



WI RLCA News

DECEMBER 2008

WISCONSIN

RURAL LETTERS CARRIERS ASSOCIATION

Season's Greetings

Well another Holiday Season is upon us! As the seasons change, we find many changes going on around us. Some changes that will affect us are the upcoming mail count, consolidation of offices, and the end of QWL/EI as we know it.

The upcoming mail count is a four week count (24 working days), starting February 14th and running through March 14th. All vacant regular and auxiliary routes will be counted and any route in which either the employer or the regular carrier opts for a count. Given the projected loss for this fiscal year of between 5.4 - 5.9 billion dollars and continued projected losses in volume of over 10%, it may be reasonable to expect to be counting. If you have been successful in securing additional customer pick ups through the Rural Reach Program, then you will want to count in order to get that built into your route. State Steward, Linda Vanden Plas has set up mail count trainings throughout the state. So, please take the time to attend one to bring yourself up to date and to make sure you get a fair count, after all it is your pay check.

Office consolidations or DUR (Delivery Unit Relocation) is another change that will affect not only our craft, but the city carrier craft and clerk craft as well. If you were in attendance at our Fall Conference Meeting in Wausau on October 26th, you were the first to hear of this new change. This issue was also discussed in more detail at a recent Labor/ Management Meeting. Given the financial forecast, the Postal Service is looking for ways to become more cost effective. By consolidating offices, they can also consolidate work hours making better use of clerk personnel as well as city carrier subs and rural relief carriers. Once they determine that it makes

financial sense to consolidate offices, they then send out a letter to the offices involved no less than 30 days prior to the relocation. The incoming carriers (Regulars and RCA's) have their seniority merged with the carriers in the receiving office because they will now be paid under the new offices' finance number. Notices left for accountables and packages that are on the relocated routes will be returned to the original office for the customers to pick up the next day, even though the carrier no longer delivers out of that office. Any routes relocated after the mail count will receive a base hour change as necessary. We are plowing new ground here and I'm sure there are going to be some rough spots as we move forward in a proactive approach. I have talked to National President, Don Cantriel and he said that we are not the only district that is dealing with relocation of routes.

The DUR Coordinator has agreed to keep us posted on any office consolidations as the decisions are made. The schedule of office consolidations as of November 21st are as follows:

Okauchee to Oconomowoc	December 6, 2008
Windsor to Deforest	December 6, 2008
Auburndale to Marshfield	December 6, 2008
Fox Lake to Beaver Dam	January 3, 2009
Black Earth to Mt. Horeb	January 3, 2009
Clinton to Beloit	January 3, 2009
Shullsburg to Darlington	January 3, 2009

Any questions concerning consolidation, contact a steward.

QWL/EI has been around since its' inception on

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October 14, 1982 when then Postmaster General William F. Bolger and NRLCA President Wilbur S. Wood signed a Memorandum of Understanding stating their commitment to the process. On November 14, 2008, the NRLCA National Board notified the Postal Service that it was withdrawing its support for the process effective January 1, 2009. The QWL/EI process is dependent on the commitment of the USPS and NRLCA to work toward improving the "Quality of Work Life" for rural carriers and their managers. Many improvements have come since its inception. The Rural Carrier Academies, strobe lites, and the orange stamp request envelopes, to mention a few. We in the Great Lakes Area have been fortunate to have had the support of Area Vice President, Jo Ann Feindt and Lakeland District Manager, David Martin, as well as his predecessors. Other areas of the United States have not been as supportive of the process and that is why after careful consideration the NRLCA Board decided to withdraw. Lakeland District Manager, David Martin, has agreed to work through the end of the year with the process. It is believed that the Academies will continue under the direction of the PEDCs, however, that is only speculation at this time.

The Lakeland DJSC is having its final meeting with District Manager, David Martin on December 17th. We should have more information following that meeting regarding the Academies as well as any other final actions that need to be taken. It has been a good run and I am sorry to see it come to an end as it has been a valuable tool in the communication process.

In closing, mark your calendars for the Spring Conference March 21-22, 2009 at the Cranberry Country Lodge in Tomah. More detailed information regarding speakers to follow in the next newsletter. Wishing you and your families a Merry Christmas and Blessings in the New Year!

Dan Strobel
President

Welcome New Members
Sept 1, 2008 – Nov 30, 2008

Alexander Strupp	Oakfield
Allen Wex	Watertown
Justine Koch	Wausau
Michael Ward	Jackson
Tracie Biniek	Somerset
Eric Koegel	Madison
Stuart Soper	Mineral Point
Bonnie Bast	Wautoma
Amy Lawler	Poynette
Colleen Schubert	Krakow
Lea Breuer	Cassville
Antonia Alamillo	Friendship
Cynthia Knorr	Wisconsin Rapids
Donna Jordan	Fall River
Anna Mass	Muskego
Patricia Burr	Holmen
Laura Mark	Rice Lake
Shannon Tischer	Appleton
Ronda Birk	Baldwin
Jay Ladwig	Madison
Vanessa Henderson	Germantown
Pennilyn Vandenberg	Beloit
Michael Peterson	Grafton
Julie Hughes	Cambria
Melissa Buell	Fond Du Lac
Julie Buell	Fond Du Lac
Carrie Nebgen	Fontana
Timothy Essinger	West Bend
Charles Connors	Ashland
Wendy Klein	Tigerton
Lisa Peterson	Waterford
Lloyd Poland II	Janesville
Sonja Van Tassel	Sparta
Cynthia Hall	Merrillan
Nancy Reeves	St Croix Falls

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HAVE YOU SEEN...

...a *sawbuck*? Take a look in your wallet. If you're not sure what you're looking *for* you may have to do a little looking – in another place. Try the library or do some searching, on line. If you already know, what a *sawbuck* is, or if you discover what it is (after hours of research) you will probably want to prove to me that you are aware of what this slang term means.

It would be way too easy to just *say* that you know what a sawbuck is – so I think it would be best to *send* me one. You see, if every one of Wisconsin's 3,895 Rural Letter Carrier members would put a sawbuck in the mail (or a check, of equal value) our State's Political Action Committee would be funded better than any other PAC, in the entire Country. That's exactly what I think our WIRLCA members should strive to accomplish, this year!

The term "buck" has its origin from the era when furs were traded for other commodities. One "buck" (deer hide) had a specific purchasing value. A "sawbuck" is an entirely different deal. I'm telling you this so there will be no confusion – I don't want to receive any deer hides!!!

Okay, so you know what a sawbuck is and have sent it to me, now you may want to write me a note to tell me *why* it's called a sawbuck. The best definition will be printed in the next edition of our newsletter. I will also print the names of every member who makes a PAC contribution – at the appropriate level – and I will send the proper PAC pin to everyone who surrenders a "sawbuck".

Active Rural Carriers will soon be suffering through another mail count. If the low mail-volume trend continues we may be working more and/or earning less. One thing that no WIRLCA member (active or retired) can afford is to also have our health and retirement benefits reduced. It is absolutely vital for all of our members to understand how vulnerable our benefits are, subject of being changed by Federal legislation.

We trust our National Officers to negotiate the contract but can we *trust* that a majority of Congressmen and Senators will not see an opportunity to reduce Federal spending through changes to our benefits? We need to be able to effectively communicate with our elected Representatives to educate them about the potential consequences of proposed legislation.

Now you may be thinking "yeah *they* really should make a contribution to PAC". Nope, *we* must make that contribution – that includes *you*. Remember *we* are "*they*" to someone else. When you point your finger, at someone else, three of your fingers are pointing back at you! Try it. Now send me that *sawbuck*.

In last September's newsletter (actually carried over from the July issue when *nobody* responded) I promised to publish the name of the FIRST person to send me a \$50 PAC contribution. So, thank you Marilyn Collins, a retired Carrier from Laona. I should print her name twice – since her check was for \$100! Well done. I hope she serves as an example to others who have yet to help to fund our Political Action Committee.

