

the Postal Superior

September 2015

Membership Recruitment:

Make It Personal

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All submissions will be edited for brevity and publication style. High-resolution photos may be e-mailed to kbalentyoung@gmail.com. Please include your non-USPS e-mail. NAPS neither assumes responsibility for the contents of the articles published herein, nor does it necessarily agree with the opinions expressed. Moreover, opinions expressed by an author do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the author's branch.

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Objectives

The object of the Association shall be to promote, through appropriate and effective action, the welfare of its members, and to cooperate with the USPS and other agencies of the federal government in a continuing effort to improve the service, to raise the standard of efficiency, and to widen the field of opportunity for its members who make the Postal Service or the federal government their life work.

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Staffing Challenges Must Be Rectified

According to the NAPS *Constitution*, it is the duty of this association to “promote, through appropriate and effective action, the welfare of its members, and to cooperate with the USPS ... to improve the service and to raise the standard of efficiency.” While this statement is a rather broad mandate, it clearly illustrates the mission of this organization. Considering events surrounding the USPS, this

mission is more important than ever.

In order for this mission to be successful, it is important for our members to understand their rights in the workplace and to exercise those rights. During the past few weeks, NAPS Headquarters has received feedback from members in the field regarding interviews with their higher-level managers. There have been occasions where these seemingly innocent interviews have

evolved into discipline.

This is where knowledge of your rights as a postal employee and NAPS member comes into play. If you are asked to engage in such an interview, your first question should be, “Will this be used in any form of disciplinary process?” If the answer is “yes,” you must say nothing further and immediately request a NAPS representative to be present. The right to representation is

clearly spelled out in the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*, specifically in Section 650. A clear understanding of your rights when it comes to any kind of disciplinary proceeding could mean the difference in keeping your job.

While our members must be proactive in protecting their individual rights, NAPS always must be on guard to protect and defend our members. For as long as anyone can remember, NAPS has been monitoring the workload of our members in the field. As you can imagine, the current climate within the Postal Service means the agency is seeking to change how supervisor complement is calculated and applied.

NAPS sent a letter to Ed Phelan, USPS vice president of Delivery Operations, regarding a couple solutions to ongoing staffing challenges. First, we proposed the formation of a SWCs team composed of subject matter experts from NAPS and the Postal Service. Our members have years of field management experience that lends itself to a knowledge base unrivaled within the Postal Service.

Second, we requested the Postal Service conduct a work study on the position of supervisor, Customer Service. It is estimated there has been no such study in at least 20 years. Obviously, the Postal Service has changed a great deal: Two decades ago, the cost of a postage stamp was only half of what it is today and the word “Amazon” referred to a river in South America.

Demands on the work force have changed dramatically in the past 20 years. We cannot continue to use antiquated formulas to determine how many managers and supervisors are needed within a specific function. Conducting a new study and following through with its findings are absolutely vital if we want to maintain service standards.

We need to address this challenge head-on; our members are constantly being asked to do more with less. We have to be realistic about the impact these demands have on EAS personnel in the field. If unrealistic demands continue to be forced on our work force, we will get to a point where many experienced managers and supervisors will be burned out and either turn away from their careers with the Postal Service or allow this pressure to negatively impact their lives at home.

The Postal Service is at a turning point. The agency

Continued on next page



Louis Atkins
President

The Postal Supervisor 2015 Production Schedule

Issue	Copy Deadline*	Mails
OCT	SEPT 1	SEPT 23
NOV	SEPT 30	OCT 21
DEC	OCT 28	NOV 18
JAN 16	NOV 24	DEC 14

*Copy must be received no later than this date; see page 3 for submission information.

Meaningful Engagement Means Meaningful Changes

Engagement is a process I always have believed can yield tremendous, positive results in addressing employee issues and corporate focus. As NAPS advocates, we must remain engaged with Postal Service leadership for the benefit of the members we serve. So, I always have viewed the positives of engagement.

As one of my best friends once told me during an engagement discussion: “Two gladiators meet on the battlefield to engage and one of them ends up dead.” This made me ask the question, “What does this agency truly consider engagement to be?” We know that engaged employees are more than simply satisfied with their jobs. Rather, according to employee engagement literature, engaged employees take pride in their work, are passionate about and energized by what they do, are committed to the organization, the mission and their jobs and are more likely to put forth extra effort to get the job done.

A number of studies by private-sector entities have found that increased levels of engagement result in better individual and organizational performance, including increased employee performance, productivity and profit margins, higher customer service ratings, fewer safety incidents and less absenteeism and turnover. Studies of the public sector, while more limited, have shown similar benefits.

For example, the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) found that higher levels of employee engagement in federal agencies led to improved agency performance, less absenteeism and fewer equal employment opportunity complaints. What do attendance percentages look like in our agency? How do we rate

compared to other federal agencies in EEOC complaints?

The answers to these questions help us look into not just the level of engagement of the USPS, but the quality of this engagement. By the time this article is published, NAPS should have been briefed on the new Postal Pulse survey results. We will know how many employees have a best friend who works with them; however, will we know what the quality of the engagement is?

Recently, I attended a convention where a postal executive stated the preliminary survey results were showing a 72 percent satisfaction rating from employees. What has happened between the VOE surveys that rated the trust of senior executives at 22 percent while the Postal Pulse found this 72 percent satisfaction rating? Is it all in the questions you ask?

If we are going to have meaningful engagement, we must have meaningful changes to how EAS employees are being engaged. Memoranda, such as involuntary reassignments that are ignored locally and condoned by executives who do not require local leadership to follow them, are draining the morale of EAS employees. We have leadership forcing EAS employees to work without being compensated and using threats and intimidation to force their will on employees.

We have EAS employees being given unreasonable demands with no resources to accomplish them and leaders who can only offer, “If you don’t do it, I will find someone who will.” Employee surveys will not fix these issues. We need top-down leadership that will make real, positive changes to the working lives of EAS employees.

NAPS has been and remains committed to taking the steps necessary to advocate for the betterment of the working lives of EAS employees.

In solidarity ...

naps.ib@naps.org

is doing a fine job cultivating new business and driving up revenues. However, the challenge is maintaining the postal infrastructure and work force to a point where it cannot only sustain current operations, but be flexible enough to allow volume growth while not sacrificing service.

Citizens, legislators and employees are beginning to grasp the value of a strong and vibrant postal delivery system. We must work to ensure real, substantive action can be taken before it’s too late.

naps.la@naps.org



Ivan D. Butts
Executive Vice President

Make It Personal

Membership is the lifeblood of our organization; currently, NAPS membership is hovering just over 25,575 in total active and associate members. There are approximately 8,750 EAS employees on our non-member list, which does not include postmasters.

Over the years, NAPS Headquarters has sent direct mailings to non-members asking them to join NAPS.

Along with a letter advocating the benefits of NAPS membership, we provide a new-member *Form 1187* and a Business Reply Mail envelope to mail back their membership forms. Though this “mail moment” has been effective, we know that personal interaction with non-members can

make all the difference.

