

# WASHINGTON RURAL POSTMAN

Official Publication of the Washington Rural Letter Carriers Association

DECEMBER 1992

## **PRESIDENTS REPORT USPS REORGANIZES**

It has been a little over four months since our state convention in Everett, and the changes taking place in the Postal Service are real. As rural carriers, we have not really been impacted to any great degree in the way we go about our jobs. That's not to say that everything is as it was prior to July 6, when Marvin Runyon took over as Postmaster General. We are becoming a leaner, meaner organization. The PMG said he would start downsizing, beginning at the top. Staffing has been cut 37% (847 positions) at Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Early retirements and/or early outs were the order of the day for some 46,000+ employees. About 30,000 left by October 3, with the remaining having until November 20 to make a decision. Included in this group are more than 33,000 bargaining unit employees. Not quite what the PMG was looking for. Most of our customers are not aware of the massive reorganization that has taken place in the Postal Service and probably could care less just as long as their mail service continues without interruption.

Postal reorganization aside, the biggest issue affecting rural carriers in recent months was the decision to count selected routes under the new time standards agreed to for sector segmented mail. I am aware of routes that were counted automated losing from one to two hours in evaluation due to sector segmented mail. Likewise, mail volume fluctuated in various locations which added to the frustrations or blessings for those being counted. Those who received sector segmented mail seemed to agree that it is much easier and faster to case. Our association has agreed to work with the Postal Service to lessen the impact that automation will have on rural carriers. I also realize that there are pros and cons as to whether the association is working in the best interests of its members. To date, I feel the best interests of the rural craft as a whole have been taken into consideration. There are individual instances where some would no doubt disagree. Keep in mind that through the QWL/EI process and our M.O.U.'s with the Postal Service, we DO have input. Information on how the special mail count went on a national level should be available in the very near future. Be sure to read upcoming issues of your national magazine.

Official proceedings of both the state and national conventions should be in the hands of all union members by now. I am not going to attempt to recap all that took place. I will say the we did make history at the national convention. The first, and by no means the last, woman has been elected to serve the members of this association at the national level. I sincerely believe that Sharon Ann DeLarme

is extremely well prepared and qualified. I now belong to the FASTEST growing MINORITY in the rural craft. The national convention in Tulsa was my third and by no means the last that I'll attend.

Local county units are once again meeting on a regular basis following time off for vacations, conventions, and just plain summer fun. I've been privileged to have attended meetings in Kelso for the Lower Columbia unit, Boyer Park for Whitman/Asotin, Kettle Falls for Northeast Counties, Prosser for Yakima Valley, and Spokane for Spokane County. In addition, I was able to attend both the east and west side mail count seminars in Spokane and Tacoma. The attendance at the west side seminar was impressive with over 120 rural carriers. There were 90+ of the FASTEST growing MAJORITY in attendance. My apologies to those of you in Lincoln/Grant/Adams and SKI Counties for missing your meetings. I hope to make it to a future meeting.

The first issue of FOCUS is out and many of its articles deal with providing service to our customers. FOCUS is the news magazine that replaces POSTAL LIFE. As an article on the back page stated, the new magazine focuses on issues, customers, and employees. I mention the new publication and its focus on customers and being competitive because of recent articles in Federal Times. One dealt with alternative delivery. According to the "Advertising Mail Marketing Association" bulletin, a private company in Seattle plans to have mail in a carrier walk mode, and to soon have 75% of the advertising mail diverted from the Post Office. Another article in a more recent issue made note of the fact that that overnight mail delivery scores dropped for the fourth quarter ending in September. Fortunately, Seattle, Louisville, and Phoenix are at 90% for on time delivery, trailing only Wichita with 91%. Back to the advertising mail and Seattle. Can you IMAGINE what would happen to route evaluations, both rural and city, losing 75% of the advertising mail? Rather than continuing increases in deliveries there would be drastic decreases that could result in routes being consolidated and carriers being excessed.

Our Fall Booster meeting was held Nov. 14 & 15 at Cavanaugh's in Kennewick, the same location as next years state convention. National Secretary/Treasurer Roger Moreland was our guest speaker. It was a good meeting.

Ann and I wish all of you a joyous and safe holiday season. We hope to see you at a meeting soon.

**Ed Koschalk  
President**



## SECRETARY/TREASURER'S REPORT NATIONAL INCREASES DUES

I have just returned from the Secretary's Conference in Washington, D.C., where we had the most informational training held so far. It was an additional half day longer and filled with seminars on LM's, Dept. of Labor, IRS audits, bookkeeping, membership, as well as speakers from the National Office and Bob West from the USPS Office of Delivery and Retail Management. Some of the highlights are as follows:

Rural Carrier Insurance. The benefit plan has been mailed to you by now, so I won't touch on that. But I will tell you that there were two fraud claims this year. One was a retiree who claimed over \$45,000 in fraudulent claims by adjusting Doctor bills and prescription charges. The other was a former member who knew she lost her coverage when she quit but continued to submit claims for both herself and her children for \$75,000. These 2 people now face prosecution, restitution, fines, and time in Federal Prison. Also, the retiree lost the disability retirement. It's not worth it!