As for the "Sawbuck bunch" I hope I have to ask President Strobel for permission to use two pages, in our next newsletter, to list all of the *Sawbuckaroos* who made the proper PAC contribution. I know that there are an awful lot of "smart" folks in the Rural Carrier craft.

Make your *sawbuck* check payable to:

NRLCA PAC

Mail that *sawbuck* check to:

DENNIS R. NELSON

1002 55TH ST

AMERY WI 54001-3013

Thanks for your support of PAC. Your contribution is not tax deductible. Your involvement is essential. Your *sawbuck* won't be missed - but it (when combined with all of the other *sawbucks*) will help to protect your future with the Postal Service and throughout your retirement.

Do You Realize Just How Important It Is?



So, having known that I needed to write this article for almost 2 months I sit down now, this Thanksgiving Day to get it done. I am here at my sister's home with all of my family to share this wonderful day. It gives me time to sit back and look at the important things in my life. I've said it before and I'll say it again, my husband and boys are wonderful, and I don't know what I'd do without their support. I am also blessed to have all 3 of my siblings and their families to be thankful for. In these difficult times I am thankful to have a job that I truly enjoy.

Now, I need to get down to business. Recently, I received a phone call from a carrier asking me to fix something that happened 4 years ago during mail count. The response that I got from that carrier was "Just another disappointment from my union." Now, most of you know that each subsequent mail count overrides the previous count. Not to mention that time limits to file a grievance at step 1 are 14 days from the date of the incident.

Carriers need to take the initiative to get educated. Yes, we stewards are here to answer your questions as they arise but we are not miracle workers. As hard as we try we cannot be in every office everyday. We also cannot be in every office during the mail count. You the carrier need to go to a meeting and get educated.

Your State Steward, Linda Vanden Plas has set up

several count trainings distributed over the state. Locations are printed on page 24 and are also posted at www.wirlca.org. We also have a Spring Conference, State Convention, and Fall Conference every year. While you may feel that you don't have the time to "waste" to go to one or all of these meetings. Are you willing to unknowingly give up the time during the next mail count because you didn't attend? There is always a chance at one of these State meetings to get your personal questions answered. If there happens to be a steward training at one of these meetings, you can attend and find out what your steward is learning. The more educated members we have, the better.

Speaking of the next mail count, it is your responsibility as the carrier to make sure that your Edit (Red) Book is up to date. The quality of your Edit Book can be directly linked to the quality of your DPS. If you are like me, you don't like a lot of extra stuff on your case labels. You may enter '80' in the cell size column if you have a 'vacant' address. You may enter '81' in the cell size column if you have a 'PO Box' address. You may also enter '83' in the cell size column for 'future delivery' addresses. These entries will show up on your edit sheets with a pound (#) sign in the cell size column, and not show up on your case labels. Also, if you happen to have holders for the 3982's on the outside of your case, simply make a note for AMS stating, "Do Not Print PS Form 3982 for this route." That will free up one inch at the beginning of each row.

Check out the other valuable articles in this issue pertaining to mail count and many other issues significant to your paycheck and relevant to your future.

I think participation is extremely important, do you?

See you at the next meeting!

"Happy Holidays to you and yours"

Lisa 'Wojo' Wojnarowski

Assistant State Steward, Vice-President

RURAL ROUTE INSPECTION by Secretary/Treasurer Karen Schauer

A route inspection is the physical observation of the official line of travel, identification of safety hazards, condition of the boxes served, adequacy and quality of service to the customer and the character and performance of the carrier. This inspection is to be made by the postmaster or a designee while accompanying the carrier on the route.

Inspecting The purpose of the inspection is to obtain current and accurate data, including route and delivery conditions, number and types of boxes served, minimum stops required to serve all boxes on the route, location, time and frequency of authorized dismounts, and the distance (in feet) required at each dismount. The route layout is reviewed to see if any changes to the line of travel could improve the efficiency and/or economy of service. Additionally, hazardous conditions, situations, and locations must be examined and appropriate action taken to eliminate or reduce the potential for an accident.

Carrier Responsibilities Carriers must travel their route and deliver mail precisely as they do the rest of the year. They must inform the postmaster/designee making the inspection of any boxes that have remained vacant more than 90 days. They should also assist in identifying hazards and/or hazardous conditions on the route and recommend actions to eliminate or reduce them to the extent practicable.

If the carrier's normal vehicle will not accommodate the examiner, he/she may be requested, but not required, to supply an appropriate vehicle. Management is responsible for the safety of both the carrier and examiner, and for ensuring the accuracy of all data collected.

Box Count All boxes currently being served and temporarily vacant dwellings, apartments, and places of business with a box erected, or served via a dismount which have been vacant less than 90 days are counted as boxes. Do not count abandoned boxes, permanently vacant

buildings and dwellings, apartments vacant more than 90 days, buildings under construction, or dwellings and businesses receiving delivery solely through general delivery or a post office box. Do not count collection compartments located in NDCBUs as boxes served.

Stop Count Stop count should only make a difference on routes that are served by using a privately-owned vehicle. The minimum number of stops necessary to serve all receptacles on the route; i.e., the number of times a carrier must move the vehicle in order to serve all boxes on the route, are counted as stops. Where a group of boxes can be served without moving the vehicle, record one vehicle stop for that group of boxes. Where boxes are grouped, the determination of stops will depend upon the size of the box(es) and the distance between the boxes. As a general rule, 2 small boxes may be served with 1 stop, provided the distance between the 2 boxes is not greater than the width of a small box. Each large box normally requires one stop.

Family Count For Postal Service purposes, the term 'family' is considered the same as 'household'. A single residence is a household consisting of only one family regardless of the number of residents or their relationship. In multi-residential buildings, each occupied separate unit is counted as a family. On routes utilizing a route and box numbering system up to five families may use the same box and use a common route and box designation. On routes utilizing a street name and numbering system customers should erect individual mail receptacles.

Authorized Dismounts The total number of authorized dismounts are recorded on a daily basis. When determining the dismount distance, all entries must be made on the basis of the number of trips required by the carrier each day. When a carrier dismounts primarily to provide other services, such as delivery and/or pick up of accountable mail, COD, Express Mail, etc., no dismount credit is authorized.

Preparing to Ride the Route In preparation for accompanying the carrier on the street, it will be

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necessary to obtain a current PS Form 4003 (route description) route map, measuring device for dismounts, and inspection worksheet for making notes concerning the route, carrier performance and to ensure the line of travel and the length of the route is correct. This work sheet can also be used to record safety concerns, condition of mailboxes and to identify unnecessary travel and roads that need repair. An edit sheet would be another valuable source document to use during the inspection. The delivery data, regular boxes, and central boxes, entered in columns 52- 95 on the PS Form 4248 (Rural Route Inspection Report), should match the active deliveries reflected on the summary page of the CLASS Edit Sheet and the Form 4003.

As a result of the inspection, it may be necessary to submit a Form 4003 annotated “updated as the result of inspection” to the district office. The mileage check made during a route inspection does not change the official route mileage. Route mileage can only be changed by the processing of PS Form 4003 as a result of an official route re-measurement, or the addition/deletion of mileage to the route.

Average daily mileage deviation for fueling up the LLV must be added to the route mileage on PS Form 4241.

Request to Repair Roads While conducting the inspection, note the condition of road and road shoulders for both city/town and private roads. Note any area in disrepair that could obstruct delivery of mail, cause undue wear or damage to the vehicle, or present a safety hazard. Management is responsible for completing PS Form 4024 (Request to Repair Roads), in duplicate. Retain a copy and mail the original to the appropriate highway official or individual responsible for the road. If necessary repairs are not made in a reasonable time, management may withdraw service.