Therefore, when recruiting a new member, make contact in person. Keep in mind the following techniques that other branches have found to be very effective. First, be prepared. Know the potential member's name and greet them by name with a handshake and smile. Second, consider taking along another branch member, preferably one who already knows the non-member. Third, wear the NAPS pin to reflect pride and enthusiasm.

In addition, bring along a membership packet or other materials, such as:

- The NAPS Historical Sketch
- A recent issue of *The Postal Supervisor*
- A recent Legislative Update
- A state/local branch newsletter
- Auxiliary information
- An organizational chart of representation
- Correspondence from NAPS officials

As these materials are presented, the recruiter should stress they are just some of the examples of the communication materials NAPS provides its members. The recruiter also should mention that NAPS has

a legislative counsel in Washington, DC, to help protect supervisors' interests in Congress. Also, mention the Disciplinary Defense Fund and how it is funded and used.

Technically, any eligible EAS employee may join NAPS without being asked. They can just complete the membership form available on our NAPS website, then

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Brian Wagner
Secretary/Treasurer

National Association of Postal Supervisors Member vs Non-Member Summary Report

As of the June 2015 Dues Check-Off (DCO) Report

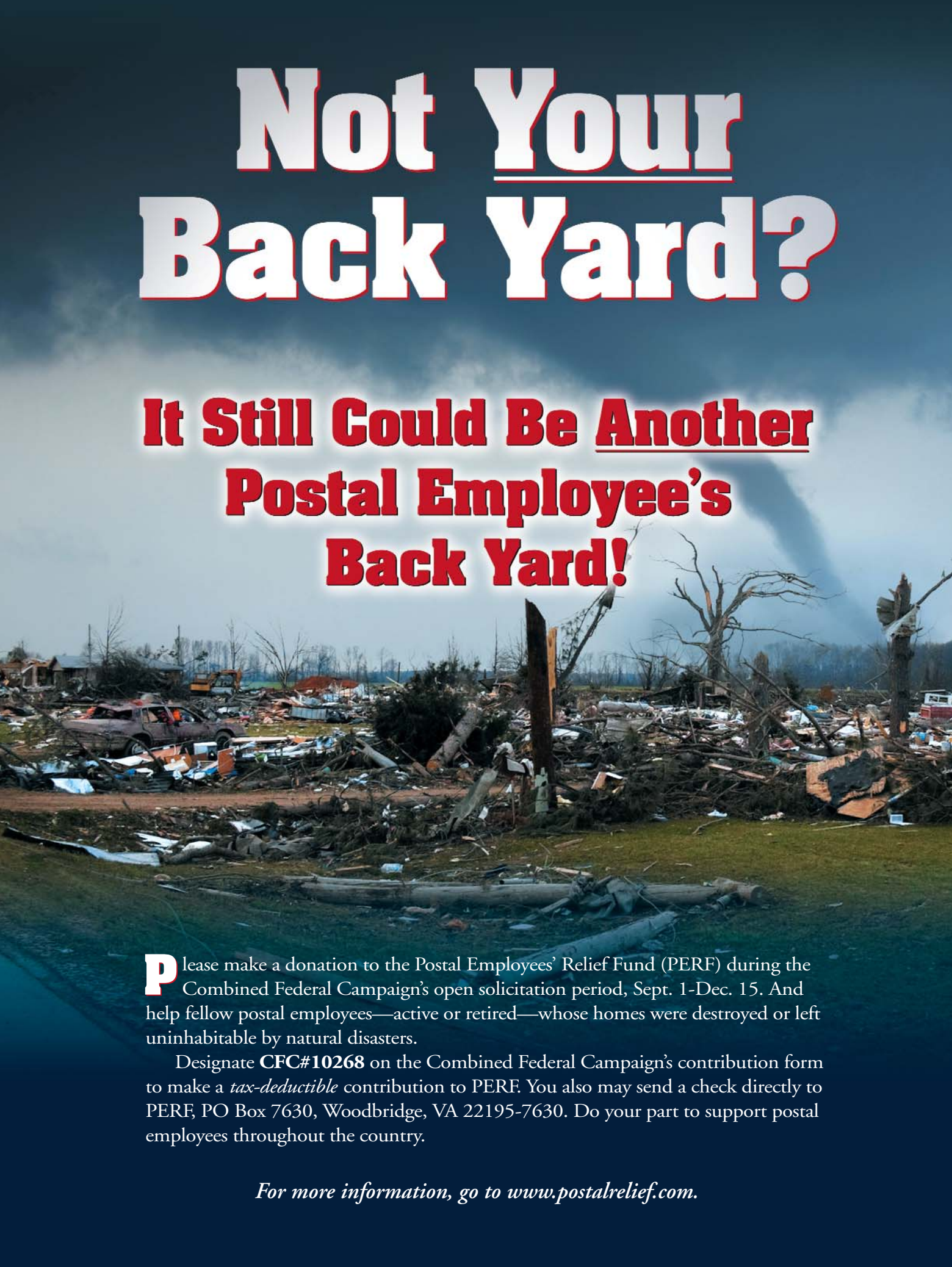
NAPS Areas	Total Members	Total Non-Members	Total Possible Members	% Members	% Non-Members
New England	1,546	379	1,925	80.31%	19.69%
New York	2,272	574	2,846	79.83%	20.17%
Mideast	2,138	643	2,781	76.88%	23.12%
Capitol-Atlantic	2,488	827	3,315	75.05%	24.95%
Pioneer	1,300	466	1,766	73.61%	26.39%
Michiana	1,107	427	1,534	72.16%	27.84%
Illini	992	445	1,437	69.03%	30.97%
North Central	835	520	1,355	61.62%	38.38%
MINK	1,057	577	1,634	64.69%	35.31%
Southeast	2,217	666	2,883	76.90%	23.10%
Central Gulf	709	307	1,016	69.78%	30.22%
Cotton Belt	826	443	1,269	65.09%	34.91%
Texas	1,680	611	2,291	73.33%	26.67%
Northwest	990	430	1,420	69.72%	30.28%
Rocky Mountain	1,449	486	1,935	74.88%	25.12%
Pacific	2,637	992	3,629	72.66%	27.34%
National Totals	24,243	8,793	33,036	73.38%	26.62%

NAPS Regions	Total Members	Total Non-Members	Total Possible Members	% Members	% Non-Members
Northeast	5,784	1,537	7,321	79.01%	20.99%
Eastern	3,960	1,352	5,312	74.55%	25.45%
Central	3,991	1,969	5,960	66.96%	33.04%
Southern	5,432	2,027	7,459	72.82%	27.18%
Western	5,076	1,908	6,984	72.68%	27.32%
National Totals	24,243	8,793	33,036	73.38%	26.62%

* Note: Northeast and Eastern Region totals and percentages are calculated to adjust for all NJ Branches factored into the Northeast Region totals, except for Branches 71 and 74.

Not Your Back Yard?

**It Still Could Be Another
Postal Employee's
Back Yard!**



Please make a donation to the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF) during the Combined Federal Campaign's open solicitation period, Sept. 1-Dec. 15. And help fellow postal employees—active or retired—whose homes were destroyed or left uninhabitable by natural disasters.