Bob West will be staying at Headquarters. This is to our benefit because he is the only one there that knows all about rural delivery. We have 48,310 rural routes that travel 2.6 million miles per day, making 22 million deliveries per day. 12,000 of the Long Life Vehicles (LLV's) will start being distributed among rural routes in September of 1993. They will go to the Vehicle Maintenance Facilities. The cost per mile will determine which rural routes receive them. The southern part of the U.S. will be the first to get them. The routes will have to be low cost with a 20 to 30 route mile limit. Some of the questions that will be asked are can the vehicles be parked in a Post Office lot that is fenced and locked and does the route justify having an LLV with high mail and high parcel volume. In some unsecured locations, they have been having trouble with batteries being stolen out of the LLV's. We'll have more info on the criteria early next year.

We were given a lot of instructional material regarding bookkeeping systems. The national office is working on one standard method for all states. The IBM compatible as well as the Mac computers, along with the manual forms for those who do not own computers, will all be alike. GREAT! The accounting firm that the national office uses continues to recommend that the states use the services of a CPA.

We were also informed on other topics, such as the state papers, vouchers, class labels, express mail, grievances, and the contract.

Now I would like to discuss a more serious matter. By now you have read in your national paper about the dues increase passed at the national convention. The delegates passed a resolution increasing the national portion of our dues by \$8.00 per regular carrier, \$4.00 for RCA/RCR, and \$2.00 for retirees. This will make the 1993/94 dues for

Washington State as follows: Regulars, \$268.00; RCA/RCR, \$51.00; Retirees, \$35.00. Remember, this does not start until July 1, 1993. Think about it this way: Regular carriers are looking at only a 31 cent per pay period increase, RCA/RCR increase 33 cents per month, and the retirees increase amounts to only 17 cents per month.

In June of 1988, your board took out a loan for \$25,000 because we were in debt and could not pay our bills. When I was elected in June of 1989, I knew things were bad and I still accepted the responsibility of the office. That first year was overwhelming. We had a loan with a balance of \$13,000. The bookkeeping was a nightmare, and there were no files. The first two years were frightening and frustrating. I also set up files and kept copies of everything. The second year I purchased a computer and set up a new bookkeeping system on it. The system wasn't perfect because it was complicated and hard for the board members to understand, but it furnished the CPA with the information that he needed. This year I have perfected it some, as well as having learned the capabilities of the computer, and now will be able to furnish a more readable financial report to the board.

What I have to report now is that we have, over the past three years, accumulated \$34,000 in reserves. This is still not enough. It is recommended that we have at least one years operating expenses in reserve. This would amount to around \$150,000. Because we continued to put in new programs, and spent more during the last two years, this year we were not able to put any money in reserve. We have not dipped into the reserves yet, but if we continue to operate as we have over the past two years, we will. There is no emergency yet, but the board will need to make some serious decisions at their meeting at fall booster.

We now have 1223 members, but many of our last years cash paying members have not renewed. If you know anyone who was a member last year and has not paid yet, remind them, please.

I told the delegation at the state convention in June that I would have the membership entered into my computer so each county secretary could have an accurate list of their county members. As of today, I am half way there. My goal is to have it completed by the first of the year, and the I'll send the county secretaries their lists.

**Kit N. Witt**  
**Secretary/Treasurer**





## **DISTRICT ONE REPORT BIDDING RIGHTS DIVIDE CONVENTION**

As your elected Delegate-at-Large to the 88th National Convention, I had several duties beyond the normal responsibilities of representing the members of the state of Washington. One of those duties, this written report on the National Convention, will depart significantly from the overview that is usually associated with the task.

The ramifications and implications of a resolution offered by our state to the National Convention several years ago continues to foster controversy. No other resolution at this years National Convention sparked more debate than the one concerning whether or not in-house RCA's should maintain bidding preference over regular carriers from other offices. Under the current contract, when a rural route becomes vacant, the regular carriers in that office have the first opportunity to bid for the vacancy, followed by the designation 73 subs (if any) in that office, followed by the RCA's in that office, followed by regular carriers from outside the office were the vacancy occurs. Regular carriers in one route offices where the route evaluation is either low and stable or rapidly declining are thus faced with the prospect of not being able to bid a better routes in other offices because the RCA's in those offices have seniority over them in the bidding process. Simply giving all regular carriers bidding seniority over all RCA's creates a different problem no less severe in magnitude. The number one incentive for most RCA's is the in-office bidding rights they earn after one year of uninterrupted service at a particular office. The sacrifices most of them make by giving up other full time employment, working the hard days after holidays, being on call six days a week, working Saturdays, and having to learn multiple routes, just wouldn't be worth it to most RCA's without the prospect of bidding for a regular route in the not-too-distant future

If regular rural carriers from outside offices could automatically outbid RCA's in the office where a route becomes vacant, those RCA's would have no assurance of ever being employed as a regular rural carrier. the job of hiring and keeping quality RCA's would thus be even more difficult than it is at the present time. At this years National Convention, delegate after delegate either argued for the position of helping the regular carrier stuck in a bidding cul-de-sac, or the contrary position of preventing any erosion of RCA's bidding rights. Both positions clearly had merit, and even though the vast majority of the delegates were not RCA's, the decision was finally reached to table an amended resolution that would have favored the status quo and hence the RCA's.