Mailbox Needs Attention Inspect the condition of all mail receptacles during the route inspection for possible irregularities. Form 4056 (Your

Mailbox Needs Attention) is designed to notify customers of mailbox irregularities. Upon return to the office, the postmaster prepares Form 4056 in duplicate, notifying the customer of the irregularity. The carrier delivers the original to the customer the next working day, while the duplicate is kept on file for future reference by the postmaster.

In the event locks are used on mailboxes, the slot for the mail must be large enough to accommodate the customer’s normal daily mail volume. Therefore, if the slot is not sufficient to accommodate the normal daily mail volume, the carrier will be compensated in column R for the additional time to effect delivery.

UPS & ME

A Lesson in Abstinence

By **Barbara Bergsma**

Area Steward

Being a single woman, I can’t help but feel a tingle of excitement when I see a UPS truck. The reason: most UPS drivers are men.

So, back in September when a UPS driver flagged me down, it was all I could do to control myself! Alas, my excitement was short lived. I said only two words to the driver, “yes” and “no”.

He asked if I was the carrier for Avoca, thus, the “yes”. He continued in the schmaltziest of tones, even calling me sweetheart somewhere in his speechifying. He was running late, he didn’t think he could make it in time to get some parcels to the Avoca PO. He asked if I would take the parcels, thus, the “no”.

It just so happened that our county meeting was that night. I inquired if anyone else had been solicited by a UPS driver to take parcels. Two other carriers (both women) said they had.

The moral of the story: Just Say No!
We have our job to do, they have theirs. Let’s not mingle. At least not while on the job.

Pre-Count Conference

The pre-count conference is a joint conference between rural carriers and managers. Regardless of the type of mail count, a joint conference must be held at least 15 days prior to the beginning of the mail count. (Note: This year the pre-count conference must be completed no later than January 31, 2009.) This is a very important event because it is management's last opportunity to introduce administrative changes in carrier procedures. Once the conference is completed, procedures are locked in throughout the count and by extension, the remainder of the year, unless corresponding changes are made in salary for additional functions. No changes in carrier work methods, casing equipment, or office procedures can be made between the date of the local conference and the mail count unless these items were specifically discussed at the conference. It is not necessary that the carriers agree to the proposed changes; it is necessary only that the proposed changes do not violate Postal Service policy or the USPS-NRLCA National Agreement. This section does not limit a manager's right to make operational changes at any other time other than the period specifically stated. It is additionally important to discuss count procedures so that any potential areas of disagreement can be identified and hopefully resolved prior to the actual count. Any carrier on leave 15 days prior to the beginning of the count must be conferred with before going on leave or immediately upon return. If operational changes are planned while the carrier is on leave, the conference must be held upon the carrier's return to duty, when all changes must be explained.

Rural carriers are well advised to take a pre-count Conference checklist with them to the local conference and make notes.

I have created a rather extensive checklist (on page 8.) It may seem excessive however with the possibility of every second costing you an hour it is to your advantage to get credit for all of your time. A good count like a good building starts with a solid foundation. If you end up in a grievance situation, the solid documentation of a pre-count conference will certainly help.

See you at a union meeting Ron Berg

The Provident Guild News!!!

The Provident Guild membership reached an astounding goal at fall conference! Membership was increased by a 167% over last year!! Is this great news?? Certainly! Is it really, really? Well.... we got 5 new members. Vice President Wojo, Louan Friend Barb Bergsma, Tony Plicka and Jason Johnson joined as new members...I do not know if they were swayed by my high pressure, high energy PowerPoint sales pitch? Or,,,, if it was that they were entered in the drawing for a framed print of "The Witness Tree" by famous photographer Cassandra Berg (OK so I am bias she is my daughter) Jason Johnson was the lucky winner! The last I heard he is adding on to his house to make room for all of his newly accumulated art work! We only had 3 new members all of last year. So this is an improvement and we still have 6 months to go to the end of the year for Provident Guild sign up goal. I am confident that we can even expand this tremendous area of growth! I promised a fabulous prize and I delivered one!!

Now for spring conference even a better deal? Win an even a more fabulous prize? I am thinking????? "**Jamaica**?" For more details you have to attend Spring Conference and hear the pitch. Cool!!! Ya Mon!! Jamaica...Yes!!! Spring Break!!! I mean Spring Conference....

Be there and hear even more lively news about a dead subject!!

Provident Guild Specialist
Ya Mon Ron Berg

Next Issue News Articles
Due January 24, 2009

Pre-Count Conference Items for Discussion
Checklist

1. Clarify mail processing procedures on the day preceding the count and the last day of count. I.e. clean in clean out.
2. How to use rural template for the measurement of mail.
3. Mail withdrawal procedures and recording of DUVRs if you are required to record volume.
4. You have the right to observe mail count on your relief days or when you are on leave.
5. You have the right to count your own mail for verification while in an on duty status.
6. Review Form 4239 with an understanding of definitions. Forms must be available to you daily, upon request, before the mail is trayed or strapped out.
7. Daily cut-off times for mail.
8. Implementation of "Directs."
9. Depositing of CFS mail, hold mail, getting stamp box, etc.
10. Clerk/Supervisor interruptions for official business, being called to the phone or counter, etc.
11. Collection boxes, collection compartments in CBU's, and parcel lockers.
12. Dismounts and dismount distance. Heavy volume days may require more than one trip.
13. Proper credit for collected mail:
 - For more than 2 separations additional compensation required.
 - From collection boxes.
 - From collection slots/compartments.
 - Bundled mail.
 - Certified and registered mail.
 - Express mail.
 - Parcels collected on the route.
14. Loading procedures including time for moving vehicle to loading spot.
15. Intermediate office procedures for routes that work out of more than one office.
16. Misthrows, Mark-ups and COAs.
17. Credit for detached-label mailings.
18. Locked pouch when transporting unsorted mail from one post office to another.
19. High Option/Leave Commitment.
20. Safety Talks
 - Actual time, approximately five minutes.
 - If multiple safety talks are given, compensation must be given for all
21. Any required functions for Saturday closeouts must be credited.
22. Procedures and time values for USPS vehicles. Average daily mileage deviation for fueling up the LLV must be added to the route mileage on PS Form 4241.
23. Any local requirement that happens on a regular basis (daily or weekly.)
24. Any unique situations. Are you the carrier that answers the secure back door for Speedy?
25. Delivery point sequence (DPS) issues.
26. Rural Box holder Non-Delivery Request (RBNR).
27. PS Form 5630, Shipment Confirmation Acceptance Notice (SCAN)
28. Carrier pickup standard
29. Service talks (actual time).
30. Proper credit for oversized letter (over 6 1/8 inches) processed with DPS mail.

The Pre-Count Conference was held on _____

The issues have been discussed as listed.

Post Office

Supervisor/Postmaster (Signature)

Carrier Route # (Signature)

Count Information by Tom Bittner

As I write this it would appear that management will opt the majority of rural carriers into the 2009 mail count. It has been reported that in the last fiscal year the Postal Service delivered eight billion less pieces of mail than in the previous fiscal year. While no one likes a pay cut, if the volume on your route is down it is reasonable for the Postal Service to re-evaluate your route to ensure you are getting paid correctly. While overall volume is down there are a few things that may work in rural carriers favor during the upcoming count. During last years count, it appeared that volumes were low, even considering the overall decline in volume. This years count will also be a twenty four day count and will include a holiday, which last years twelve day count did not. While mail volume is beyond our control, we can have some control over our destiny by educating ourselves and making sure we get credit for everything we are entitled to. I'll try to list a few items that could have a significant effect on your count.