Designate **CFC#10268** on the Combined Federal Campaign's contribution form to make a *tax-deductible* contribution to PERF. You also may send a check directly to PERF, PO Box 7630, Woodbridge, VA 22195-7630. Do your part to support postal employees throughout the country.

For more information, go to www.postalrelief.com.

Memo Regarding Temporary Involuntary Reassignments, TACS Help Desk Submissions Among Discussion Items

President Louis Atkins and Executive Vice President Ivan D. Butts were present for the July 16 consultative meeting with the Postal Service. Executive Board Chair Larry Ewing attended via telecon.

Representing the Postal Service were John Cavallo, manager, Labor Relations Policy Administration; Phong Quang, Labor Relations specialist; Gordon McGraw, manager, Pay Program; and Carol Ruzsala, manager, Payroll; Kris Tackett, manager, TACS Help Desk; and Joe Healey, accountant, all via telecon.

Agenda Item #1

NAPS received concerns regarding the Western Area memo on involuntary reassignments; this issue was properly moved up the chain. NAPS is deeply concerned whenever the agency creates EAS job postings with scheduled work hours and days off, which are necessary to establish the time the USPS wants and needs the applicant to commit to fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of the position.

NAPS presumes the agency's expectation is that the successful applicant(s) will schedule their personal life events around those work hours and non-scheduled days off to be available during the work hours listed on the job posting. NAPS' contention is that when EAS employees are involuntarily reassigned for any reason, the agency not only negatively impacts the EAS employee's work life, but personal life events, as well.

The response from the Western Area states the agency's actions "do not fall under the criteria outlined within the letters." Criteria identified in the memorandum reads:

"Again, there is a difference between temporary involuntary reassignments made in order to meet operating, training or development needs and involuntary reassignments made for punitive or arbitrary reasons. The latter are inappropriate. If management perceives that action is needed in order to address unsatisfactory performance, then corrective actions should be taken in a manner compliant with applicable rules and regulations."

NAPS believes this memorandum contains the necessary due-diligence requirements that should be maintained by managers if a temporary involuntary reassignment is necessary. NAPS requests that any involuntary reassignments not made in accordance with the memorandum be ruled inappropriate and immediately terminated.

USPS Chief Operating Officer Dave Williams looked at previous memos; he has drafted an updated memo, which is under final review. Once finalized, the memo on involuntary reassignments will be presented to NAPS.

Agenda Item #2

NAPS has received a concern regarding excessive telecons in the Arizona District. This issue has been previously voiced and addressed by Postal Headquarters.

The USPS contacted the Western

Area and found the issue had been resolved after the Western Area HR department talked to NAPS President Louis Atkins. A WEA team investigated the issue and it has been resolved.

NAPS pointed out it was resolved temporarily by the USPS area office, but the postmaster involved reinitiated the excessive teleconferences. Atkins stated he will speak to the Western Area office again.

Agenda Item #3

NAPS requested procedural guidelines (SOPs) for submitting, processing and verifying submissions to the TACS Help Desk. NAPS is not questioning USPS policy; it just wants a copy of the policy. NAPS members have indicated they have been challenged the very next day, before the resolution deadline of 24 hours has been met.

This is specifically regarding timelines for resolution of issues. TACS has a 24-hour turnaround time goal. The USPS believes the issue involves changes requiring PS forms 1723 and 3189, which should be submitted before the effective date. It is believed these changes are being allowed to build and then combined for convenience, rather than doing so in advance and in a timely manner.

There are quick-reference guides on the TACS home page to instruct the field on how to address this issue. The USPS will direct TACS to update the quick reference to include advance submission regarding these items. The USPS will provide NAPS Headquarters with the TACS quick-reference guides.

Agenda Item #4

NAPS asked to discuss changes to ELM 412.1 for policy on career appointments. NAPS does not believe the current SDA is properly reflected in the supervisors' salaries when taking into consideration the contractual COLA increases as defined in the 2011-2015 CBA for craft employees.

Each time a COLA, general increase or contractual increase is due, USPS Headquarters is notified and the SDA charts are updated; USPS Headquarters works with Payroll and Finance using the same effective date.

NAPS asked when an SDA update shows up in the ELM.

It has not been updated because other changes are needed, as well; in addition, there has been a history of lag time in updating the ELM. The goal of USPS Headquarters is to have updates to the ELM implemented by October, as it is published twice a year.

Agenda Item #5

NAPS asked for an explanation on what the pay differences are for an employee(s) on detail and how they are calculated.

This is the same for everyone; it is 5 percent above the current level or to the minimum of the grade. SDA does not apply to this; SDA only is for permanent positions.

Agenda Item #6

NAPS received a concern from the Alaska District about the issue of special-exempt EAS employees not receiving their authorized TCOLA for work hours beyond eight.

ELM 439 states it is not included for hours over 8/40. TCOLA is established by the Office of Personnel Management; current TCOLA is 24.69 percent. It also is dependent on distance from certain metros designated by the OPM.

Agenda Item #7

NAPS requested an update to the follow-up agenda item from the May consultative on the SDA issue brought up at its spring Executive Board consultative meeting. The most previous statements by the agency were:

- May USPS Response: *Within Human Resources, some functions and responsibilities changed. SDA is a pay policy handled by Compensation. However, the issue as to who qualifies for SDA is handled by Organizational Effectiveness (OE). The EAS position in question still is being evaluated by OE. The USPS will provide NAPS a final response on its position in the near future.*

- June USPS Response: *The USPS is working to modify some USPS occupational codes that fit the criteria for receiving an SDA, but currently are not. These identified EAS positions will have their respective occupational codes modified to automatically receive the SDA. USPS Headquarters will notify NAPS when the final modification has been completed.*

NAPS asked about back pay for these positions, stating that a pay differential should exist between all management and craft.

USPS Headquarters has developed a job description for qualifying jobs; a copy will be forwarded to NAPS within the next week. Once approved and distributed to the field, if an EAS-19 employee meets these criteria, they will be placed in the new OC and paid appropriately; back pay should be handled locally.

However, NAPS can take the back pay issue to the vice president of Labor Relations for further discussion. A review of a 1979 court decision clearly indicates that consultation regarding an overall differential was the only obligation the USPS had with NAPS; there is no legal obligation to set a specific differential percentage.

Agenda Item #8

NAPS asked when the USPS would address pay talks.

Rules apply: First, the APWU (because it was the largest union when the last pay package was consulted) pay package must be completed. Title 39 requires the USPS to look at circumstances upon agreement with the craft unions.

The USPS is required to look at the largest union (although, right now, it is the NALC; a recent arbitration may boost APWU ranks to that position). If it is the APWU, then the USPS will send a proposal within 45 days from the signing date, thereby opening pay talks. If the NALC is the largest union, then it's 45 days from the settlement for that union. Final agreement from the consultations (pay package) will last as long as the appropriate union's contract.

Make It Personal

Continued from page 6

sign and date it to join. However, by personally asking a non-member to join, it makes the "ask" much more personal. This also gives you, as a NAPS recruiter, the opportunity to inform the potential new member that the objective of NAPS is to promote, through appropriate and effective action, the welfare of its members.

