$55 single, \$65 double, \$75 triple, and \$85 quad (or prevailing government rates) with upgrades available for river view costing \$15. Dates are June 26-27-28, 2006. Meeting room charges based on number of sleeping rooms used and food and beverage purchased.

2007: Consensus to hold getting a contract for the 2007 State Convention until after the 2004 State Convention to have current total of attendees.

WESTERN STATES CONFERENCE APRIL 2005:

It is Washington's turn to host Western States Conference for April 28, 29, 30th, 2005. Thursday the 28th is an evening social with meetings on Friday and Saturday. The banquet is Friday evening. Patricia signed a contract with Sheraton Tacoma Hotel in Tacoma for the conference. Room rates are:

Traditional: \$99 single, \$109 double, \$10 per additional person

Mini-Suite: \$179 single, \$189 double, \$10 per additional person

King Suite: \$225 single, \$225 double, \$10 per additional person

We will get one complimentary guestroom for every 50 occupied, one upgrade for a mini-suite at the Traditional price, and one king suite for two nights. The board decided to raffle the king suite for two nights as a fund raiser (\$1.00 each 6/\$5). The block will be held until April 7, 2005. The rates and complimentary items are based on a \$1,800 minimum of food and beverage and usage of at least 80% of room block of 50 rooms for Thursday and Friday each for this event. Also there is a \$200 set up fees for both Friday and Saturday's general session. Discussion on Chair for Western States Conference and consensus was for Patricia Alexander. Susie reported that currently there is \$1,126 in checking and \$230 more from sales at the area officers meeting.

STEWARD PROGRAM UPDATE:

Charles updated the board on the latest steward activities and arbitrations. Charles develop a resolving issues with postal management packet to help define any issues, decide if a grievance needs to be filed, and creates a paper trail for details. Charles will send it to all local stewards. Next he reported on the post mail count meeting with District concerning red lining that was mostly about edit books. Charles feels that we will have more regional arbitrations coming up, and is having trouble getting the grievant paid when an award has been decided. Charles then updated the board on the National Steward Training, of which Patrick attended. Discussion on OWCP outsourcing to a company to video people on OWCP to try and catch them, which then usually involves the Postal Inspectors.

Next was discussion on Judi retiring and her duties as Assistant State Steward. Charles will get more information from Judi and report back at the next board meeting. Discussion continued concerning the retired representative not getting a stipend to attend board meetings while the other elected board members receive ADOP, and it was decided to continue the discussion at the next board meeting after each has time to think more about it.

DISTRICT MEETINGS FEEDBACK:

The feedback from each District having their own meeting, with three on one weekend and one the following weekend, was positive. District 1, 2, and 3 each had good attendance, however, District 4 was low. Overall, it was agreed that it would best to continue separate meetings next year. District 3 said the feedback having Joe Harvey, a retirement specialist from Human Resources (who came on his own time) and Bob Lavigne, EAP speaker was very informative and helped draw members, as well as the mail count evaluation printouts.

FUTURE MEETING DATES AND DETAILS:

New Local Steward Training, Steward Enhancement Training, and Labor Relations Training:

The board reached consensus to reimburse the local stewards \$150 for new local steward training All members are invited to attend local steward and enhancement training but will not receive reimbursement unless they are a certified local steward.

- **New Local Steward Training:** There will be new local steward training as needed on an ongoing basis.
- **Enhancement Training:** There will be NO enhancement training until next WRLCA year 04/05 since local steward elections start in July, 2004.
- **State Convention Labor Relations Training:** June 20, 2004, from 10 AM to 4 PM. Everyone is invited but no local steward will be paid to attend.

Board Meeting:

- June 19, 2004 at State Convention in Bellingham. Saturday from 9 AM to 5 PM.

WASHINGTON RURAL CARRIER:

The Board set the following date for the Washington Rural Carrier as per Constitution and Bylaws: Spring Issue: Paper to printer the week of April 5, 2004, articles to Susie by March 15. The board discussed the cost for Becky W to send out meeting notices and that if the paper came out more often, the paper could be the meeting notice.

DJSC UPDATES:

Seattle: Patrick has started on the DJSC and Becky Pike will be trained in April. Shawn has been asked to be the recorder.

Spokane: Dave reported that Spokane had a 16 hour training this week, as well as selected 2 Ad Hoc Trainers for Greenacres.

Portland: Monte updated the board on the Portland DJSC as well as what is happening on the AJSC. The question that will be asked in the future is "What is the next step of the process".

NATIONAL CONVENTION:

Patricia said she received a suggestion for the National Convention delegates. It is:

1. Have one assigned delegate for each break out/training session that will take notes and share with the others. The rest of the delegates should meet and discuss the resolutions and constitution and by law proposed changes.

The board thought this was a great idea and suggested that a constitution and by law proposal go in to change the duties.

NEXT BOARD MEETING:

- June 19, 2004 in Bellingham at the Best Western Lakeway Inn 9 AM to 5 PM

Respectfully Submitted:

Rebecca Wendlandt, WRLCA Secretary / Treasurer

Want to be a Delegate to National Convention?