Be sure that you are getting credit for the correct number of deliveries on your route. With the exception of seasonal deliveries, any deliveries that have been vacant for less than 90 days on the last day of the mail count should still be counted as active boxes. Since mail count ends on March 14th in 2009, any deliveries that become vacant after December 14th, 2008 should still receive credit during count. If you begin delivering mail on the last day of mail count to a box that had been vacant, you would also get credit for that delivery.

Check the mileage recorded on your mail count forms. Mileage should only be changed as a result of an official route re-measurement or an extension, it should not be changed due to the mileage recorded during a route inspection. If it appears that you are entitled to additional mileage, you'll need to request a re-measurement. On the other hand if management feels you're mileage is too high, they will need to re-measure your route before it can be lowered.

Withdrawal procedures in your office can only be changed if Management were to determine that it would be operationally advantageous to change. If Management wishes to change the withdrawal procedures in an office (either adding or taking away the credit), they would need to advise the steward assigned to the office. Once Management proposes a

change, a majority of the regular rural carriers in the office would need to agree to the change. If you have withdrawal time now and wish to keep it, make sure your manager follows the rules.

Remember that anything in your DPS that is not in exact delivery order gets re-counted as raw mail. This includes mail that is forwarded and mail for customers on hold. The easiest way to explain it is if you were to take your DPS to the street, any mail that you would have brought back should be re-counted. You'll also want to watch for any letters over 6 1/8 inches high, these letters would be re-counted as flats and deducted from the DPS total. With count starting on Valentines day this year we may see quite a few. Any rigid item over five inches in height would be re-counted as parcels, this would not include rigid items in a flexible packaging; these items would fall under the "80% rule".

Any mail piece that requires a signature would receive credit as an accountable, this includes signature confirmation, foreign delivery confirmations and insured mail that asks for a signature. Insured mail that doesn't require a signature would receive credit as a delivery confirmation scan. Delivery confirmation parcels receive both a parcel credit and credit for the delivery confirmation scan.

There are several items that you may have gotten credit for in the past that have been decided in managements favor. It has been decided that Netflix movies will be credited as letters. The NRLCA has withdrawn their grievance on additional time for removing labels from trays and tubs. If you pick up a tray or tub that contains only letters you would get credit as one piece collected. (If there was a prepaid parcel over two pounds in the tub you would get credit for a parcel collected).

I've asked Lisa to post a few supporting files on the website that you can share with your manager.

In a perfect world our managers would know what credit we are entitled to and make sure we receive it. The reality is that many managers are poorly trained in mail count procedures and others feel it's their duty to balance the Postal Services budget on the backs of rural carriers. It's up to you to make sure you get what you have coming.

EVALUATION or HOURLY

How many of us wish we had that choice?

Chances are you once had that choice and passed it up or chose evaluation. We all have that choice one time in our career. That time is when we first accept a full time regular route.

That first guarantee period, or partial guarantee period, you get to decide if you want to be paid based on the routes evaluation or based on your actual hours of work. While the evaluated system used to be the dream pick, many carriers now feel it is time to be paid by the hour. We don't have that choice after we complete our first guarantee period. The guarantee period usually starts the first full pay period in November. This year it started on October 25, 2008.

While it may not affect you anymore, it may be worthwhile for you to help an RCA in your office as they finally become a regular carrier. Is it on a route which can be completed under evaluation on a regular basis? Or is it a route that just presents a challenge even to the finest carriers effort?

When a relief carrier accepts a full time regular carrier position they need to decide whether or not to sign PS Form 4015-D (Regular Carrier Agreement to Terminate Guarantee). Signing this form will qualify them to be paid according to the routes evaluation. Failure to sign this form will mean the carrier is paid only actual hours worked daily, when under 8 hours and overtime each day they go over 8 hours. Remember, there is no license to drag your feet and management has a right to avoid payment of overtime. But, if you feel the route is poorly evaluated then one way to cover yourself is by not signing the PS Form 4015-D. That may help prevent you from working over your evaluation for free until the route can be properly counted or adjusted.

2009 COUNT PREPARATIONS

Your State Steward and State Board are busy preparing for the 2009 National Mail Count. If you have any memory left you may recall the 2008

National Count. The results were not pretty for most carriers route evaluations. Unfortunately, we may be in line for another hit in 2009. The postal service believes there is a huge savings available due to a steady decrease in mail volume. It doesn't matter what we think through out the year. The volume from February 14 – March 14 will be all that matters.

Plan now to protect your evaluation as much as possible. Remember, your EVALUATION is your SALARY. In this issue will be a listing of all the state held count trainings. Plan to attend a count training. Stewards will be there to help you learn the procedures involved with a count. Who do you want to trust your salary with? Your supervisor? Your postmaster? The retired manager who comes in to 'help count'? The clerk who is 'helping out'? Or a union steward who is also protecting his/her own salary? Stewards can answer your questions when you call them during the count but by then, how many errors have already been made? And how about the questions you've never heard before? There is a lot of knowledge to be gained by attending a count training. Get paid for everything you do. There are some honest managers out there who want to be fair.....but do you want to trust your salary to someone who might be in a hurry, may take a 'short cut' or may think you are already overpaid?

DOCUMENT DOCUMENT DOCUMENT!!!

We've seen it in this newsletter many times before. Document everything. This is never more important than during a count. When in doubt, write it down. Item size (height and width), address orientation, number of pieces, date in, date out, credit received, credit expected, your opinions, bosses opinion. Too much work? Then it must not mean enough to you. Fight for your beliefs. If you are wrong, you are only out a little time. If you are right then it could have an impact on your salary for the rest of this year as well as future years because "now you know". One minute can put you in the next hour of evaluation. That could be worth over \$1890.00. Yes.....one MINUTE!

(continued on page 12)

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Chaplains Corner

If you think you are doing any duties which are not compensated for, contact your steward. Find out if your manager is performing the count correctly. Any situation that can not be settled to your satisfaction should be written up on a separate piece of paper, give a copy to your manager and forward the original to your STEWARD. These situations will be discussed at the district level between your State Steward and a Rural Analyst. If they don't reach an agreement then it can be dealt with in the grievance system. But it all starts with the documentation.

THE COUNT STARTS TODAY

That's right. The count starts today. Watch everything you do now. Make a mental note of it. How are you compensated for it. It must be covered in the count or chances are it is free. Then plan to attend a count training. Listen to other carriers. How does their office do it. Just because you've "always done it that way" doesn't mean it is right. Become informed. Watch your own count closely. Nothing changes 'just for the count'. Question when in doubt.

Document. Document. Document!!!
Remember.....IT'S YOUR SALARY!!!

And also remember, when in doubt, contact your steward.

Roger Schewe
Assistant State Steward
535, 537, 538, 546

Have any of us ever stopped to really think of how much we have to be thankful for?

During this year I sure have. I've lost a lot, yes, my wonderful husband Marc, one of my best friends Bill Foley, and my beautiful and generous mother-in-law Donna. So yeah I could be sitting here crying and moaning in self pity, but I choose not to. Instead, I look up to the Heavens and thank God My Father everyday for what I do have. I am thankful for all of you, my rural carrier family, for if not for you I would probably be nuts by now !! I'm thankful for my health, the freedoms I have, the beautiful world we live in. Yes some of it is not so nice, BUT so much more of it is :o) We have our jobs, our homes, our families and the ability to make choices. So many people don't have these things. We have so much and some have so little. During this Blessed Christmas Season lets all help somebody less fortunate than ourselves, let those we help have one more thing to be thankful for, the generosity of you. It really doesn't take much to put a smile on someone's face, maybe even a simple smile in it's self would be enough. Be thankful for every single second you have, no matter how difficult your life's journey, you can always count your blessings - past, present and future.

May you all be Blessed with the Holiday Spirit this Christmas season, Be safe on your travels and be true to your Heart. God Bless and Love to you all.