By asking, you welcome; by welcoming, you grow the NAPS organization. By growing NAPS, we become a stronger organization. And by becoming stronger, we make a difference. When we make a difference, we improve the personal lives of our members and their families. Make membership personal!

naps.bw@naps.org

Graduates of the New Supervisor Program at the Philadelphia P&DC



Executive Vice President Ivan D. Butts spoke to graduates of the New Supervisor Program at the Philadelphia P&DC.



President Louis Atkins and his wife Bonita, former President Ted Keating and his wife Joyce and former New York Area Vice President Ann Konish with the Branch 96 Executive Board.



Ann Strickland (left) and Patti Lynn with Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-FL)



Executive Vice President Ivan D. Butts and Mideast Area Vice President Hans Aglidian with New Jersey Executive Board, from left: Butts, President Anthony Dallojacono, Vice President Ruthann Kyer, Secretary Irma Walton, Treasurer Gary Rutter, Sergeant-at-Arms Edna Water; Northern Area Vice President Jose Santiago, Southern Area Vice President Les Cohen and Aglidian.



Junemarie Brandt, USPS research analyst, came across this photo of recently retired Parliamentarian Franklin Blackstone in a 1972 issue of *The Postal Supervisor*.

Our Challenges Continue

By Bob Bradford

Texas Area Vice President

Hello again from the sun-baked state of Texas. The previous time I wrote, we were dealing with flooding. But now, we are in week four of a drought; down here, it's either one or the other.

The Postal Service suffers from its own flooding: discipline and dumb decisions being made by mid- to top-level managers. They just go on changing days off, tour hours, saying no T-time and not paying for work performed.

We need help and all I am told is that it is a "local problem!" Heck, yes, it is a local problem: It is a local Texas problem, a local Southern Area problem and a local national problem. An example is the letter from USPS Vice President of Delivery Operations Edward F. Phelan Jr. dealing with Retail Customer Experience evaluations not applying to the Rio District per the Rio Labor Department. Discipline given for window failures is due to failure to follow orders or failure to follow procedures. The "orders" do not have failures.

I am fighting one case where only one employee is assigned to the station and the supervisor has been assigned to two offices three miles apart. During the investigative inter-

view, it was pointed out there was only one employee at the station and there was nothing the supervisor could do; he still got a letter. The reason is the district manager says if they do not issue a letter, the postmaster or station manager will get one—no excuses accepted.



In my 10 months as an area vice president, I have handled three times as many cases as I did in the eight years I previously had the position. Something must be done. It is almost impossible to get people to run for NAPS office; many who do run cannot handle the amount of cases they receive every day. At one time this year, I handled more than 100 cases. I was not ready for this and spent quite a bit of my own money helping members.

I guess I have cried enough on everyone's shoulders so I will ask for one more thing. In the past week or so, I have been getting member e-mails bounced back; I would like everyone in Texas to e-mail, text or mail me their correct e-mail address. Please do this even if you think I have your correct e-mail address. I would like to have your mailing address, as well. The past convention mailing list was in terrible shape—hoping to hear from you all.

texasbob94@gmail.com

NAPS Training Calendar

Southeast Area (FL/GA)

Oct. 3, 2015

Conducted by: Southeast Area VP Bob Quinlan

Location: Embassy Suites Orlando-North, 225 Shorecrest Dr., Altamonte Springs, FL 32701; (800) 445-8667

Hotel Rate: \$106, single/double

Registration Fee: \$35; make checks payable to NAPS Branch 911

Training Topics: Secretary/treasurer training, adverse action, debt collection

Instructors: Secretary/Treasurer Brian Wagner, Southern Region VP Tim Ford

Capitol-Atlantic Area Training (MD/DC/VA/NC/SC)

Oct. 8-11, 2015

Conducted by: Capitol-Atlantic Area VP Richard L. Green Jr.

Location: Sheraton Roanoke Hotel and Conference Center, 2801 Hershberger Rd., Roanoke, VA 24017; (866) 716-8134

Hotel Rate: \$129 plus tax, single/double

Registration Fee: \$150; make checks payable to NAPS Headquarters

Training Topics: Legislative advocacy

Instructors: Executive Vice President Ivan D. Butts and former Capitol-Atlantic Area VP John Geter

Central Region Training (IN/MI/IL/MN/ND/SD/WI/IA/KS/MO/NE)

Nov. 13-14, 2015

Conducted by: Central Region VP Craig Johnson and Michiana Area VP Kevin Trayer, Illini Area VP Luz Moreno, North Central Area VP Dan Mooney and MINK Area VP Larry Ewing

Location: Chicago Marriott Southwest at Burr Ridge, 1200 Burr Ridge Parkway, Burr Ridge, IL 60527; (630) 986-4100 or (888) 236-2427

Hotel Rate: \$129 plus tax, king/two queens; \$149 plus tax, single-king suite

Registration Fee: \$95; make checks payable to NAPS Headquarters; after Oct. 23, fee is \$125. Mail registration form (www.naps.org under Training Center and NAPS Forum under Central Region section) and payment to NAPS Central Region Training, c/o NAPS Headquarters, 1727 King St., Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314-2753

Training Topics: Friday general session—legislative advocacy, career development, USPS retirement, RIF process. Saturday breakouts—IDP, ELM 650 advocacy, time management, resolution writing, filing for non-profit status, branch officer training, national office Q&A. SPAC Café will be available; bring your USPS EIN or CPM CSA# and password to sign up for automatic SPAC contributions.

Instructors: NAPS resident officers, Michiana Area VP Kevin Trayer and Pam Cothrine; others TBA

Bruce Moyer
NAPS Legislative Counsel



Since the Legislative Training Seminar in March, a quiet, sustained effort has been under way on Capitol Hill to draft a moderate postal reform measure that can at-

tract Republicans, Democrats and the postal stakeholder community. The most intensive work to date has occurred in the Senate and soon could result in a bipartisan measure being introduced. Earlier this spring, Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), chairman of the Senate postal oversight committee, gave the green light to his ranking Democratic colleague, Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE), to draft a consensus postal bill. Carper, who chaired the committee during the past Congress, has the experience to know the "sweet spot" of postal re-

form. As committee chairman, Carper ran into obstacles from both Democrats and Republicans, but tenaciously cleared his postal measure (S. 1486) through the panel, only to have it die after Majority Leader Harry Reid declined to bring it to the floor.

were printed in the August issue of The Postal Supervisor.)

The roundtable discussions, unsurprisingly, lined up with NAPS' plea to Congress from LTS delegates earlier this spring: Pass postal reform legislation that stabilizes the Postal Service's finances, restores prompt service and assures greater postal product and service innovation. As a result, Carper, in late June, directed his staff to draft a postal measure along these lines, especially addressing the growing concerns of rural-state senators.

