

# Officer's Reports

Georgia Rural Letter Carriers'  
Association

APRIL 2015

*Happy Easter*



## Put That Cell Phone Up!

By the time you read this most of the District meetings will have already come and gone and I hope you took the time to attend yours. If your meetings have yet to take place I wish you would take the time to grace the doors with your presence. The Union process starts here and progresses up to the National level. You may have aspirations of becoming an officer of your local District or State or even a National Officer someday. Anyone that seeks these positions hopefully will have a vision of positive change for the future of our Union. I know there will be change coming as there has been change all along the way of my career. Some of the changes will be good and some not so good. This new Congress we now have is already making waves and you need to stay abreast of what they are up to and stay in contact with them on issues concerning your career and future as a Rural Letter Carrier.

Now it befuddles me to understand why anyone would want to take pictures with their "cell phone" of whatever on their mail

route and post it on social media. Aren't we supposed to be delivering the mail? Aren't we supposed to be driving safely? Aren't we supposed to be on the clock, unless you are on your lunch break? If I were a Manager, Oh My Gosh, I would have a signed, sealed and delivered case against you for not working in a safe manner and possibly violating the confidentiality of our customers. And the list could go on! We need to be more aware of what we do and the possible consequences of our actions while on the job. **PUT THAT CELL PHONE UP!** That little contraption could cost you your job, not to mention "YOUR LIFE"!

Your Vice President, Legislative Director and I will be traveling to Washington DC in May to the annual Legislative Seminar and Hill visits with the State's Senators and Congressmen. This year we have a few newbies to try and educate on Postal issues and hope they are receptive to our ideas. We will also be trying to persuade the others to see things our way. Very seldom do we get to speak with the Congressional

person themselves but rather we normally meet with the staff. Now some of these staff members are as young as twenty-something and never been inside a Post Office or bought a stamp. It's kind of like talking to your grand kids and making sense of the conversation. They live in a different world and just don't see in the Postal Service what we see. But you can wish us good luck anyway.

I will be attempting to attend as many District meetings as possible and would like see a full house wherever I go and hopefully the earlier officer training will pay off. Let's all have a good and fruitful meeting. Remember Officers, get your Delegate and elected Officer List along with Constitution and Resolution changes to the State Secretary asap after your meeting. Thank you for all you do for the Association by serving in any capacity. See you somewhere, sometime.

*Respectfully Submitted,  
Fred DeLoach, President*

## The Big Picture

I received my PS Form 8028 last month. What is that you may be thinking? It's your Personal Statement of Benefits for 2014. It's a statement that gives a personalized summary of your total compensation, both direct pay and benefits. I would encourage each of you to take some time and really look it over carefully.

I find myself getting caught up in the day to day, week to week and month to month issues that we all deal with and often

forget the 'big picture'. Reading this statement line by line is a great reminder of how good I have it. It makes me very appreciative of my job and the fact the NRLCA fights and protects what benefits they can.

My blood pressure rises a little though when I think about the non-members that received their statement. The ones that say "Why should I join the Union?", "I do my job each day therefore I don't need the Union". "I don't believe in Unions, they're

against my beliefs' or thinking, 'I'm content not to join and pay dues as long as your paying yours!!' REALLY? When they look at LEAVE AND HOLIDAYS ACCURED IN 2014 do they think that's what the USPS wanted them to have? I wonder if they realize that the USPS went after those benefits and others during the last negotiations and will again.

Another area non-members do not seem to realize is the Union's presence in Legis-

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## From the Secretary's Desk

Spring Forward...not only did the time change but along with it some nicer weather. Hopefully in the next few weeks we will continue to enjoy some true spring weather before jumping into the boiling heat of summer.

Spring has also brought forth some changes that we all need to be aware of. In the recent Republican proposed budget they slipped in a little surprise for postal and federal employees that would make TSP Contributions worthless. To save \$32 billion over 10 years, House Republicans propose changing the fund's interest-rate calculation, because, the resolution says, "those who participate in the G Fund are rewarded with a long-term rate on what is essentially a short-term security." The fund's current annualized interest rate is 1.88 percent. Adopting the House plan would result in a precipitous interest-rate drop to an annualized 0.01 percent, according to the TSP. This little surprise along with the HR Concurrent 27 needs to be watched closely.