It seems to me that the NRLCA should attempt to represent the interests of as many of its members as possible, and steer for compromise between competing groups. The issue of bidding seniority between in-office RCA's and out-of-office regular

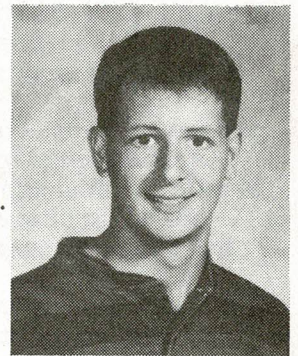
carriers almost begs for compromise. If we, the membership of the Washington Rural Letter Carriers' Association, spend some time thinking about and discussing this problem in our county, district, and state meetings, perhaps we can come up with a compromise that solves the dilemma. To start you thinking, I offer the following suggestion: *For the purpose of bidding on a vacant route, regular rural carriers, from one carrier offices within a fifty (50) mile radius of the office with the vacant route, shall be considered the least senior regular carrier in the office with the vacant route. Any senior designation 73 substitute or senior RCA "bumped" by a regular carrier from a one route office shall have the right of first refusal to fill the residual vacancy in the one route office.* This , or a similar proposal, would allow regular rural carriers in one route offices a limited opportunity to escape financial hardship, without significantly eroding the RCA bidding rights. Any RCA attempting to calculate his bidding seniority would simply need to consider regular rural carriers from one-route offices within 50 miles of his office as potentially higher in seniority. Senior RCA's looking for the shortest path to full time employment would thus have the opportunity to take the residual vacancy (regular or RCA) at the one route office. Such a move could be taken in preparation for moving out and up when vacancies occur in offices within the fifty mile radius. RCA's could also exercise the option to transfer to an office that was not within fifty miles of a one route office. Such a move would render them immune to being bumped by those regular carriers from one route offices.

The above ideas are meant only to serve as a starting place for all of us to seek a compromise resolution to a potentially divisive issue. Our association was founded to represent everyone in the rural carrier craft, and it is our responsibility to jointly seek solutions that make that goal a reality.

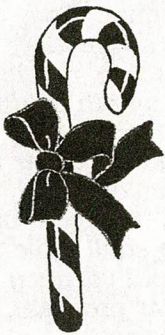
**Charles Alexander  
District One Rep.**

### **DARIN REPPE RECEIVES WRLCA SCHOLARSHIP INTENDS MATH MAJOR**

Darin Reppe, 1992 graduate of Touchet High School, was winner of the scholarship for 1992. Darin, son of David and Sandra Reppe of Touchet, plans to major in Secondary Mathematics at Eastern Wash. University in Cheney. Other areas of study for Darin will be Spanish and Pys.Ed. This years scholarship was \$500. Good luck Darin!!!







Postmaster General Marvin Runyon signs banquet programs after the National Convention Banquet on Wednesday night. Editor Dan Snyder was one of those who was able to get his autograph (below).

## PROGRAM

Invocation

Introduction  
of Head Table

**William R. Brown, Jr.**  
*NRLCA President*

Dinner

Guest

**Marvin T. Runyon**  
*U.S. Postmaster General*

Entertainment

**Kathy Mattea**



## **DISTRICT TWO REPORT**

### **MISTAKES MADE OFTEN IN OWCP CASES**

Greetings from your District Two Representative. Continuing with my series of articles on OWCP, the following is taken from a recent "Federal Times" for your benefit.

Postmasters and supervisors don't know the law about handling injured workers, according to an attorney in the field. It's costing the U.S. Postal Service large amounts of money, he said.

Last year, USPS paid out \$382.6 million in workers compensation claims, plus an additional \$14.4 million in administrative costs, according to a postal spokesman.

Howard Graham, an attorney who handles injured worker complaints in Tacoma, Wash., said not observing the medical restrictions placed on injured workers by physicians causes chronic injuries, which mean large workers compensation claims. A recent case he handled amounted to \$500,000, he said.

Forcing injured postal workers back to work too soon is a "short-term benefit to managers but a long-term cost to taxpayers," Graham said.

"The problem is lack of training and a lack of supervision," Graham said.

In an ongoing case, Graham is representing a letter carrier who was ordered to go to a contract physician after injuring his leg on his route and then was told to go back to work. A subsequent examination by specialists at a Veterans Affairs medical center showed a ruptured tendon, Graham said.

"They now predict this injury may be a permanent injury," Graham said in a letter to USPS demanding action on a compensation claim.

The issue of prompt action following an injury is a touchy one. In the Southeastern (Pa.) Management Sectional Center, officials are preparing to issue a memo clarifying an earlier memo sent to local postmasters on injuries.

The earlier message contained such tips as: "Take the employee to a contract physician immediately," and re-contact the physician in an attempt to get the injured worker on limited duty work to avoid losing work hours.

The memo used the phrase "try to convince the doctor to return the employee to work."