Postal Reform Legislation Emerges in the Senate

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Earlier this spring, Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), chairman of the Senate postal oversight committee, gave the green light to his ranking Democratic colleague, Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE), to draft a consensus postal bill. Carper, who chaired the committee during the past Congress, has the experience to know the "sweet spot" of postal re-

This time around, Carper has taken a more methodical, transparent path toward drafting a postal bill, working with Senate colleagues and stakeholders to find common ground. During May and June, Johnson and Carper convened a series of roundtable discussions with leaders from the Postal Service, the Government Accountability Office, employee organizations, mailers and others to identify postal policy priorities. NAPS participated in and contributed to those discussions and offered its views. *(NAPS Executive Vice President Ivan D. Butts' written remarks*

Rural-State Pressure

Lawmakers from rural states always have been key to support for the Postal Service. Post offices, prompt mail delivery and the fulfillment of the universal service obligation are singularly important to rural states and their connection to the rest of the world. But rural-state lawmakers began to raise their voices in protest after the Postal Service changed its delivery standards in 2012 and initiated, according to the Congressional Budget Office, "one of the most comprehensive operational transformations in the agency's history."

Since then, the USPS has closed about 150 mail processing facilities—about one-third of the 460 such facilities it operated in 2012. As the Postal Service began to reap cost savings this spring, it also witnessed plummeting service performance scores in urban and suburban areas—and especially in rural locales—because of poor planning, bad weather, longer transportation routes and insufficient capacity.

Lawmakers grew even more upset and began to suggest the Postal Service had overreached in its quest to cut costs. "The Postmaster General doesn't have a clue about what's going on in rural America, and it shows," Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) said recently.

Thrift Savings Plan

Fund	G	F	C	S	I
July 2015	0.19%	0.74%	2.10%	(0.12%)	2.08%
Past 12 Months*	2.09%	3.27%	11.29%	11.28%	0.00%
The G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns for the last 12 months assume unchanging balances (time-weighting) from month to month, and assume that earnings are compounded on a monthly basis.					
Fund	L Income	L 2020	L 2030	L 2040	L 2050
July 2015	0.55%	1.03%	1.22%	1.33%	1.46%
Past 12 Months*	3.52%	5.23%	6.14%	6.79%	7.20%
These returns are net of the effect of accrued administrative expenses and investment expenses/costs. The performance data shown represent past performance, which is not a guarantee of future results. Investment returns and principal value will fluctuate, so that investors' shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost. The L 2010 Fund was retired on Dec. 31, 2010.					
Visit the TSP website at www.tsp.gov					

Efforts to require the Postal Service to roll back relaxed service standards began to surface. In June, the House Appropriations Committee narrowly approved an amendment to rescind the lower service standards and restore postal service standards to those in place on July 1, 2012. In July, Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-ND) introduced legislation, the "Rural Postal Act of 2015" (S. 1742), that would restore stronger service standards and place a two-year moratorium on closing additional mail processing plants. In endorsing the legislation, NAPS President Louis Atkins said, "It is critical that mail service to all parts of America, including rural America, remains strong and we assure the highest-quality, most-cost-effective service available."

Putting the Genie Back in the Bottle

Whether Congress can realistically mandate the Postal Service to turn back the clock and return service levels to what they were in 2012 remains unclear. To do so, the USPS would need to reopen facilities that have been closed or sold, redeploy workers and return equipment it no longer owns or has been repurposed. The Congressional Budget Office has told Congress that costs would mount. Indeed, the CBO estimates these realignments would cost significantly more than \$300 million and the Postal Service doesn't have the necessary resources.

How Congress puts pressure on the Postal Service to better assure prompt service, while remaining financially viable, represents the toughest challenge Carper faces in drafting postal reform legislation. NAPS will continue working with Senate leaders and friends to assure the best balance that provides all Americans cost-efficient and prompt mail delivery.

bruce@moyergroup.net

Article XIV of the *NAPS Constitution* requires the secretary/treasurer to "furnish financial reports quarterly and publish same in *The Postal Supervisor*."

Balance Sheet—May 31, 2015

Assets:

Cash and Investments	\$14,462,016.42
Dues Withholding Receivable	247,974.45
Prepaid Expenses and Other Assets	476,350.05
Total Current Assets	15,186,340.92
Building and Equipment, Net of Accumulated Depreciation	3,552,760.50
Total Assets	\$18,739,101.42

Liabilities and Fund Balances:

Accounts Payable	\$ 11,554.06
Accrued Expenses	253,109.70
Deferred Revenues	49,840.00
Dues to be Remitted to Branches	481,001.90
Total Liabilities	795,505.66
General and Designated Fund Balances	17,943,595.76
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	\$18,739,101.42

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

(For the period March 1, 2015, through May 31, 2015)

Revenues:

Dues and Assessments	\$ 1,605,030.40
Less: Dues Remitted to Branches	1,043,559.95
Net Dues and Assessment Revenue	561,470.45
Investment Income	82,883.94
Royalties	2,118.11
Legislative Conference Revenues Net of Refunds	71,635.00
National Convention Revenues Net of Refunds	16,360.00
NAPS Property, Inc. Net Income Before Depreciation	\$144,828.85
Less Depreciation	(79,246.80)
NAPS Property, Inc. Net Income	65,582.05
Training Registration Income	8,130.00
Other	10,802.88
Total Revenues	818,982.43

Expenses:

National Headquarters	319,451.79
Executive Board	305,446.87
Legislative Conference	213,377.73
National Convention 2014	8,900.00
<i>The Postal Supervisor</i>	60,440.89
Legal and/or Fact Finding	4,236.00
Legislative Counsel	21,313.26
Legislative Expenses	4,550.99
Education and Training	33,792.63
Disciplinary Defense	61,854.87
Training Registration Expense	37,690.00
Total Expenses	1,071,055.03

Revenues In Excess of Expenses \$ (252,072.60)

Make Contributing to SPAC a Habit:

Contributions via USPS Payroll Deduction



To authorize your allotment **online**, you will need your USPS employee ID number and PIN; if you do not know your PIN, you will be able to obtain it at Step 3 below.

- 1 Go to <https://ewss.usps.gov> to access PostalEASE.
- 2 Click on "I agree."
- 3 Enter your employee ID number and password.
- 4 Click on "Allotments/Payroll NTB."
- 5 Click on "Continue."
- 6 Click on "Allotments."

- 7 Enter Bank Routing Number (*from worksheet below*), enter account number (*see worksheet*), enter account from drop-down menu as "checking" and enter the amount of your contribution.
- 8 Click "Validate," then "Submit." Print a copy for your records.

PostalEASE Allotments/Net to Bank Worksheet

On your next available allotment (you have three):

- Routing Number (nine digits): 121000248
- Financial Institution Name: Wells Fargo (this will appear after you enter the routing number).
- Account Number (this is a 17-digit number that starts with "772255555" and ends with your eight-digit employee ID number):
7 7 2 2 5 5 5 5 5 _____
(Example: 77225555512345678).
- Type of Account (drop-down menu): Checking
- Amount per Pay Period (please use the 0.00 format; the "\$" is already included): _____.



To authorize your allotment by phone, call PostalEASE, toll-free, at **1-877-477-3273** (1-877-4PS-EASE). You will need your USPS employee ID number and PIN.

- 1 When prompted, select one for PostalEASE.
- 2 When prompted, enter your employee ID number.
- 3 When prompted, please enter your USPS PIN.
- 4 When prompted, press "2" for payroll options.
- 5 When prompted, press "1" for allotments.
- 6 When prompted, press "2" to continue.

- 7 Follow prompts to add a new allotment.
- 8 Use the worksheet to give the appropriate information to set up an allotment for SPAC.