There is still time to submit your nomination form for delegate to the National Convention. Mail it to the State Secretary to arrive by May 12.

EDIT BOOK REVIEWS FINALLY COMPENSATED IN SEATTLE DISTRICT

Charles Alexander

We need to be compensated for what we are required to do. The concept is simple, but oftentimes managers are confused by our evaluated system. A good case in point is the manager who tells the rural carriers, "I'm going to be sending the Edit Books to Seattle next Thursday, so everyone needs to review their Edit Books before Thursday." What precisely does a manager expect the rural carriers to do when they review their Edit Books, and how will the rural carriers be paid? Is a normal review of the Edit Book different from when there has just been a big adjustment to your route, and there are lots of travel changes that need to be verified? Again, how are rural carriers to be compensated for working in their Edit Books?

In general, when you add or subtract an address from your Edit Book during a mail count, the time IN EXCESS of what it would have taken you to make the same change on the back of your Trip Sheet (the way we used to do it before the advent of Edit Books) should be tracked and recorded as Column R time. Since the time for the writing involved in adding a new address is roughly equivalent whether the change is made on the back of a Trip Sheet or in an Edit Book, the excess time turns out to be the time it takes you to find the spot in the Edit Book where the change needs to be made. But how are rural carriers to be compensated for regular REVIEWS of their Edit Books, and how extensive should those reviews be? These are some of the questions I asked Bob Nelson, Manager of Operations Programs Support, when we discussed Edit Books this past week. I told Bob that it was his call whether or not the District wanted us to make periodic reviews of our Edit Books, but that if we were to be required to do the reviews, we needed an explanation of the procedure we would be expected to use, and then an appropriate compensation would have to be built into our evaluations. Bob agreed, and the result is the memo attached to this email. Please read the memo carefully and take special note that you will NOT be required to do a line by line review as part of the normal monthly maintenance of your Edit Book. All that should be necessary is a quick check of recent changes to be sure that Address Management in Seattle properly implemented everything that you noted on your Edit Book the last time it was sent down. Remember that you are only going to have 4+ minutes per month built into your evaluation, so don't plan to make your normal monthly Edit Book review an involved project. A quick check of a few recently changed or added addresses is all that should be necessary. You will also note that should an extensive line by line review be necessary/required after a route adjustment, for instance, Bob has indicated that pay on PS Form 8127, or auxiliary assistance, would be appropriate.

All in all, I think we have a procedure we can live with. Management will not be asking us to do much in a normal monthly review of our Edit Books, and we will be properly compensated for what we do. As is always the case with the evaluated system, however, some routes will have more changes that need to be checked than other routes, but in general, the compensation should be adequate. There is no question that very few carriers in the Seattle District have received any compensation for working in their Edit Books since the District Manager cancelled the last Edit Book agreement after the 2002 Arbitration award. Now, at least for the routes that are counting, one minute per week for brief monthly Edit Book reviews will be built into every evaluation.

For the first time ever, all three Districts in Washington State are being credited a minimum of one minute per week for working in the Edit Book.

Individual carriers make a difference

By John Martin

It would be easy to write an article full of all the things that were

Maddening,

Annoying,

Frustrating,

Irritating,

And unfair about the recently completed count.

Instead, here's a look at the positive:

No matter at what level our evaluations will end up, we can know that, thanks to our union, the count was better than it could have been.

When I say union, I am not merely talking about the people who are elected to run the union, although they are very hard workers and we appreciate them all.

I'm also talking about the rank and file members of the union.

Working together, then, our "union" of rural carriers was successful in getting us all a better count in some ways.

I thought of it each time I had an AOL tin that counted as a parcel, instead of as a flat, due to the fact that it had to be measured that way, according to its address orientation.

I thought of it each time I saw a small magazine or catalog that counted as a flat, instead of as a letter, due to its address orientation.

Why did this change come about? Because, in some offices, somewhere, there were some rural carriers who were annoyed enough, during past counts, to document things like this, making careful note of such things as address orientation and measurements of the disputed pieces.

These carriers then filed grievances, saying that they had not been given enough credit for these mail pieces. The grievances were, of course, denied by local management, but that only served to send them further up the line, where assistant state stewards and state stewards took over, pushing the issue on up to the national level where, on March 19, 2003, in a pre-arbitration agreement, the postal service ruled in favor of the union's position.

It doesn't always work out that well. But, sometimes it does. But, it has less chance of working out well at all if someone at the local office level doesn't get things started by documenting an issue and filing a grievance.

Yes, individual union members CAN make a difference.

Uninformed? Here's easy solution

By John Martin

Awhile back, I heard a rural carrier complaining about the lack of information made available to union members. While he was it, he complained about the fact that there is a charge of \$3 for the compact-size copies of the National Agreement.

"This is the only union I've ever been in where they charge you for a copy of the contract," the carrier complained.

I got to thinking about that later and I remembered that, in the past 14 years that I have been a carrier, every time there has been a new National Agreement it has been published, in its entirety, in the national magazine – in essence, free to all union members!