Psalm 103 check it out

Your State Chaplain and friend

Chris Weber

For Sale
1999 RHD Subaru Legacy Wagon, 2 owner,
190K, about half route miles. Motor OK, Body
OK, Transmission OK,
Needs catalytic converter??
And cooling system check \$3000 OBO.
Contact Tom 715-347-2155 or
tkc@uniontel.net

**Mail Count February 14th through
March 14th, 2009
Are you prepared?**

FSS and DUR

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed on July 8, 2008 concerning the potential impact to rural route evaluations from the implementation of DPS flats. This Memorandum has temporarily modified three contractual provisions.

1. Auxiliary rural routes over 39 standard hours will not be converted to regular routes.
2. Residual vacancies will not be posted.
3. Rural routes can have the classification of 47K or 48K pending route adjustments when it is impractical to adjust routes.

So, what does this mean for you? First off, this will only impact Post Offices that are within 50 miles of a FFS site. These offices include:

Avalon, Beloit, Big Bend, Burlington, Caledonia, Clinton, Darien, Delavan, Dousman, Eagle, East Troy, Elkhorn, Fontana, Fort Atkinson, Franksville, Genoa City, Franklin, Janesville, Kansasville, Kenosha Carrier Annex, Lake Geneva, Milton, Mukwonago, Muskego, North Prairie, Palmyra, Racine, Four Mile Station, Salem, Sharon, Silver Lake, Sturtevant, Sullivan, Trevor, Twin Lakes, Union Grove, Wales, Walworth, Waterford, Waukesha, White-water, Williams.

The second part of the equation is that Auxiliary and Residual routes will not be filled. These routes would not be posted. Also, rural routes can become overburden (47K-48K) without an adjustment unless the route's standard weekly hours exceed 57.36. These are temporarily provisions

until the NRLCA and the Postal Service determine they are no longer necessary.

On October 2, 9, & 29 President Cantriel and Vice President Dwyer met with the Postal Service to talk about the implementation of DPS flats. The NRLCA and the Postal Service also conducted a joint study of any additional duties associated with the introduction of DPS flats. Filming of 32 rural routes with the carriers casing DPS flats and carrying DPS flats to the street. The filming should be done by the first week of November. Once the analysis of the work involved with the handling of DPS flats is finished, the NRLCA and the Postal Service will begin negotiation for a DPS flat Standard. Hopefully, a fair standard will be agreed upon and we can then guesstimate how many hours our routes will lose.

As a cost savings measure the Postal Service has begun Delivery Unit Relocations (DUR). The Postal Service is looking to see if any savings could be realized by moving rural routes to a neighboring office. The savings that are being looked at are clerk hours, down grading the postal level, postmaster's pay, etc. While the rural carrier and sub move with the route, certain compensation changes may occur:

1. Mileage
2. Loading time
3. Change in withdraw
4. Where holds are kept
5. Throwback case
6. Saturday closeout

This certainly is not a complete list. Every office is a little different. Other changes that could occur are accountable mail and left notice parcels. While in some offices a clerk might bring the items to the previous office. In other offices the carrier might be required to bring the items to their previous office. Once again proper compensation should be included in your route evaluation. Another change is that seniority will be merged with the new office which will result in a new office wide seniority list.

(continued on page 14)

(continued from page 13)

A DUR Coordinator has been named. I and your President Dan Strobel have been in contact with him. The new coordinator has promised to keep the union informed. The Postal Service has a contractual right to combine offices. The Union's job is to make sure you are properly compensated. If you have received a 30 day letter notifying you of a move. Please make sure you are compensated properly. If you have any questions call your local, area, Assistant State Steward or me.

One other cost saving measure the Postal Service is starting to implement is route consolidations and rebuilds. The consolidation language says that all vacant routes will be considered for consolidation. This means that under Article 12 the Postal Service can absorb current vacancies and adjust the remaining routes upwards. But, the entire vacant route must be absorbed. The savings realized would be the benefit packages that the Postal Service would no longer be paying out. I have not heard of this happening to regular routes, but I have heard that aux routes have been consolidated. There are big changes that are coming within the Postal Service and we as carriers must be informed and understand our rights.

Linda Vanden Plas

Steward Hours	
Monday	7:00-11:30 AM 1:00-9:00 PM
Tuesday	7:00-11:30 AM 1:00-5:00 PM
Wednesday	7:00-11:30 AM 5:00-9:00 PM
Thursday	7:00-11:30 AM 1:00-5:00 PM
Friday	7:00-11:30 AM 1:00-5:00 PM
Phone 920-498-2948	



The following article is reprinted from the Northland District Safety and Diversity Quarterly paper:

There's nothing "Fishy" about John's Safety record

After 37 years of delivering mail, John Manka still looks as fit and trim as the high school wrestler he was many years ago. Today Manka limits his grappling to oversized parcels for the 525 customers on his Whitehall WI rural route. But he still applies an athlete's cautious preparation to his task each day. It's a big reason why he's been accident-free those 37 years and a recent recipient of the National Safety Council Safe Driver Million Mile Award. Take a quick glance at Manka's route vehicle and his attention to task is evident. The big, black Buick is virtually spotless, inside and out. As he picks his way along the busy, sometimes narrow streets, he's on constant alert for possible hazards. Manka vies safe working habits as part of an overall attitude about doing the job the right way. Safety programs do a great job of reinforcing good habits. In time they become ingrained. "I don't take safety for granted but I also don't really think about it all the time. I just do it." He says.

Dates to Remember	
Spring Conference-Tomah	March 21-22
Mid-States-Peoria, IL	May 1-3
State Convention Oconomowoc	June 26-28
National Convention- Texas	August 18-22

PHONE PROTOCOL

If you have a problem and you do not have a local steward in your office, contact the appropriate steward for your area, either area or assistant. The State Steward can be called anytime if you have trouble reaching your assigned steward.

Area Steward Post Office Assignments

Carol Cherney Home PO Wisconsin Rapids
Hm 715-325-7613 wk 715-423-2150 cell 715-459-1203
Arpin, Auburndale, Junction City, Marshfield, Milladore, Nekoosa, Pittsville, Rudolph, Stevens Point, Vesper.

Fred Resch Home PO Antigo
Hm 715-449-3026 wk 715-627-4812
Aniwa, Birnamwood, Bowler, Eland, Elcho, Gleason, Gresham, Hatley, Merrill, Neopit, Pelican Lake, Ringle, Summit Lake, Wittenberg.

Sue Heiderscheidt Home PO Centuria
Hm 715-646-2186 wk 715-646-2121 cell 715-553-0050
Webster, Frederic, Prescott, Cumberland, Balsam Lake, Barron, St Croix Falls, Dresser, Eau Claire, Bloomer, New Auburn, Chetek, Osceola, Grantsburg.

Barbara Bergsma Home PO Avoca
Hm 608-532-6007 wk 608-532-6880 cell 608-604-4715
Benton, Blue River, Boscobel, Dodgeville, Fennimore, Hazel Green, Lancaster, Linden, Lone Rock, Montfort, Mount Hope, Muscodia, Plain, Potosi, Prairie Du Chien, Richland Center, Spring Green, Stitzer.

Michael Wiczorek Home PO Peshtigo
Hm 906-290-2993 wk 715-735-7342
Peshtigo, Coleman, Crivitz, Oconto, Oconto Falls.

Louan Friend Home PO Pardeeville
Hm 608-587-2053 wk 608-429-2782 cell 608-697-8113
Email jklmf@hotmail.com
De Forest, Reedsburg, Portage, Columbus, Endeavor, Poynette, Montello, Packwaukee, Westfield, Randolph, Wisconsin Dells, Rio.

