

Ruralinfo.net March Newsletter

In this issue:

- 1. Mail Count**
- 2. Back Pay**
- 3. COLA adjustment effective 3/15/08**
- 4. New Salary Chart released effective 3/15/08**
- 5. RHD Incentive revised instructions and forms**
- 6. NRLCA website gets a face lift**
- 7. USPS management-union video addresses key issues**
- 8. Proposed FMLA Changes**
- 9. Legislation would allow more feds to cash out sick leave at retirement**
- 10. Editorial**

1. Mail Count

It seems that the USPS has achieved a slam dunk in this year's mail count. They began touting their expected savings a month or so before this count began. They estimated that they expected to cut anywhere from 3-6 hours off of each route. From the reports I am getting, they came very close to achieving this estimate. This alone seems like a sort of benchmark to me. But, I am just an ordinary rural carrier out here delivering mail every day, so what do I know?

On Thursday, Feb. 28th, PMG Potter testified before a House Subcommittee on the implementation of the PAEA (Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act). This was 5 days after mail count started and he was already identifying the rural mail count as a way to adjust work hours in front of Congress. <http://www.napus.org/govrelations/E5-5.pdf>

There are numerous reports from carriers in the field of benchmarking still going on, even after the 60 Million dollar pay out from the Eischen award. There are still reports of harassment by managers, no record mail being held back, COA's never showing up at all, DPS percentages dropping to almost nothing, flats and box holders all but disappearing, DHL and UPS drop shipments disappearing, UPS stickers being slapped over USPS stickers, and many more signs of manipulation. Looks like they were determined to make back that 60 million any way they could... We have essentially lost our wage increases we gained in arbitration.

For the life of me, I cannot understand why local PM's and Supervisors try so hard to deny proper credit during a mail count. Do they not realize that when rural routes in an office lose evaluation that it will affect their office budget? So, now after this nationwide massacre, we will have regular carriers having to choose the high option to survive. We will have a lot of leave replacements losing 2 days a month of work. We will have all involved having trouble finishing in evaluation. This will create a bad situation for all

If you have issues about the mail count that you do not agree with, provide documentation and do not sign your count papers.

Below are a couple of great links that provide how to deal with mail count disagreements.

[NRLCA Protocol for Mail Count Disagreements and USPS Requirements for Disagreements](#)

[Vigilance for Justice: Rural Carriers can do something about this mail count](#)

And, if you have to choose the J option, be sure and take advantage of the Free Saturday provision.

[Free Saturdays](#)

2. Back Pay

Hopefully everyone received their lump sum payment on 2/22/08. Remember we still have the wage increase back pay coming on May 2nd, 2008. Both RCA's and regulars will receive this back pay. [Click here for official back pay report from the NRLCA](#)

3. COLA adjustment effective 3/15/08

The Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) for January rose to 615.8. This is an increase of 9.2 points above the May 2007 base of 606.6. This represents a COLA increase of \$458 per annum, \$17.62 per pay period or 22 cents per hour for a 40-hour route, and is increased proportionally for routes over 40 hours. This increase will become effective on March 15, 2008, (Pay Period 07) in accordance with Article 9.1.F.2 of the 2006-2010 National Agreement.

The next opportunity for additional COLA will be with the release of the July 2008 Consumer Price Index.

4. New Salary Chart released effective 3/15/08

As was reported recently, the release of the January 2008 Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) resulted in a cost-of-living adjustment of \$458 per annum. This COLA increase will become effective on March 15, 2008, (Pay Period 07). The next opportunity for an additional COLA will be with the release of the July 2008 Consumer Price Index. [NEW SALARY CHART](#)

5. RHD Incentive revised instructions and forms

A revised Memorandum of Understanding #8 became effective on December 3, 2007. As a result of several changes having been made to the prior MOU, it was necessary to modify the previous instructions and the forms which are to be used to process requests for the incentive payments provided for in the current MOU. The revised instructions and forms were sent to the field on March 6, 2008.

[REVISED RHD INCENTIVE](#)

6. NRLCA website gets a face lift

The NRLCA national website has been redesigned. It has been given an updated look along with easier searching. You will have to sign up for a new log in, as the one you used on the old site will not work. There is also an option to sign up for news

bulletins.... This feature has been needed for a long time... Kudos <http://www.nrlca.org/>

7. USPS management-union video addresses key issues

Want a glimpse at some of the issues facing the Postal Service? Check out the new video, *Building Our Future Together*. The show features Chief Human Resources Officer Tony Vegliante conducting an open, roundtable discussion with the four union presidents on the future of the Postal Service. The union leaders agreed to videotaping the discussion and sending it to all postal facilities for all employees to view.

[USPS NEWS LINK](#)

8. Proposed FMLA Changes

The Bush administration has proposed new regulations that would weaken employees' medical privacy protections and make it more difficult for workers to use leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). [Take action at APWU website](#)

9. Legislation would allow more feds to cash out sick leave at retirement

Rep. James Moran, D-Va., said Monday that he planned to introduce a bill that would provide employees under the Federal Employees Retirement System with a one-time payment of up to \$10,000 for any remaining sick leave at retirement. The benefit also would apply to employees covered under the Foreign Service Pension System and U.S. Postal Service [CLICK HERE](#)

10. Editorial

[Open Letter to Postmasters and USPS Managers](#) by John Amtsfeld

Important Links

[Download the ruralinfo flyer](#)

[Rural Carrier Classifieds](#)

[2008 USPS FY Calendar](#)

[Current rural carrier salary](#)

[Table of evaluated hours](#)

[Current EMA chart](#)

[Current RCA Wage](#)

[Disclaimer](#)

INTERESTING NEWS STORIES

[Postal Service Achieves Positive Net Income](#)

[USPS 2007 Annual Report](#)

[U.S. Postal Service pays \\$66 million in Wi for overtime](#)

[The evolution of mail: Postal agencies look to technology](#)

[Postage Rate Increase Continues Disturbing Trends](#)

[Halliburton exec is new USPS CIO](#)

[Pitney Bowes spent \\$1.4M lobbying in '07](#)

[Anti-Subcontracting Measure Attracting Support](#)

[Reforms deliver freedom to compete, transparency.](#)

[NOTES from the hearing over implementation of PAEA](#)

[FedEx, UPS look to gain if DHL scales back](#)

[OPM losing hope for passage of bill allowing annuitant rehiring](#)

[Post Office Approves 10K Mail Spying Requests Annually](#)

[USPS pushes back Intelligent Mail barcode implementation](#)

[GAO: Federal workers' compensation mismanaged millions](#)