2015 SPAC Contributors



President's Ultimate Oval

Boisvert, Michael	CA	Branch 159
Lopez, Victor	FL	Branch 146
Mullins, Kym	FL	Branch 81
Sebastian, Gerald	FL	Branch 386
Strickland, Ann	FL	Branch 146
Harmon, Rosemary	KY	Branch 920
Atkins, Louis	LA	Branch 209
Thompson, Craig	MD	Branch 42
Trayer, Kevin	MI	Branch 142
Gawron, Dennis	NY	Branch 27
Konish, Ann	NY	Branch 11
Warden, James	NY	Branch 100
Butts, Ivan D.	PA	Branch 355

July Donors

President's Ultimate Oval (\$1,000+)

Trayer, Kevin	MI	Branch 142
Warden, James	NY	Branch 100

VP Elite (\$750)

Hernandez, George	AZ	Branch 246
Woods, Terrence	CO	Branch 65
Weilep, Laurie	MN	Branch 16
McCracken, Cindy	WA	Branch 61
Reedy, James	WA	Branch 61

Secretaries Roundtable (\$500)

Moreno, Luz	IL	Branch 489
Massie, Larry	IN	Branch 576
Williams, Darryl	PA	Branch 554
Green Jr., Richard	VA	Branch 98
Mott III, George	VA	Branch 132
Gillett, Michael	WA	Branch 031

Chairman's Club (\$250)

Schulz, Mark	FL	Branch 577
Lum, Chuck	HI	Branch 214
Hacker, Patricia	MA	Branch 6
Krzycki Jr., Kenneth	MI	Branch 508
Vasquez Elms, Valerie	MN	Branch 16
Robinson, Theresa	NC	Branch 299

Continued on next page

SPAC Pins Redesigned for 2015

This year offers new
SPAC designations with
corresponding pins:



President's Ultimate Oval

*\$1,000 level includes LT'S
SPAC reception for donor
plus one guest*



VP Elite

*\$750 level includes LT'S
SPAC reception for donor
plus one guest*



Secretaries Roundtable

*\$500 level includes LT'S
SPAC reception for donor
plus one guest*



Chairman's Club

\$250 level



Supporter

\$100 level

SPAC Scoreboard

All statistics reflect money collected
between Jan. 1 and July 31, 2015

National Aggregate:

\$149,546

National Per Capita:

\$5.91

Region Aggregate:

1. Southern	\$39,682
2. Eastern	\$28,698
3. Northeast	\$27,486
4. Western	\$26,939
5. Central	\$25,977

Region Per Capita:

1. Southern	\$7.03
2. Central	\$6.11
3. Northeast	\$5.64
4. Eastern	\$5.46
5. Western	\$5.14

Area Aggregate:

1. Southeast	\$24,871
2. Capitol-Atlantic	\$13,632
3. New England	\$13,110
4. New York	\$12,874
5. Pacific	\$12,224
6. Mideast	\$9,691
7. Michiana	\$8,700
8. Rocky Mountain	\$8,033
9. Texas	\$7,380
10. Pioneer	\$7,147
11. Northwest	\$6,682
12. North Central	\$6,484
13. Illini	\$5,632
14. MINK	\$5,161
15. Central Gulf	\$4,526
16. Cotton Belt	\$2,905

Area Per Capita:

1. Southeast	\$10.66
2. New England	\$7.88
3. Michiana	\$7.43
4. North Central	\$7.30
5. Northwest	\$6.72
6. Central Gulf	\$6.20
7. New York	\$5.47
8. Capitol-Atlantic	\$5.36
9. Rocky Mountain	\$5.35
10. Pioneer	\$5.23
11. Illini	\$5.12
12. MINK	\$4.73
13. Pacific	\$4.45
14. Texas	\$4.31
15. Mideast	\$4.30
16. Cotton Belt	\$3.35

State Aggregate:

1. Florida	\$22,486
2. New York	\$12,304
3. California	\$11,029
4. Texas	\$7,380
5. Michigan	\$6,924

State Per Capita:

1. Maine	\$14.56
2. Florida	\$13.06
3. Delaware	\$12.42
4. Vermont	\$11.28
5. Rhode Island	\$11.20

Continuous Contributor Club

Members by Region:

1. Central	83
2. Eastern	66
3. Western	66
4. Southern	64
5. Northeast	52

Aggregate by Region:

1. Central	\$14,754
2. Southern	\$13,223
3. Western	\$13,100
4. Eastern	\$12,601
5. Northeast	\$10,891

Did you know there is a SPAC section on the NAPS website? Click on "Legislative Center" on the blue bar at the top of the NAPS web page, www.naps.org, then click on "SPAC" from the drop-down menu. In this section, you can find updated SPAC contribution forms to take to your branch meeting, the most recent SPAC Scoreboard and helpful "Do's and Don'ts" to help with fund raising.

Mayes, Sean	OH	Branch 29
Fearrington, Melvin	OK	Branch 80
Shelburne, Sarah	OR	Branch 66
Yut, Rachelle	OR	Branch 66
Longoria, Richard	TX	Branch 229

Supporter (\$100)

Frazier, Rickey	AL	Branch 399
Ingalls, Dianne	CA	Branch 77
Rascati, Wayne	CA	Branch 244
Parker, Laroma	HI	Branch 214
Gans, William	ID	Branch 915
Levernier, Catherine	IL	Branch 270
Laurendine, Kyle	LA	Branch 073
Minor, Sandra	LA	Branch 209
Lewin, Kim	MA	Branch 118
Brownfield, Patricia	MD	Branch 531
Byrum, Jimmy	MI	Branch 508
Glenn, Sandra	MI	Branch 140
Perkins, Ethel	MI	Branch 140
Pulinski, Leonard	MI	Branch 545
Roundtree, Wanda	MI	Branch 140
Spurlin, William	MI	Branch 268
Taylor, Deborah	MI	Branch 361
Kofsky, Jonathan	NJ	Branch 568
Solomon, David	NY	Branch 100
Hartsel Jr., Robert	VA	Branch 22
White Jr., William	VA	Branch 526
Ware, Michael	WA	Branch 61
Williams, Arthur	WA	Branch 61
Sederholm Marti, Susan	WI	Branch 72

CCC Earned in July

Maginnis, Gary	CA	Branch 466
Dallojacono, Anthony	NJ	Branch 568



OPM Contributions to SPAC (for Retired Postal Supervisors)

Below are step-by-step instructions for making an allotment to SPAC through your OPM retirement allotment, using either OPM's telephone-based account management system or the online "Services Online" portal.

Please note: The amount you key in will be your *monthly* allotment to SPAC. The start of your allotment will depend on the time of the month it was requested. If you make your request during the first two weeks of the month, expect the withholding to take place the first of the following month. If the allotment is requested after the first two weeks of the month, the change will take place the second month after the request.