It is that time of year once again for the annual spring district meetings. I hope you are making plans to attend and participate in yours. The district officers spend their free time planning these meetings on your behalf. Your attendance would be appreciated by them. If you have a Resolution that you would like to present this will be the place to present it.

Due to limitations of space in this paper the new member list could not be included. However; the list will be printed in future editions as space permits. Since March 1st, I have processed 82 membership applications and our membership has only increased

by 35 since February 28th. New relief carriers are being trained every week but retaining them continues to be a problem.

Be Safe on your routes, take a second look before pulling back into traffic from serving a mail box. I will be attending several of the spring meetings and I hope to see the regular attendees and meet some new.

*Glynda G. Wurtz*  
*GARLCA State Secretary-Treasurer*

### Membership March 31, 2015

#### Cash Members

Regular	9
Retired	80
Associate	1

#### Dues Withholding

Regular	2657
Relief	1405
Retired	690
Associate	<u>26</u>
Membership Total	4878

## Retirement!!!

A couple of friends of mine just took a trip to the mountains where they stopped in a small town and visited a coffee shop. When they came out of the coffee shop, there was a cop writing out a parking ticket. They went up to him and said, "come on man, how about giving a senior citizen a break?" The cop ignored them and continued writing the ticket. They called him a not so nice name. He glared at them and started writing another ticket for having worn-out tires. Then my not so smart friends called him another not so nice name! He finished the second ticket and put it on the windshield with the first. Then he started writing more tickets. This went on for about 20 minutes. The more they abused him, the more tickets he wrote.

Imagine that! He finally finished, sneered at them and walked away. Just then my friends bus arrived, they boarded it and continued on their mountain trip. They always look for cars with bumper stickers that say, 'I am a POSTMASTER.' They try to have a little fun each day now that they are retired postal employees.

I can hardly wait to join my retired postal friends and have that kind of fun! So many things are changing and changing so fast with our jobs. I remember when I used to report to work at 6am, case my mail, head out on the route around 8:00 or 8:30 on a heavy day. I would get back to the office between 1:00 & 2:00 and go home and nobody ever bothered me.

Now we are lucky to be able to go to work at 8:00 or 8:30. Everything is supposed to be better...faster...yea right! Supervisors and Postmasters micromanage us like crazy. We have safety talks, service talks, customer service talks, talks, talks and more talks. We have DPS mail, DPS flats, all kind of parcels and spurs. We have scanners with little cell phones that don't scan half the time. It takes 2 or 3 months just to get extensions approved, plus a shortage of subs. I have a hard time getting back in before the car repair shop I use closes if I need to get something fixed to be ready for the next exciting day. I could go on whining, but I won't. I do have a good job and I am blessed, but I can't wait to Retire!

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Last month, the “Rural Quest “ was “What is the form # to sign up to become a member of the GARLCA?” The answer is Form # 1187 and was won by Jerome Parks from Albany, Ga. The “Rural Quest” this month is “When a rural carrier retires, what is the Form # they must submit to remain a member of the GARLCA?” If you want to make an easy \$10.00, send me your answer. I will draw a name out of the hat of all the correct answers.

In order to encourage non-members to become union members, please share your GARLCA Rural Bulletin and your National Rural Magazine with them. Hope to see ya’ll at one of the spring district meetings!

**Terry Chancey**

*Chairman Executive Committee*

## Well Attended

The Spring Booster Meeting was well attended by rural carriers searching for information and they got it. Questions concerning the recent mail count were among the many subjects discussed. Will there be another mail count as we know them? That is a question that may be answered shortly after the (ETS) is complete. What is (ETS) and how is it proceeding? If you had been at the Spring Booster Meeting you may have learned about it. How are the new scanners working? Answer: a question that may have been discussed during the meeting. When will the other rural carriers get their new scanners? There is a time frame,

do you know? What do you do when you have no sub on your route? There may be something about 120 days, do you know? What is (PAC), and what does that stand for? What is Provident Guild and who is eligible to be a member? Why do your State President and Vice President go to Washington every May? These and many other questions can be answered during a Booster Meeting that is held twice a year. These informational meeting are planned for your benefit, take advantage of that.