Under the contract covering craft employees, the injured worker can pick the physician and does not have to go to the postal service's contract physician. There is a guarantee of "the right to a free choice of physician," according to postal regulations.

The employee has a choice of doctors even after being treated in an emergency.

Jeffrey Moran, the Pennsylvania MSC's director of human resources, is the author of the first memo and soon will send out the second, clarifying memo. He said the purpose of the first message was to alert postmasters and doctors to the availability of limited duty.

"We're going to clarify it by words to the effect if we think the doctor doesn't understand limited duty, we let them know we can do it," said Moran. "It may help to clarify some items."

Joseph DeMarco, human resources director at the South Jersey Division, said he felt Moran's memo was "misconstrued, more than anything else. Jeff was trying to explain to postmasters that private doctors are not as familiar with limited duty as a contract doctor."

"The safety and health of employees is of foremost interest," said DeMarco. Officials "clearly are not trying to coerce people," he added.

Wilson Clow, an advocate for injured workers, disagreed.

"They put it in exactly the way they wanted it," he said of the original memo. "They continue to harass, coerce, and violate the (handbook) to suit their purposes." He said actions by local jurisdictions were taken "with the knowledge of upper postal management."

Clow, who heads the National Association of Federal Injured Workers in Tacoma, WA., said managers "are causing more severe injuries to employees when more rest is needed. They are working people with herniated discs, fractured bones."

Clow charged that officials are not eager to offer support in cases of injury, and sometimes proper forms are not available.

Attorney Graham said a postmaster in the Seattle Field Division was giving injured workers improper forms.

"A couple of months later, the employee gets the form back with a note saying it was sent to the wrong office," Graham said.

**Jennie M. Seeley**  
**District Two Rep.**

## **DISTRICT THREE REPORT**

### **USPS SHAKE-UP IMPACTS SERVICE**

Just when things look like we are on the right track, BOOM!! Along comes a new PMG, and suddenly, one wonders if we will have enough experienced help to handle the holiday mail. Granted, the postal service was top heavy with managers, and ready made jobs for no matter how insignificant the task. Initially, they were looking to reduce the work force by some 30-35 thousand employees. During a recent stand-up talk, our postmaster told us that the numbers are closer to 40,000 plus!

The largest percentage of those in the Spokane MSC were postmasters and city letter carriers. However, there was also an appreciable number of experienced distribution clerks who made the decision to jump on the bandwagon before it left town.

The deadline for the first wave was the 3rd of October. Now, for whatever reason, they have extended it until the 20th of November. This time postmasters are not eligible.

The presidents of both the National Association of Postmasters, and the Supervisors Union testified



before the House Post Office Committee. Both organizations have hired top gun lawyers and threaten to slap an injunction against the PMG and the Post Office if their bargained for rights are jeopardized. Both also let it be known that they had suspicions that the new PMG, Marvin Runyon, was hired to dismantle the Postal Service and turn it over to private enterprise.

So what is next?? Where do we go from here? What about all the programs? QWL/EI and MBP? Are they to be discontinued? Is automation still on target? What about our contract??

Now, more than ever, we need to become better informed on the issues and encourage those members who do not attend our meetings to participate and become a part of our family.

**Jack Spangler**  
District Three Rep.

### **DISTRICT FOUR REPORT PROBLEMS WITH SECTOR/SEGMENT MAIL**

My office was automated prior to this years September mail count. Four routes qualified to be counted and four did not. Mine did not. This process was done in a very compact time frame so that the postal service could capture the savings on those routes that qualified for the count.

This system works great if you are lucky enough to have a route that is street addressed. This is the case with two of the eight routes in my office.

Given the enormity of the task and the limited time frame, AIS had no choice but to concentrate on the routes that were to be counted. If you were to call AIS with a problem, the first question was always, "Are you one of the routes that will be counted?" If the answer was no, you were basically told that your problem was at the bottom of the pile and that it was a very large pile. This was completely understandable. I was getting mail that was easier to case, and at least for a year, I won't have to pay the price for it.

On the routes that I am most familiar with among those that were counted, 10-15% of the letters daily that were in the sector/segment trays were not truly sector/segmented. This would certainly not be acceptable to a clerk sorting the mail.

Now that the count is finished, I have attempted to get AIS to straighten out various problems with my segments concerning the zip+ fours. While AIS and I are in agreement as to what the problems are, and also in agreement as to what the solutions are, I am now being told that AIS is not allowed to implement the necessary changes, basically because until the national count next September, '93, the postal service won't benefit at all financially from straightening it out.

I have always believed that a job worth doing is worth doing right. It is incredibly more difficult to try and straighten out these problems after the system has been installed incorrectly.

So, if you are going to be automated for the next count, attend every meeting you can and find out everything you can about sector/segmenting and do all the screaming and yelling and phone calling it takes to see that it gets done right the first time.

In the Spokane MSC, at least, they are only going to authorize one day of training, be it for cross training a sub on a new (additional) route, or, something that the contract doesn't address, training a sub who has bid to change the route on which they are a sub of record on due to a vacancy. Local management can authorize additional training if they are willing to "eat" the hours. You have to try to persuade them it is in their best interest to do so.