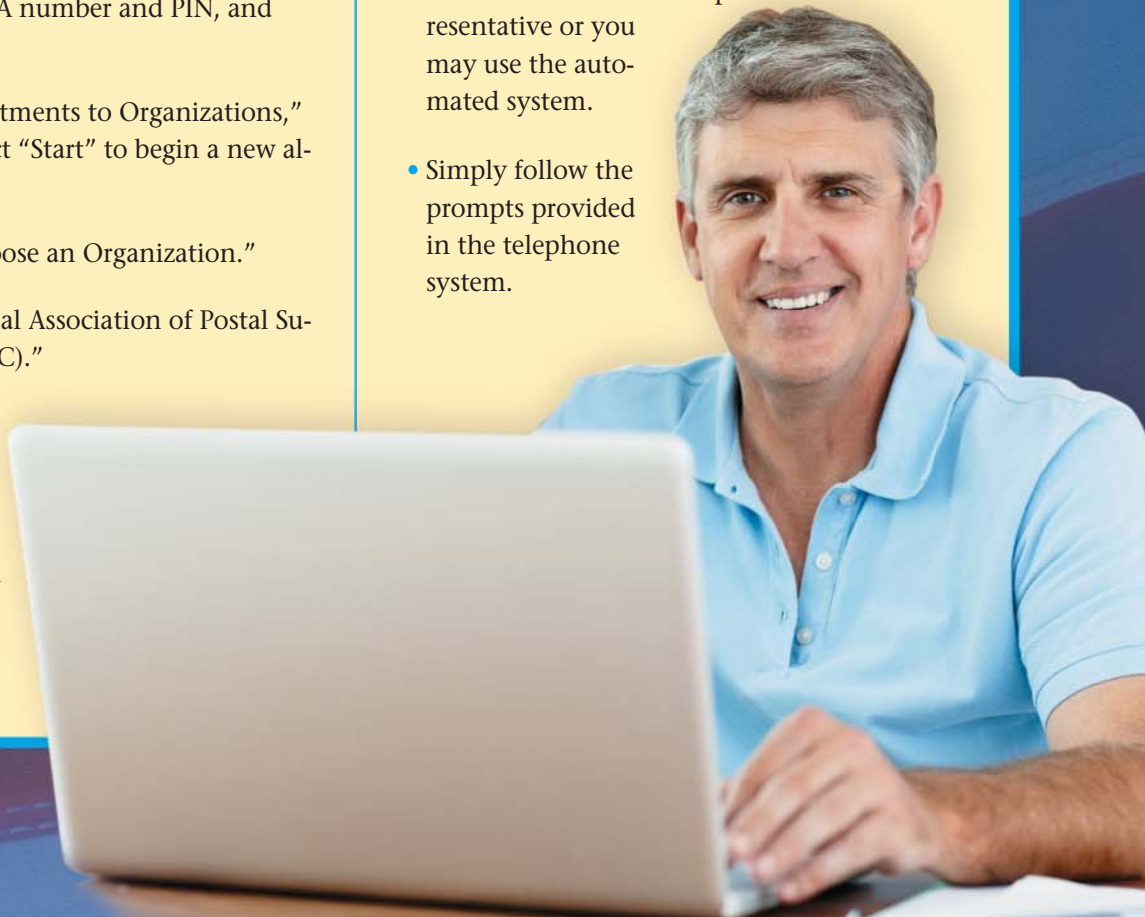
By Internet:

To sign up online, go to the OPM website at www.servicesonline.opm.gov, then:

- Click on "Employment and Benefits," and then on "Retirement Benefits."
- Under "Retirement Services," click on "Services Online."
- Enter your CSA number and PIN, and log in.
- Click on "Allotments to Organizations," and then select "Start" to begin a new allotment.
- Click on "Choose an Organization."
- Select "National Association of Postal Supervisors (SPAC)."
- Enter the amount of your monthly contribution and then click "Save."

By telephone:

- Dial 1-888-767-6738, the toll-free number for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)'s Interactive Voice Response (IVR) telephone system.
- Have your CSA number and Personal Identification Number (PIN) on hand when you call. You may speak to an OPM customer service representative or you may use the automated system.
- Simply follow the prompts provided in the telephone system.



The Postal Service of the Future

By Joe Bodary

When I recently was blessed with another grandson, it got me thinking about what the Postal Service will look like when he is an adult. To be honest, my vision is a scary one.

It's amazing what technology can do nowadays, as evidenced by our new scanners. We no longer need carriers to call us; they can send a text message. We can tell the exact location they delivered a package—sometimes it's not the right place—and we can alert them of emergencies, late mail coming out or the need to pick up some mail from a customer, without talking to them.

Taking it a step further, I have a Fitbit, which is a bracelet I wear. It documents how many steps I walk each day, calories I burn and take in, miles walked, sleep patterns and more. The bracelet buzzes to congratulate me when I reach my goal for the day.

I can picture us having Fitbit-type devices on carriers, along with baseball caps with cameras embedded in the brims so Postmasters at the Postal Command Center can monitor what the carriers see at all times. If the picture is always looking down, with no movement, we can buzz the carrier on the wrist "to wake them up." If the picture stays looking up, with no movement, we can call emergency services.

Let's take it a step further: Drones delivering packages would lighten

carriers' loads so they only deliver papers. Of course, we would control the drones, as well, from our Postal Command Center.

When I started carrying mail in 1988, I thought there was no way they could ever replace carriers. Now, with my vision, let's take it a step further again and look at the Honda Robot, ASIMO (Advanced Step in Innovative Mobility). This robot can walk up and down steps, go backwards and even run! It doesn't get tired or need to slow down. Google it; it's incredible!

As carriers retire, we could replace every two carriers with one robot. Of course, the robot also would have vision hooked up to the Postal Command Center so we could monitor, and customers could speak directly to us through the robot. We also could have the robot print postage, set up packages for drone pickups and always be pleasant. If a customer tries to touch the robot, they would get buzzed: no dog hazards or crime.

The robots could be programmed to recognize emergencies and notify emergency personnel, as well. Of course, each one costs \$2 million right now, but I'm sure they will be more affordable in the future.

We would save an astronomical amount of money on salaries and benefits; income would be focused on maintaining drones and robots. Sick leave, annual leave and holidays would not be needed. The window would be fully automated, as well as distribution—no need for clerks.



On the Move?

Have you moved or are planning a move? Let NAPS know, too!

Keeping your mailing address current at NAPS Headquarters helps us keep *The Postal Supervisor* coming to you without interruption and avoid unnecessary "Address Service Requested" charges.

Please let us know your new address and its effective date as soon as you know it. Address changes may be mailed to NAPS at 1727 King St., Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314-2753, or faxed to (703) 836-9665.

Robots could replace carriers; containers could be programmed for loading trucks, so no need for mail handlers. I've seen the new automatic-drive vehicles, so no drivers would be needed. Rurals could be replaced by drones, which will drop mail with the packages.

With this scenario, I see a reduction in district managers, POOMs and CSOMs. Maybe a couple area VPs would monitor the remaining Postmasters who oversee the command centers and the supervisors who program the robots, schedule maintenance and clear all the necessary reports at the end of the day.

Yes, I still see supervisors and postmasters. There would be no OPs because everything would be perfect and they would have nothing to support. All training would be programmed into the robots overnight, so many other things would be eliminated, as well.

