

### Hacker Valley Post Office Statement

I am asking that the Postal Regulatory Commission take action to reopen the Hacker Valley (WV) Post Office because of the hardship that it is causing to members of our community, as well as to the commerce and vitality of the area.

Many in our community are elderly but independent folks who live a simple lifestyle, growing a garden and canning their own food in remote locations not on a postal route. They go to town (Buckhannon or Webster Springs) only when absolutely necessary, usually for medical care. Many, like Jimmy Silman, are veterans who have prescriptions mailed to their post office box. Some medications must be kept cool, some come in bulky packages, too large for the locked boxes. In the past, these people picked up their packages at the post office on the day of delivery, often getting a ride with a relative or neighbor if they didn't drive themselves. With the current route carrier arrangement, packages are now delivered a day later. If the route carrier has to hand deliver the item due to hardship, this delays the mail for other patrons and places a burden on the carrier. If medications are delivered to unlocked mailboxes closer to home, this creates an opportunity for thieves to steal. Registered mail, money orders, packages, and stamps all present further problems for people of limited means who must travel to another town to reach a retail post office.

Our mountains can be treacherous in winter. This past year, our county schools had at least 12 "snow days." To reach any post office, other than the one we had in Hacker Valley, involves going over at least one mountain and miles of steep and curvy highway. Having to travel south up to 25 miles one way to the Diana post office, or north 30 plus miles to Rock Cave is not an option in bad weather.

I frequently mail packages to our grown children who live in other states, stopping at the Hacker Valley post office before or after school. By the time I would travel to another community, that post office would be closed, leaving me with the option of using more expensive services such as UPS or FedEx.

Our post office served an area of northern Webster County of well over 100 square miles and close to 1000 persons. The area takes in those families and businesses from the top of Hodam Mountain in the south, to the Upshur County line to the north, and from Replete in the west on the Braxton County line, to Holly River State Park and the Randolph County line to the east. Hacker Valley also has its own telephone exchange (493). Hacker Valley is home to Holly River State Park, Coastal Lumber Company's Hacker Valley Mill, Lake Lumber & Fence Company, Sun Lumber Company, a WV Department of Highways Maintenance Sub-Headquarters, and the new Hacker Valley PreK-8 School. We also have a volunteer fire department, at least five churches, a convenience store, a sport shop, a tavern, two restaurants, a cabinet-making shop, two auto repair businesses, a seasonal bookkeeping business, several home-based businesses, and the Jerry Run Summer Theater. Many crafters live, produce, and ship out their goods here: pottery, woodcrafts, handmade baskets, cosmetics, and quilts. In addition, there are several rental cabins and numerous vacation homes. The entire community depended on the post office for mailing letters and packages, purchasing stamps and money orders, picking up tax forms, etc. Scores of patrons depended on the post office for a secure indoor mailbox.

Please consider these hardships as you review our current situation.

Respectfully,

Renee Anderson