An apparent ongoing problem is the belief that handing the immediate supervisor a Step One statement constitutes filing a grievance. THIS IS NOT THE CASE!!! The Step One statement serves ONLY to document that a Step One meeting occurred. In order for a grievance to be filed, either the grievant, or in the case of a class action, the local steward, must say the phrase "This is Step One of the grievance process."

Hope to see you at a meeting soon.

**Steve Higgins**  
District Four Rep.

### **STATE STEWARDS REPORT YOU MUST HAVE A STAMP STOCK!**

I want to take this opportunity to recognize and thank all of you who serve as Local Stewards. Without you, the financial burden on this Union would be enormous and representation would not be as good as it is now.

I have not publicly thanked all the former stewards who have served and retired or just resigned the job for whatever reason. THANK YOU!

I am taking the liberty of borrowing a section of an article and a letter from Alvin Oliver, Illinois State Steward, printed in the Illinois state paper:

#### **STAMP STOCK REQUIRED FOR EVERYONE**

PO 603 (162.1): *Rural carrier must maintain a supply of stamp stock sufficient to meet the needs of the route. An adequate quantity of postage stamps fixed credits is issued to you, unless you prefer to purchase an adequate amount of stamp stock with personal funds. Rural carriers must have access to stamp stock in the office and must not be required to purchase stock from window clerks in the service lobby.*

There are many, many offices, (carriers) especially in North Suburban Division that do not have stamp stock, and even more relief carriers that are not being required to have stamp stock. This practise must come to a halt, and for the following reasons:

1. This is part of your work duties and responsibilities as a rural carrier.



2. The fact we are touted as "A Post Office on Wheels", we must maintain that credibility and respect.

3. The fact that many North Suburban Division offices are constantly in a contest on the most "Stamps by Mail", is another reason we must use the rural envelopes. The bright orange long envelopes, Form 3227-R, MUST be furnished to you.

4. There is a form, Notice 208, which shows what services the rural carrier provides, that must be given as boxholders once a year, and preferably in the fall. We request that each of you insist on this form, and grieve if not provided.

5. The Rural Letter Carrier Union is requiring you to all have stamp stock. We will not be defending your not completing all your work duties as a rural carrier.

If you have asked for stamp stock repeatedly and have been denied this, please contact a State Board Member, as North Division on Aug. 25/92 had sent a letter to all their offices requiring this be done for all carriers. THE REGULAR OR RELIEF DOES NOT HAVE THE OPTION AS TO WANTING OR NOT WANTING ANY STAMP STOCK. THE OPTION IS IF YOU HAVE YOUR OWN OR THE POSTAL SERVICE STOCK.

The issuing of such small amount as not to be adequate to serve the needs of the route should also be changed. We know that if you have not been making stamps available, your business if not too great, but once you provide the orange envelopes and the Form 208, you will be cultivating business, exactly what the new PMG is advocating.

We also want the top of the trip reports completed and to be accurate. This also has been covered by this same letter that North Division sent out. Read the back of the Form 4240 and you will see that you only complete the first six (6) blocks, and management must complete 7-12. The Remarks section is not only your section, but is your most important documented factoid. The August 25/92 letter from Division follows so that you can read for yourself so there can be no denial.

**TO: Postmasters  
Rural Offices Only  
North Suburban Area (600-603)**

*It has come to my attention that some of our rural carriers do not have a stamp stock to service the customers on their routes. Rural carriers are required to have supply sufficient to meet the needs of their route.*

*Also, Form 3227R, Stamp Purchase Order, should be available to our rural customers.*

*What better way to reduce the amount of retail traffic in your lobbies while at the same time providing our customers a more convenient retail service alternative to driving to the post office to purchase stamps.*

*Additionally, the use of the Rural Carrier Trip Report, PS Form 4240, has been observed not being accurately prepared as required by the carrier*

*and/or management. Specific observations include lack of daily carrier times, and changes in deliveries.*

*The respective responsibilities for completion are listed on the back of the form.*

*It is your responsibility to ensure these forms are reviewed for completeness and accuracy, proper workhour/overtime recording, leave calculations, and submitted corresponding forms, (i.e., PS Form 4003, 1621-C) to maintain credible route data and employee compensation.*

*Postmasters must ensure these rural management requirements on stamp stock and control forms are being met.*

*David C. Fields, Sr., Director, Field Operations-9992*

It is most disappointing when I learn that many carriers and especially Non-L carriers who are not selling stamps and services on their routes. Bringing it the next day doesn't cut it. All Non-L carriers should realize that the stamp purchase credit gives half of you a one hours greater evaluation. Let's earn those dollars!!!

The DJSC plans to start training soon for automation and the 1993 mail count. We anticipate bringing on 6 more offices in addition to those who had some routes counted automated this year. The additional offices are: Auburn, Kent, Marysville, Monroe, Snohomish, and Yakima.

It is nearly 11:00 P.M. and I plan to get up at 4:00 A.M. to go hunt the mighty elk. Wish me luck!!