Lois Graper Home PO Marion
Hm 715-754-4904 wk 715-553-5831
Amherst, Amherst Junction, Clintonville, Iola, Manawa, Ogdensburg, Rosholt
Scandinavia, Schofield, Shawano, Tigerton.

Marilyn Laporte Home PO Spooner
Hm 715-635-2560 wk 715-635-6919
Birchwood, Cameron, Minong, Rice Lake, Sarona, Shell Lake, Springbrook, Trego.

Debra Downen Home PO Omro
Hm 920-290-2903 wk 920-685-5199
Berlin, Coloma, Fremont, Green Lake, Hancock, Menasha, Neenah, Neshkoro, Oshkosh, Pine River, Plainfield, Redgranite, Ripon, Rosendale, Van Dyne, Wautoma, Wild Rose.

Al Muench Home PO West Bend
Hm 920-994-4436 wk 262-334-3677
Adell, Allenton, Beaver Dam, Campbellsport, Cascade, Fredonia, Hubertus, Jackson, Juneau, Kewaskum, Lomira, Random Lake, Saukville, Sheboygan, Sheboygan Falls, Slinger, Waupun.

Eugene Heckel Home PO Bristol
Home 262-889-4948 wk 414-857-7111
Genoa City, Kansasville, Salem, Silver Lake, Sturtevant, Trevor, Twin Lakes.

State and Assistant State Steward Assignments by Area

Linda Vanden Plas -- State Steward
1610 S. Ridge Road
Green Bay, WI 54304
Phone 920- 498-2948
Email: evandenplas@new.rr.com
First 3 digit zip code areas 541, 542, 543, 549
ALL area codes

Roger Schewe
Phone 608-835-3789
Email: rschewe@charter.net
First 3 digit zip code areas
535,537, 546, 538

Charles Groth
Phone 715-634-3938
Email: cgroth@centurytel.net
First 3 digit zip code areas 540, 547,548

Lisa Wojnarowski
Phone 414-810-4860
lwojnarowski@wi.rr.com
First 3 digit zip code areas 530,531,532, 534, 539

Anyone wishing to receive the State Stewards' electronic newsletter should send their request to: tombittner@wirlca.org with 'electronic newsletter' in the subject line.

<u>State Office</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>County Meeting Assignment</u>
<u>President</u> Dan Strobel N4431 Daley Road Hustisford, WI 53034	920-349-3782	Dane, Dodge, Fond du Lac-Green Lake, Waushara, Winnebago
<u>Vice-President</u> Lisa “Wojo” Wojnarowski 1202 S. 49th Street Milwaukee, WI 53214	414-810-4860	Jefferson, Milwaukee-Waukesha, Racine- Kenosha, Rock-Walworth, Washington- Ozaukee
<u>Secretary/Treasurer</u> Karen Schauer 5857 Prill Road Eau Claire, WI 54701	715-836-9612	Buffalo-Trempealeau, Chippewa-Eau Claire, Dunn, Jackson, Pierce-Pepin, St. Croix
<u>Assistant Secretary/ Treasurer</u> Lois Graper W10980 Riverside Road Marion, WI 54950	715-754-4904	Lincoln-Langlade, Marathon-Clark, Shawano, Tri-County, Wood-Portage
<u>Chairman Executive Committee</u> Charles Groth 12729N Small Road Hayward, WI 54843	715-634-3948	Barron-Washburn, Polk-Burnett, Price- Taylor, Rusk, Sawyer, Lake Superior
<u>Committeeman</u> Louan Friend N685 10 Drive Endeavor, WI 53930	608-697-8113	Columbia, La Crosse, Marquette-Adams, Monroe-Juneau, Waupaca
<u>Committeeman</u> Ron Berg 402 Dalogasa Drive Arena, WI 53503	608-220-4855	Crawford, Grant-Iowa, Lafayette-Green, Sauk-Richland, Vernon
<u>State Steward</u> Linda Vanden Plas 1610 S. Ridge Road Green Bay, WI 54304	920-498-2948	Brown, Door-Kewaunee, Cal-Man-She, Marinette, Oconto, Outagamie

Column J – Mark ups

(time allowance of .25 minutes per entry)

By Committeeman Louan Friend

Mark ups are mail pieces undeliverable as addressed that require the carrier to endorse the mail with the reason of non-delivery. In this column, record the number of pieces of all classes of mail that requires a mark up.

Credit one (1) mark up for each piece of mail in the following categories:

1. deceased (DEC) – This endorsement is used only when it is known that the addressee is deceased and the mail is not properly deliverable to another person.
2. no record mail –
3. transcribing information on PS Form 3982-R
4. other undeliverable mail management requires you to individually endorse

Credit one mark up for any mail piece you are required to correct errors (spelling or numbers) prior to its being sent to CFS.

Credit one mark up for each piece of mail when you are required to blot or mark out barcodes.

Credit one mark up for transcribing the non-delivery request information on PS Form 3982-R or discarding the form when receiving a reinstatement of delivery.

Credit one (1) mark up for each bundle of mail in the following categories:

1. CFS machineable/ CFS non-machineable
2. Insufficient address (IA) – mail without number, street, box number, route number, or geographical section of city or city and state omitted and the correct address is not known.
3. Attempted not known (ANK) – addressee is not known at the place of address.
4. In dispute (DIS) – it is unknown which of the disputing parties has the greater right to the mail.
5. No such number (NSN) – nonexistent number and correct number is not known
6. No such street (NSS) – nonexistent street and the correct street is not known

7. No mail receptacle (NMR) – addressee has failed to provide a mailbox.
8. Refused (REF) – addressee has refused to accept mail or pay postage charges.
9. Temporarily away (TA) – addressee is temporarily away and period for holding mail has expired.
- 10 Unclaimed (UNC) – addressee abandons or fails to call for their mail.
11. Vacant (VAC) – house, office, apartment, or building is unoccupied.
12. Illegible (ILL) - address is not readable.
13. Undeliverable bulk business mail (UBBM) – UBBM with a specific customer name and address.
14. Other UBBM – UBBM that is addressed to Occupant, or Resident is normally undeliverable because the delivery point is vacant or the address is incorrect.

Column R – Other suitable allowances

reasonable time allowance which may be claimed for unusual conditions, or for other services rendered on a daily or weekly basis that are not accounted for under the normal work functions. The following are some examples of “R” time entries:

1. Actual time required to place CFS mail in designated location.
2. Actual riffling time to assess the quality of DPS, if separator cards are not used.
3. Actual time to perform closing duties on Saturday, when no office personnel are on duty.
4. Minimum allowance of 15 minutes to service a non-personnel unit – any additional time must be explained in the comments section.
5. Time for returning Business Reply mail to a designated location.
6. Time for changes in the Red Book beyond the time that would have been required on the back of PS form 4240.
7. One (1) minute per day to acquire, setup, and return to cradle the assigned scanner.
8. Eighteen (18) seconds for each delivery confirmation scanned.
9. Eighteen (18) seconds per scan for all shipment confirmation acceptance notices – PS Form 5630.
10. Actual time required for weekly safety talk

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11. Actual time for daily or weekly stand-up service talks in addition to safety talks.
12. An additional time credit is given if management elects to repeat a weekly safety talk for the relief employees or a carrier who was not present.
13. Actual time to take mail to vacation hold and return.
14. Actual time to travel to and from throw back case.
15. Actual time to travel to and from CFS case and place mail in designated location.
16. Actual time to unlock, sweep, verify collection with magnet, wand, or scanner, close and lock blue collection box.
17. Time for accessing key, unlocking and locking gate, and returning key in gated communities.
18. Actual time to deposit collected mail in more than two separations.
19. Time to locate and retrieve errors associated with the Mail History Tracking System (MHTS) process. (done during the riffling process)
20. Actual time for reloading a satchel.