Now! For the final question: What is our National Association sponsored automobile insurance? You as a member can be cov-

ered by a company that has been insuring rural carriers for over 60 years. Even if you drive a LLV you are still eligible and also anyone who you may know like other family members or friends. That company is National General and the Rural Letter Carriers’ Vehicle Insurance Plan. Call them today and see if you can save money by getting a no-obligation quote and don’t forget to ask for savings code R-21 when you speak to them. Their number is 1-877-274-9632.

**Mark Larman**

*Executive Committee*

## House Concurrent Resolution 27

Not much going on in Congress at this time as far as Postal Legislation but read on.

However as federal employees and postal employees, it appears to me that, we are being attacked from all sides. Benefits that we have fought to attain through PAC, NARFE, and Union Negotiations through the past many years are in jeopardy.

The House in the last week of March voted on a fiscal year 2016 Budget Resolution namely House Concurrent Resolution 27. The Resolution is seeking \$318 Billion in cuts to earned pay and benefits of federal and postal employees and retirees.

Some of the items are: increasing feder-

al retirees share of their health insurance premiums they pay, increasing the employee’s share of premiums paid into Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) for all current federal employees and possibly totally eliminating the Federal Employees Retirement system (FERS) for new employees. Also the budget proposal makes reference to changes to the frequency and type of mail delivery.

The Senate will vote on their budget bill, Senate Concurrent Resolution 11; then the leadership of both the House and the Senate will meet and attempt to combine both bills eventually. Presenting a “Budget Reconciliation Bill” to both House and the Senate and then to the President.

Also, there is a bill that has been introduced by Republican Bruce Westerman (R-Arkansas), which would change the federal employee’s calculations for retirement from the highest 3 years to the average of their high 5 years. If passed, this legislation would go into effective January 1, 2017 and according to the Congressional Budget Office, this could save \$3.1 Billion dollars over a 10 year period.

This is not the first time this item has come up and because as it is written it applies to all members of Congress and their Staffs.

This could be a long battle.

There is one new bill, House Resolution 973. It is a new bill but the intent of the bill is something that we have been fighting for

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many years. The bill, introduced by Republican Rodney Davis (R-Illinois) is asking for the repeal of Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). Both GPO and WEP deal with retirees. GPO prevents retirees who receive a government annuity based on work in non-Social Security covered employment from collecting full Social Security benefits based on their spouse's work. WEP greatly reduced the Social Security benefit who worked in a Social Security covered employment and who also receive an annuity based on their non-Social Security-covered government jobs. In common language, the government calls it "Double Dipping" but we believe if an individual worked two or more different jobs during their lifetime; they deserve both benefits.

Now is the time to put the "Grass Roots" Program to work. We need to contact our Representative and Senators and let them know our concerns.

Until next time, hope to see you at your District Meetings

*Sincerely,  
Dwight Brookshire  
Legislative Director*

*Vice President continued from pg. 1*

lative issues. Do they even know about the battles the Union fights on their behalf in Washington? Sadly I doubt it. In case you were wondering what the majority in the House thinks of Federal workers and their benefits look up H. Con Res 27. It's the House's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Resolution that passed on March 25. Federal workers benefits are under attack! Scary! Another battle looming. What would non-members think if the next 8026 they received didn't look quite as good as previous ones? That might be a wake up call! We need to continue to educate our non-members about what the NRLCA does for us all and hopefully they'll see the 'big picture'.

If you attended the Spring Booster you heard about a little extra incentive offered in addition to what the RAFT program promises. District Spring Business meetings are underway. I hope you were able to attend yours or are planning to. You need to be thinking about making plans for the State Convention in Macon. It will be here soon! Be safe!

*Phil Upchurch  
Vice President*

## **State Convention Hotel**

**Marriott Macon City Center**

**240 Coliseum Drive**

**Macon, GA**

**Room Rate \$119 plus tax**

**Reservations may be made by calling:**

**800-228-9290**

**Or**

**478-621-5300**

**Ask for the group rate for the GA Rural Letter Carriers**

**Cutoff Date for reservations:**

**June 5, 2015**