**Neil M. Buchanan  
State Steward**

### **STATE PRESIDENTS SELECT NEW RURAL CARRIER UNIFORMS**

**DAN SNYDAR**

At a recent meeting held in Washington D.C., the State Presidents and Officers of the National Rural Letter Carrier's Association, along with representatives of the United States Postal Service, reached agreement on the new uniforms to be worn by all rural carrier craft employees. The new, unisex uniforms, will include pants, long sleeve shirt, and sportscoat. After debating several styles and fabrics and colors, consensus was reached on a manure colored, 100% heavy polyester leisure suit style of uniform. A black, platform sole leather shoe will also be a part of the stylish ensemble. The new rural carrier leisure suit uniform will be worn year 'round, as the weight of the polyester will keep the carrier warm in winter, and absorbs sweat well during the summer months, as all three pieces, including the long sleeve shirt, will be worn at all times. The left front of the jacket will have the USPS logo printed on the fabric. The only rural carriers who will be exempt from wearing the uniforms are those whose routes require that they ride ferry boats on a daily basis. "I'm sure the carriers will love them when they get them in February.", said state pres. Ed.





Washington Rural Letter Carrier's Association President Ed Koschalk (above) discusses the issues with other rural carriers seated at his table at the National Convention Banquet. Also attending the banquet and sharing their views with carriers from across the nation were WRLCA Vice-President Lynn Walker and his wife, Auxiliary Rep. Donna (below).





## EDITOR'S RAMBLINGS DAN SNYDAR

Hope you all made it through the election season okay. A couple of the local races here in Whatcom County weren't as hotly contested this year as they had been in past years, so the mail was somewhat lighter. The Presidential election came out the way I had been hoping it would. Now we at the Post Office can look forward to a "kinder, gentler, administration."

For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of being counted automated yet, this oughta make your day. In my office, it cost the average carrier anywhere from 1 to 2 hours per week in evaluation. I think it's safe to say that most routes had about 50% of the mail as sector/segmented, and therefore counted at a lower rate per piece. The sector/segment mail was actually rather lousy, as far as correctness goes. In most cases they will not break a segment at the end of the case on the far right, resulting in the carrier having to turn way around to case letters from the segment just because the same 100 block happens to wrap around. Hopefully, they'll have the s/s mail straightened out before the rest of you have to put up with it.

I was one of your paid delegates to the National Convention in Tulsa, OK, this past August. We elected a lady carrier from Pennsylvania to the national board, Sharon DeLorme. She's the one who has the rural route with several hundred customers and only one or two stops. Sharon drives a van, as she does not need to be able to reach mailboxes as we all do. She dismounts for a very large apartment complex. Sounds like an interesting route. Definitely an "L" route!

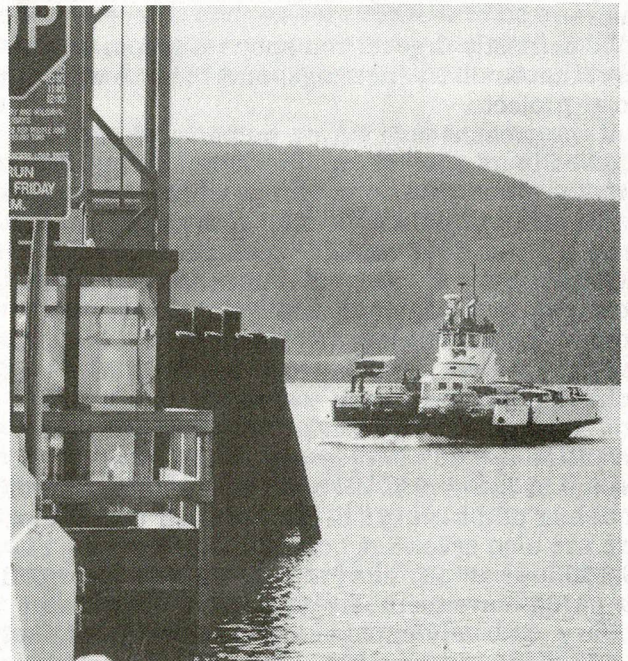
Some interesting resolutions were considered this year also. We passed a resolution to support 6-day delivery; early-out retirement, and sick leave retirement credit for FERS employees. One resolution that was objected to, but later passed, was one to convert highway contract routes (HCR) to regular rural delivery once they reach the one box per mile criteria. Can you believe someone actually objected to that? Makes you wonder what some people have for brains! We also rejected resolutions to ask the Postal Service to increase their contribution to our health coverage; that our pay go up (or down) in 15 minute increments; MSC postings of rural routes; half day sick leave use; rural carrier's birthday as a holiday; to increase the annual leave carry-over from 55 to 70 days, and to provide health benefits to RCA's at the same cost as we pay. One thing that was evident was that there were a lot of people at the convention who do not understand the give and take of contract negotiations. We killed some good resolutions that we could have used as bargaining chips. If you want only 3 items, you don't just go to the table with those 3 things!! You take a whole bunch up with you, that way you can "give up" the items that aren't at the top of the list, and hopefully come away with those that you really wanted in the first place. How and why

some of these states send some of these people as delegates to the national convention is a mystery to me. They would be better suited making policy for the Farmer's Co-op or the Church Council. Perhaps they should learn about collective bargaining and negotiations before they go to another convention.