So, our union DOES distribute copies of the contract to everyone. If someone misplaces their magazine, or just wants to get a copy in a more convenient size then, yes, there is a charge.

But the whole incident got me to thinking about how MUCH information IS available to the average rural carrier. It's just a matter of taking advantage of it!

We all have busy lives, with sleep eight hours a day, work eight hours a day, and eight hours left over for families, household chores, hobbies and the other aspects of life that we either enjoy or are obligated to.

It can be hard to devote some of that precious "off" time to educating oneself on matters concerning work. And so, we find it easier to not bother, knowing that, if a question comes up, we can just "ask the steward." Of course, we may not consider that the "poor steward" then has to spend "off" time researching the answer to OUR question!

How much easier it would be on everyone if we all took advantage of the MULTITUDE of opportunities we have to educate ourselves, and THEN "ask the steward" if we still didn't understand.

Here are just some of the easy ways we have of educating ourselves:

- Our contract, or National Agreement, which is published in our magazine.
- The "Analysis of Changes" which is published in the magazine to explain new provisions of each new National Agreement.
- Our PO-603, that "yellow book" that is in the binder below our case shelf. Or, we can purchase our own copy to have at home. Sometimes, these are available for sale at union meetings, which leads to the next item:
- Union meetings. There are at least four small county meetings and two larger district-wide meetings held each year, where state or assistant state stewards, and sometimes national officers, come to speak on issues concerning rural carriers. There is also an annual state convention, along with larger Western States meetings and National Convention. Those who can't attend the national convention can read every word uttered there in our national magazine, which brings up, once again:
- Our national magazine, "The National Rural Letter Carrier," which comes out every two weeks. It always includes detailed articles on whatever issues are coming up for rural carriers. Several times I've heard fellow rural carriers ask questions and realized that, if they had read their national magazine, they would already KNOW the answers!
- Our state newspaper, The Washington Rural Carrier, edited by the hard-working Susie Hill of Vashon. It is packed with articles from our state-level stewards, district representatives and others, alerting us to issues that affect our jobs. It comes out several times a year and is mailed to all union members.
- Charles Alexander's emails. Our state steward sends out timely emails on new and urgent issues affecting rural carriers. If you have email, ask him to add you to his list. His email address is charleska@nas.com. During the recent mail count, for example, Mr. Alexander sent out several timely emails on issues concerning the count, so rural carriers would know about them immediately, in time to do them some real good.
- The National Rural Letter Carriers Association website, www.nrlca.org. Plus, many state associations have their own websites, some official and some unofficial, but all informative. The Tennessee site, which is often highly recommended, is www.tnrlca.org. Another one is www.varlca.org, from Virginia. There are many more. To find them, simply type: rural letter carriers association into your search engine, and you'll get a list.
- The office bulletin board. As part of our National Agreement, the Postal Service is to provide a rural carrier bulletin board and the steward is responsible for maintaining it. Check this board regularly to find out about things affecting your job, and even opportunities for other types of jobs, such as being on the QWL/EI team, serving as an ad hoc trainer, or other opportunities.

- And, we'll even modestly add The Rural Enquirer to the list, along with any other local office or regional newsletters that may be out there.
- Have I left anything out? Probably. If you can think of other sources of information, let me know, and I'll list them, too.

With all of these opportunities, how can we NOT be informed? Even if we only use two or three of them, we'll easily turn into a more savvy rural carrier, much less likely to be manipulated by management.

HOW DID THE MAIL COUNT TURN OUT FOR WASHINGTON?

Charles Alexander

In an attempt to do an "exit poll" of route evaluations for Washington routes immediately after the 2004 mail count, I requested from carriers who counted and who also received email updates from me (you too can receive email updates by emailing me at charleska@nas.com) that they send State President Patricia Alexander (patriciaka@nas.com) the change in evaluation for their routes and/or the routes in their office. When the survey was finally completed, Patricia had received preliminary data from 158 routes all over the State of Washington. Based on the preliminary changes to those 158 routes, there was a net gain of 15 hours of pay for rural carriers. If the same ratio continues to hold and 800 routes end up having been counted, there would be 76 hours of paid evaluation added to Washington State rural carriers' salaries.

Projections are, of course, just that, projections, and therefore we won't really know how the 2004 mail count turned out until all the numbers are in. At this point, I am not even sure how many routes were actually counted in the three Postal Districts within the borders of Washington State. The total of 800 routes counted was just an educated guess, but if that guess is correct, and the projection does hold, rural carriers in Washington State will have collectively increased their evaluations by over \$100,000 dollars per year.

Even if the end result shows no change in evaluations, the Postal Service will have lost the extra hours it took management to count all the routes for three weeks. It is still a little early to make definitive statements, but maybe, just maybe, Western Area blew it when they tried at the last minute to opt in as many routes as possible. Like any large-scale gamble, this one might not have paid off.

Come to the State Convention June 21 and meet NRLCA Vice-President Donnie Pitts and his wife, Mary Jo. Hear the latest news from the National office. Have a good time too. See you there.

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