These are only examples, not an all inclusive list. Be sure to review these entries each day (or as often as they are available to you). Review last years count sheets to get an idea of what credits you were given then. Ask if you don't see or understand an entry.

See you at count training.
Good Luck and Good Counting!!!

Congratulations to newly retired carriers

Vernon Liegel	Spring Green
Ronald Greunke	Hortonville
Donald Kunkel	Marshfield
Alfred Knapp	Appleton
Martha Schmidt	Brillion
Sandra Kaltenbach	Beloit

(continued from page 2)

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Justin Barsamian | Eau Claire |
| Sandra Glascock | Helenville |
| Belinda Harris | Lake Geneva |
| Kari Reilly | Cambridge |
| Linda Giorno | Mauston |
| Jodi Bohnen | St Germain |
| Nancy Schlies | De Pere |
| Roger Dasko | Germantown |
| Rebecca Lefstad | Augusta |
| Kari Gammeter | Adams |
| Kari Johnson | Appleton |
| Roxana Reitz | Curtiss |
| Megan Friedauer | Larsen |
| Diane Morrissey | Lena |
| Derek Cummings | Menomonie |
| Cathy Schachtner | Osceola |
| Kim Chapin | Shiocton |
| Kaye Conner | Colby |
| Cherie Kattner | Lake Geneva |
| Marlene Chamberlain | Barneveld |
| Michalene Krueger | Owen |
| Ryan Stevens | Black River Falls |
| Charles Stricklen II | Exeland |
| Andrew Little | Eau Claire |
| Brittany Morford | Eau Claire |
| Jason Boisen | Onalaska |
| Theresa Strand | Mondovi |
| Kristina Szalai | Boyceville |
| Christopher Grajkowski | Eau Claire |
| Alilcia Kleist | Richland Center |
| Brian Bennett | Chippewa Falls |
| Barbara Stern | North Prairie |
| Badiah Christianson | Big Bend |
| Sue Schwartzlow | Monroe |
| Courtney Fitz | Sun Prairie |
| Philip Weckler | Sun Prairie |
| Philip Weckler | Sturgeon Bay |
| Tabatha Sanwick | Milton |
| Robin Schweder | Janesville |
| Mark Gilmore | Prairie Du Sac |
| Raymond Young | Edgerton |
| Michael Loucks | Hartford |
| Carol OLeary | Warrens |
| Jonathan Dervetski | Chippewa Falls |
| Leslie Phelps | Marshfield |
| Heidi Eliason | Menomonie |
| Norbert Smurawa | Pewaukee |
| Elena McAllister | Woodville |

Welcome

Injured on Duty Employees

1, 2 Buckle my shoe - 3, 4 Out the door

submitted by Chuck Groth Assistant State Steward
Now I know this title may seem a little crass, but that was my impression from attending a Labor-Management Meeting in Minneapolis this past October.

The information to follow is merely observational and any questions about OWCP should be referred to our National OWCP Representative, Thomas Markey. Mr. Markey in fact has written some of the policies while working for the Office of Worker's Compensation.

The Postal Service has developed a National Re-assessment Plan (NRP) that establishes guidelines and areas of responsibility for the placement of Injured on Duty (IOD) employees while still employed by the Postal Service. This process affects only those employees who have been on workman's compensation for more than two (2) years and have achieved maximum medical improvement (MMI). This really is not new, especially the final step, but lays out a road map of the Postal Service's commitment to find necessary work within a facility, craft and tour. At the core of this plan is the establishment of Area and District teams of senior management from various departments within the Postal Service. Union representation is allowed through all of this and in the final steps, is requested in order to help with the sensitivity of the matter.

The NRP has three processes, each with its own set of steps. First is the "Search Process". The District Team compiles a list of "necessary work", which are positions and tasks that will not displace any other employees. The job position considered is to be prioritized by; first, work within the employees' facility; second, by craft; and third, by tour. The list could include positions anywhere within the District, up to fifty (50) miles from the employees' original office and could include placement from a level 11 office to, as in Northland District, Eagan Financial Services.

Second, is the "Job Offer Process". During this process, the modified job position is created and

offered to suitable candidates (from all crafts) through an interview schedule. One thing to note is that, it is the date of adjudication (settlement) of the employees' injury claim that determines who gets a job offer first, NOT seniority as a Postal employee. The employee has the opportunity to accept or refuse the modified work position. If the position is refused, then the Dept. of Labor-OWCP assess if the job offer is suitable to the employees' limitations.

Last, but not least is "No Work Available". If there are no modified positions (within the scope of the employees' limitations and criteria of placement) available in the Postal Service then the District Assessment Team proceeds with the last step. A review of all documentation is done and a "search sign-off" is prepared and an exit interview is arranged. Postal Inspection Service and the OIG are involved in investigating any potential fraud (really, they are involved the whole way) plus the employees' union representation is invited to help with this sensitive matter. During this interview, an Employee Resource Guide (ERG) is provided, which is a list of suitable jobs outside of the Postal Service. To assist the employee, a second interview is provided to explain all the options available, such as early retirement, disability retirement, use and exhaustion of annual/sick leave. It is also possible to re-file with OWCP if, during all this, your medical condition changes.

Once again, please refer to our National Office for complete information regarding any Worker's Compensation information.

National Web site

Are you having trouble getting onto the nrlca.org web site? Forgot your user ID or password? To retrieve your information, log on to nrlca.org and click on "Forgot Password?" A new screen will open requesting you to enter either your Employee ID or CSA number. Enter the information and click on "Retrieve Account". The system will then email the necessary information to your email address on file with the system. If you have changed your email address, you may have no choice but to reregister.

WI R L C A S P R I N G C O N F E R - E N C E

M A R . 2 1 - 2 2 , 2 0 0 9

**C R A N B E R R Y C O U N T R Y L O D G E
W A T E R P A R K &
C O N V E N T I O N C E N T E R
T O M A H , W I**

6 0 8 - 3 7 4 - 2 8 0 1 O R 8 0 0 - 2 4 3 - 9 8 7 4

Ask for the WIRLCA room rate

Yes, It's coming soon so plan to attend!

**We've met at Cranberry Country Lodge before and have had requests
to meet there again, so here it is!**

Save the dates-Mar. 21 and 22

Itinerary will develop as speakers are contacted

Mar. 21 1-5 open session

Mar. 22 8-3 general session w/ speakers

**This a great time to get together with friends and
enjoy the start of Spring**

Plan to attend and bring your family

Fall Conference Board Meeting – Lodge at Cedar Creek, Wausau, WI – Oct. 24, 2008

Meeting was called to order by President Dan Strobel at 11 a.m.

All board members and the State Steward were present. Additions were made to the agenda.

The minutes from the Special Meeting of July 21-22, 2008 were approved as printed in the September 2008 newsletter.

The board discussed the schedule for the Fall Conference. State Steward Linda gave a brief overview of the Saturday steward training. Lisa, Tom, Roger and Chuck will be assisting her. On Sunday's schedule Sandy Donnell, HR Specialist, will present a retirement seminar. She will cover VERA, Thrift Savings, Insurance and Flexible Spending Accounts. Steve Shears, Lakeland CSA, will follow with topics like RDSOP, Percent to Standard, DPS Formal Review, Formula Offices, and FSS. President Dan announced that there would not be a National Officer present due to former NRLCA President's retirement party. The Board would like to show their appreciation by presenting pocket calendars to the many people that go the extra mile in the WIRLCA.

Motion made by Karen Schauer, seconded by Ron Berg to allow Louan to pay \$5.00 to anyone that signs up for a quote from GMAC Insurance. Motion carried.

Discussion was held concerning the WI Convention sign. Dan and Lisa will discuss possible changes to the new sign. The old sign will be given to Dennis Nelson for the PAC auction at the State Convention.