The 1993 National Convention will be held August 10-13, in Philadelphia, PA. I can't decide whether to fly or take the train, but one way or another, I'll be there.

This will probably be the last issue of the "Postman" that non-members will be receiving. We are in a bit of a budget crunch, and I did some calculating just to see how much money from the Editor's budget is spent on printing and postage for non-members. We have approx. 800 who do not pay dues in this state. I have spent, and can count on spending, an additional \$1600.00 per year for the extra printing and postage costs. That money can be better spent serving the needs of the MEMBERSHIP and not being flushed down where it is going now. Those people who do not pay dues have that choice. Why should we keep spending YOUR money trying to keep THEM educated and informed??!! Let them depend on their good friends in management to let them know how things are supposed to be!

Here's a picture of the ferry boat I ride every day. Interesting to know how many of you read the uniform article earlier on. It would have made a great story in an April 1 issue, if we had one. Well, that's all. Don't work too hard over the next few weeks!



The Lummi Island Ferry, "Whatcom Chief".



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# AUXILIARY NEWS AND REPORTS

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## AUXILIARY PRESIDENTS REPORT S.I.D.S. IS NATIONAL PROJECT

At the National Convention, a new "Program of Discovery" was launched by Marilyn Jones, newly elected National Auxiliary President. Our aim is to help discover the cause and help eliminate **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome**.

SIDS is the sudden, unexplained death of a seemingly healthy baby-the leading cause of death among infants in this country. It claims the life of nearly one baby every hour of every day.

Usually, our national president selects a project that has personally touched his or her own life. That is the case this year. President Marilyn was taking care of her baby grandson and was the one who found the baby dead in his crib. It is her fervent hope that research will find the reason that these healthy babies die in their sleep, and no other parent or grandparent will have to go through the hurt her family had to suffer.

Her symbol is a three masted sailing ship, with our Association, Auxiliary, and Junior logos. We are all working for a common goal. The pins sell for \$10.00 and make you a member of the "Admiral's Club". We also have flashlight keychains for \$3.00, and packages of notes for \$1.00.

The Subaru Company of America has donated another car to be raffled. All the proceeds will be put in a special fund for a perpetual scholarship for our Juniors.

We earnestly urge all you spouses to join us and attend the Auxiliary meetings, and help us with our special projects.

At the present time we are preparing dues cards to be mailed to all spouses on dues withholding. There are many of you who do not know what we do to help our Association. When we mail your card you will receive a letter detailing all of our activities.

One thing I would like to mention is our own scholarship given each year and the many scholarships offered to our juniors by National. This past year we were able to give a \$500.00 scholarship because of the success of our Country Store. Items offered at the Country Store at State Convention are donated by our Auxiliary and Association members. All proceeds go to a child or grandchild of a member to further their education. There are also several scholarships given by National and all our children are eligible, provided their parents are members of the Association and Auxiliary. One very capable and talented young lady was awarded a scholarship at National, but she was later deemed ineligible because her mother did not belong to the Auxiliary.

I would like to thank all you faithful, diligent members who are working so hard to make our Auxiliary and project so successful. You are

appreciated by all who have benefited from all your hard work through the years.

Both Joe and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best for the coming holidays, and hope your New Year is a happy and successful one.

**Hazel Halleck**  
Auxiliary President

## SECRETARY-TREASURER'S REPORT

Greetings! Fall has come once again, and the MASTER ARTIST, using the Earth like a giant canvas, paints the beauty of Autumn for our eyes to behold, and we are blessed.

Another challenge is before me. I was elected Secretary/Treasurer at the state convention in June. I accept this challenge!! There is a time for all of us to serve. It will be an honor and a privilege to serve the Auxiliary.

PAC is important. We need to be involved as an Auxiliary and be helpers to the Association. I have received the 1992 NRLCA PAC Handbook that serves as our guidelines. There is a format we must follow. Raffles are an excellent way to raise money for PAC. When choosing a raffle, there is check list to be filled out. This must be filled out before it is given to the PAC chairman with the money and receipts, for him to send to national. The person conducting the raffle needs to know the guidelines. This is for the PAC chairman and the national office. SKI County Auxiliary has been active in contributing to PAC through raffles at the state convention. At the SKI meeting in October, \$62.75 was donated to PAC through a raffle.

We are on the Family Plan for dues. One major goal we want to accomplish this year is to send out permanent dues cards to all members.

Let us all be available to write letters to our Legislators in D.C. on issues that are important to the Rural Carriers.

Be thankful, count your blessings, and thank HIM. Hope you had a blessed Thanksgiving and here's hoping you have a Wonderful Christmas this holiday season.

**Delores Robb**  
Secretary/Treasurer



## **DISTRICT ONE REPORT ON THE ROAD AGAIN**

Hello everyone! Time for an article for the paper again, and here I am, wondering what to say!

I am sorry that I didn't get to Tulsa for the Nat'l Convention, but Dexter was getting ready to retire and didn't have the annual leave time for us to go. Dexter retired as of the 30th of October, so now we have time to do some traveling. We will be in Yuma, Arizona, by the time you read this. Our address will be: c/o Hidden Cove Park, 2450 W. Water St., Sp.47, Yuma, AZ 85364. We have someone to take care of our house while we are gone, so no worries there. We'll be back in March!

We attended the SKI meeting in Kent. I sold flashlights and notes there. I also passed out brochures on the National SIDS Program.

I regret that we will be gone and will miss Fall Booster and the Board Meeting. As the season nears, I'd like to wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving and a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!!

Love you all and hope to see lots of you in the spring.

**Inez Nesmoe  
District One Rep.**

## **DISTRICT TWO REPORT COUNTRY STORE PROFITABLE**

Greetings from you District Two Representative!

We were able to attend the Lower Columbia Meeting held in Longview at the Masthead Restaurant. There was a good attendance at this meeting.

We were VERY pleased with the Auxiliary Country Store. At the 1992 state convention we made a grand total of \$459.25. This was our best year since we started in 1980. So we give a big THANK YOU to all Auxiliary, Retirees, and Association members who gave us donated items to sell at our store. Without your continued support, this project would be impossible.

We were truly pleased when we could give Mr. & Mrs. Dave Reppe's son, Darin, a scholarship check for \$500.00 to help him with his continuing education.

Our National Humanitarian Project is Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). We are pleased to say that we have sold \$80.00 worth of either notes, flashlights, or SIDS project pins. Thanks, Lower Columbia!!

This year we are again asking for items for the Country Store. We will accept craft items, baked goods, jellies, jams, or maybe you even have a treasure in your closet you no longer want. We would be happy to accept these items also.

Hazel Halleck, our State Auxiliary President, has a nice traveling raffle, which includes a lamp, pair of pillow cases, clock, crocheted table cloth, and a padded album. This money will be used for SIDS research. So buy a chance when you can and help

save our babies. Thank you for your continuing support of all of our Auxiliary projects.

Hope you had a Blessed Thanksgiving and may you all have a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

**Odetta Yeager  
District Two Rep.**

## **DISTRICT FOUR REPORT AMERICANISM**

Hello from the 4th District! And Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!!

It's good to serve on Hazel's board, and she's requested I write something on Americanism. Now where to begin.....

How often I have wondered if there were any patriotism left in our country, then there was Desert Storm! How the American people can "Rally 'round the flag". What a dreadful way to find out that we love our country and what it stands for. *What Americanism!* But there's more to it than flags flying and singing our national anthem. Men and women must die, also, so that we may practice Americanism.

During a trip last year, we were surprised to learn, at Gettysburg, PA, that our country is still piecing together information to name the soldiers in all those unmarked graves. The battlefields with all their monuments make you really think hard about what has gone on before. And the markers, row upon row of them at Arlington National Cemetery, made me feel very sad, and yet very PROUD to be an American. What price our country has paid for the right to be free. Isn't this what Americanism is all about?

I believe the feelings we get in the pit of our stomachs or the lumps in our throats is a "feeling" of Americanism, such as when you see the little kids salute the flag or wave their little flags as the parade OR the big kids in uniform parade by.

And did we all vote? This also is a part of Americanism. It's not only our right, but our responsibility!!! If you don't vote, you haven't the right to complain.

Fly your flag every day. Stand tall and sing the national anthem and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Raise the young people to follow the American tradition of respect for our flag and proper flag etiquette, and don't forget to remind the older people also!

And you can complain also, if you wish, because we still have freedom and this is a part of our Americanism. It's good to be an American!

**Marian Personett  
District Four Rep.**





# BECOME A MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATION

It's not too late to join the Association !! Some of the advantages of belonging to the Union are: having access to the Rural Carrier auto insurance and homeowners insurance; be eligible to join your local Quality of Worklife/Employee Involvement workteam; have low cost access to OWCP Specialist Mike Watson; and receive the weekly magazine from the National Rural Letter Carrier's Association and keep informed about Congressional actions and automation. You'll also be assured of receiving the quarterly state paper! Whether you are a regular carrier or a sub -- become a member now!!

The following rates apply for the 1992-1993 dues year:

Regular carrier---	\$260.00
Sub(73)--	57.00
RCA/RCR--	47.00
Retiree--	33.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Post Office where employed \_\_\_\_\_ Finance No. \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

Regular carriers may request to go on dues withholding. Ask for form 1187 from any State Officer. Tear out (or photocopy) this form and give to your County Secretary/Treasurer, along with a check made out to WRLCA for the appropriate amount. You may also mail this form and your check to:

Kit Witt, Secretary/Treasurer  
38 Craftdale Rd.  
Oakville, WA 98568

This is a (check one) New Member ( ) Renewal ( )

Thank you for your support



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(Above) Delores and Harley Robb pose for a photo during the National Convention Banquet in Tulsa. Harley is a past state president of the WRLCA, and Delores is the Auxiliary District One Rep. (Below) Becky Wendlandt, Washington State's Carrier of the Year, receives her award during a ceremony at the National Convention in Tulsa.





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**Address correction requested**



Charles and Pat Alexander, Kit Witt, Dan Snyder, and Dorothy Iannucci, along with the Kansas State President and his wife and daughter, share a table at the National Convention Banquet last August in Tulsa.