The financial and membership reports were presented by Karen. The budget is looking good at this time but the membership is down slightly from 2007. The recruitment mailing that was sent out in September is helping. Board members are reminded that the 2008 expense vouchers need to be in Karen's hands by December 30th.

The meeting recessed at 1 p.m. for lunch and reconvened at 2 p.m.

Lois distributed the copies of the 2008 convention minutes to all board members and State Steward. Copies will be available at the Fall Conference and also at the Spring Conference. Anyone wishing to request a copy mailed to them contact Karen or Lois.

Equipment needs were discussed. Motion made by Karen, seconded by Lisa to allow Karen to be able to purchase 2 printers/copier, 1 monitor, 1 shredder, 1 or 2 laptops. The approximate cost would be \$3700.00. Motion carried. Chuck will check on audio equipment for the next convention.

Steward's report was given by Linda Vanden Plas. Count training has been scheduled as follows: December 28th, Wausau - January 4th, Milwaukee – January 11th, Chippewa Falls – January 18th, Green Bay and January 25th, Reedsburg. The steward training will be from 8-12 a.m. and count training from 1-5 p.m. Chuck will do count training in Hayward on January 25th. Linda will also give count training in Belmont on January 24th from 6-9 p.m. Training for the area stewards will be November 16th. There will not be joint count training with management this year. The State Steward and Assistants will be attending National Steward Training at Bloomingdale, IL from November 3-5, 2008. Linda announced that she only has enough contracts for stewards. Motion was made by Ron, seconded by Karen to order 300 contract copies to be sold to the general membership. Motion carried. Discussion was held concerning the newly revised PO 603. The National Steward System does not endorse them.

Dan and Linda will be attending the November 24th Lakeland District Labor/Management Meeting. Chuck gave a report on the Northland District Management Meeting and explained the National Reassessment Program.

The National Office will host the State President, State Secretary/ Treasurer and State Steward seminar April 14-16, 2009. Motion was made by Lisa, seconded by Chuck to have Dan check on having the Assistant Secretary/Treasurer also attend this meeting. Motion passed. (continue on page 22)

(continued from page 21)

Discussion was held on the rotation of the DJSC members. Dan announced the names of the new academy trainers for Oconomowoc and Madison. The QWL work team 2 day training is on hold at this time.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. and reconvened at 8:30 a.m.

Dan opened the meeting by announcing the following dates to remember.

December 1 is the deadline for the next newsletter.

January 19th a mid winter board meeting at Tomah.

January 24 is the deadline for the February newsletter

March 20 Board Meeting in Tomah

March 21-22 Spring Conference at Cranberry Lodge in Tomah

May 1-3 is Mid-states in Peoria, IL

May 16-20 is the President/Vice President Legislative Conference in Washington DC

June 24-25 Board Meeting in Oconomowoc

June 26-28 State Convention in Oconomowoc.

June 29 State Board Reorganization Meeting.

Karen would like to give training for County Presidents and County Secretaries to assist them with their duties. This training could be held during the Spring and Fall Conferences and State Convention. More discussion will be held at future meetings.

Discussion was held on the duties of the Financial Review Committee. With the audits being done at the meetings, very important information needs to be brought each time. Motion made by Ron, seconded by Chuck to have Karen and Lois explore the cost of an annual audit with an accounting firm in lieu of the Financial Review Committee. Motion passed. Financial Review Committee met with us at 11:45 a.m. Questions were answered concerning inventory and expense vouchers.

Dan announced that the Constitution Committee has been formed. The following people have agreed to be on this committee as well as the State Convention Committee: Sue Heiderscheidt, Debra Downen, Roger Dobbe, Bill Jarzombek, Alan Bengsten and Karen Schauer as board representative. They will meet on Sunday at 8 a.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Submitted by Lois Graper
Assistant Secretary/Treasurer.

ODDS AND ENDS by Karen Schauer **Finances and LM Forms**

The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959, as amended (LMRDA), grants certain rights to all union members and protects their interests by promoting democratic procedures within labor organizations. This Act establishes reporting requirements for all labor organizations, union officers and its employees. In order to meet the reporting requirements which allow us to be transparent, keep our financial integrity in place, and ensure union democracy, every state is required to file an LM report as well as every county organization in the state. Your State LM Report has been filed along with every county unit and can be viewed at the DOL

Web site:

<http://www.dol.gov/esa/olms/regs/compliance/rrlo/lmrda.htm> any carrier with questions should feel free to call me as I am always happy to answer them.

WIRLCA AUXILIARY OFFICERS-2008-2009

President

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10686 County Road Bb
Marshfield, WI 54449-9559
715-676-3376

Vice-President

Kathy Lueck
1417 Oak Street
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920-262-1980

Secretary/Treasurer

June Strobel
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Hustisford, WI 53034-9742
920-349-3782

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920-485-2576

Executive Committee Member

Betty Lilley
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Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-9388
715-884-6592

Junior Sponsor

Karen Rasmussen
N55W31185 County Road K
Hartland, WI 53029-9305
262-367-2330

Pocket Calendars for sale.

Our Sec/Treas Karen Schauer has 20 pocket calendars for 2009 with the National logo on them. If you would like one; contact Karen at 715/836-9612. Cost is \$2.00. Make check out to WI RLCA.

National Scholarship Applications

Applications for the National Scholarships need to be ***post marked no later than March 1, 2009.*** The scholarship applications are available on the WIRLCA website or by contacting any State Auxiliary Member.

Sons, daughters, grandsons, and grand daughters of Association and Auxiliary Members are eligible to apply. Spouses of Association members are considered Auxiliary members through their dues that are automatically withheld unless the Association member has specifically contacted Secretary/Treasurer Karen Schauer each year and requested otherwise. Please have the applicant indicate "yes" on the form that the Association member's spouse is an Auxiliary member, even if they are not actively involved in the State Auxiliary.

Applicants are reminded that they are to fill out the application forms ***completely and accurately to qualify.*** ***Scholarships are chosen by a random drawing of all eligible applicants.*** The National Scholarships are not just for graduating high school seniors. The requirements are listed on each individual application form, as well as the name and address to which the scholarship application is to be sent.

Moving?

If you have access to the postal intranet, *Blue*, or a Personnel Center kiosk, you can change your address by clicking on *Employee Self Service*. If you don't have access to these options, request a *Form 1216, Employees' Current mailing Address*, from your supervisor. All districts should send Form 1216 to HRSSC Compensation/Benefits, PO Box 970400, Greensboro NC 27497-0400. Retirees should send address changes directly to WI RLCA Sec/Treasurer Karen Schauer, 5857 Prill Rd, Eau Claire WI 54701-8215

WI RLCA Lois Graper-Editor
W10980 Riverside Road
Marion, WI 54950-9020

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2009 Steward Training/Count Training

Steward Training will be from 8 a.m. to 12
Count training will be from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

January 4, 2009
Best Western Milwaukee Airport Hotel
& Conference Center
5105 Howell Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53207
414-769-2100

January 11, 2009
Avalon Hotel
1009 West Park Avenue
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
715-723-2281

January 18, 2009
Best Western
780 Packer Drive
Green Bay, WI 54304
902-499-3161

January 25, 2009
Voyager Inn
200 Viking Drive
Reedsburg, WI 53959
608-524-6431

Count Training Only

December 28, 2008 from 1 p.m.-4 p.m.
Best Western Midway
2901 Hummingbird
Wausau, WI 54401
715-842-1616

January 24, 2009 from 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Baymount Inn & Suites
103 W. Moundview Avenue
Belmont, WI 53310
608-762-6900

January 25, 2009 from 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Comfort Suites
15586 County Road B
Hayward, WI 54843
715-634-0700

January 27, 2009 from 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.
Ramada Plaza
1 North Main St.
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
920-923-2592