The average lifespan should be about 80 or higher as my grandson ages. So, by 2095, in his lifetime, what I thought would never happen could become a reality. Management would be a totally different lifestyle and much less stressful!

jbod@aol.com

Joe Bodary is a NAPS Michiana Area member and postmaster of Lincoln Park.

Insomnia

How to Handle This Obstacle to Happiness



Submitted by the USPS EAP

Did you get your eight hours of sleep last night? If you are like most people, you probably came close. Most average six to seven hours of sleep; however, the optimal sleep time for adults is seven to nine hours. An estimated 30 to 40 percent of people sleep less than the recommended amount for a typical person. And we often feel worse for it.

We live in a culture that is bombarded with stimulation, constant connections via social media and an adaptation to having instant gratification by being able to reach someone to express news as insignificant or irrelevant as the update might be. This creates an environment where, for many, it is difficult to relax. Insomnia has become a problem experienced by between a third and half of the population at some point in their lives.

For some, insomnia is a chronic problem that does not abate. Insomnia is a serious issue that contributes to a number of physical, emotional and cognitive problems. The market for prescription sleeping pills, over-the-counter sleep aids and a whole host of “natural supplements,” such as melatonin, valerian root and kava, among others, is large and very profitable.

Secondary insomnia, as it is called, is not uncommon. It often is

the result of external issues that are treated by finding solutions to the underlying problem. Secondary insomnia may dissipate over time if it is related to a stressful life situation or unresolved worry. Most people experience this at some point; it would not be uncommon to have this recur over time as other problems arise.

Such things as job pressure, marital discord, financial concerns, uncertainty about medical conditions or having too much to do with too little time are some examples of factors that can bring this about. Insomnia also can occur in relation to fears about “positive” events. An impending wedding, job promotion, retirement or moving to your dream home are things we may be anticipating with joy. But they also can come with additional feelings about change, tracking all the details or trying to second-guess our decisions. These stressors also can impair our ability to relax and let deep sleep happen.

Primary insomnia is a sleep disorder where there is no secondary cause for the difficulty in being able to sleep night after night, or very frequently, for an extended period of time. The person is unable to identify the source and this, in and of itself, can increase anxiety. Once this becomes a pattern, the frustration and assumption that it will happen yet again, and the resulting anger,

can help it become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Stress levels may rise each evening as bedtime approaches from fear that sleep will not come. In order to address primary insomnia, the cycle needs to be broken so the person can recognize this type of insomnia is not a given.

The need for adequate rest is necessary for our overall well-being. Lack of sleep can have a significant effect on daily functioning. Some of the problems resulting from insufficient rest include:

Weight gain—Sleep is necessary for production of the hormones involved in controlling appetite, telling your body when you have had enough to eat and stimulating appetite at the appropriate times. Obesity and being overweight are two consequences of not having adequate sleep for these processes to occur. Additionally, the risk of developing Type 2 diabetes also rises, as more fat is stored.

Anxiety and depression—Serotonin, a hormone regulated during sleep, influences mood. Some studies suggest eliminating insomnia may actually have a direct impact on anxiety and mood disorders. Having a more elevated mood generally allows one to deal with small stressors more effectively, as well, and diminishes irritability.

Memory—Sleep gives the brain

time for consolidating and retaining information so it may be accessed later. In order to retain the data, sleep is needed to provide the adequate attention and concentration necessary to absorb the information more thoroughly in the first place.

Heart disease and stroke—Lack of sleep increases blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Add to that the increased risk of weight gain and the risk for heart disease and stroke is obvious.

Premature aging—Cortisol, a stress hormone, is released in higher amounts with lack of sleep. Increased levels of cortisol in the body can break down the collagen in the skin, which, in turn, leads to the loss of skin elasticity. Elasticity provides a more youthful appearance.

Low libido—Factors such as fatigue, increased irritability, sleepiness (literally not being able to stay awake) and headaches are common with lack of sleep and can take a toll on one's sex drive.

Brain changes—Recent studies indicate that sleep helps wash away toxic proteins in our brains, preventing buildup that potentially could destroy brain cells. While the direct connection is not yet known, the buildup of toxic waste proteins forms plaque found in patients with Alzheimer's disease.

There are many ways to address insomnia in addition to pharmaceuticals. Sleep medications certainly have their place, but should be carefully prescribed and monitored. There is no one strategy that will work for everyone. Even if a physician has recommended the use of prescription medications and/or supplements, the techniques and tips described here may be used alone or in combination.

- Try to establish a regular sleep schedule, even on days when you do not work. Varying sleep times any

more than two hours at either end of your typical habits can be enough to damage your pattern.

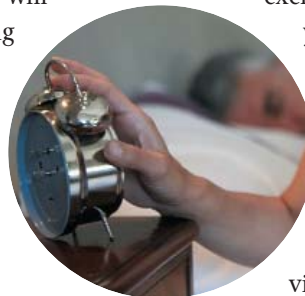
- Do not go to bed following a heavy meal. Your body will be working on digesting the food and will not be focusing energy on sleep.

- Avoid alcohol within two hours of bedtime. Even a moderate dose of alcohol, such as two drinks, consumed within as much as six hours before going to sleep has been shown to have a "rebound effect" and may increase wakefulness during the second half of your sleep. Drinking a lot of water with alcohol may help prevent dehydration and help lessen the impact of the rebound.

- Caffeine and nicotine also should be avoided right before bed; both are stimulants.

- Avoid using technology within at least an hour of going to sleep. Exposure to blue wavelength lights—the kind emitted by computers, tablets, smart phones and others—can interfere with sleep by sending a message to your brain that it's still daylight. This then prevents the brain from winding down and producing melatonin, a hormone that helps induce sleep. We typically get the melatonin increase about 9 or 10 p.m.; the blue light will intensify the awakening effects of the devices and the brain will not recognize the onset of night.

- Exercise helps enhance restful sleep. While many feel it best to work out in the morning, it may be different for everyone. Find what schedule works best for you; some benefit from being worn out closer to bedtime. Calisthenics, biking, gardening, yoga, golfing, Pilates and even walking have been shown to reduce inadequate sleep.



- Relaxation exercises can be very helpful. YouTube videos and DVDs at your local library or bookstore have breathing or relaxation exercises that can verbally walk you through progressive muscle relaxation, a soothing visualization or self-hypnosis; find one that suits you. Sometimes music or noise machines can provide the same type of environment for you to clear your head of the day's anxieties while meditating.

- A dark, cool room is recommended for sleep. Developing a bedtime ritual you find calming also should help: a warm bath, reading, stretching or whatever helps you unwind. Eliminate distractions whenever possible.

For frequent insomnia, a thorough physical to rule out such physical disorders as obstructive sleep apnea or restless leg syndrome should be obtained. Physical issues that can be diagnosed and treated can help restore good sleep habits.

The EAP (800-327-4968; TTY: 877-492-7341) can assist you in dealing with insomnia by providing a thorough assessment to rule out any causes that might be contributing to secondary insomnia and teach you more about good sleep hygiene. If a referral to a primary care physician or sleep specialist is in order, your EAP staff can assist by monitoring your follow-up to ensure your doctor has developed a treatment plan to fit your individual needs. The EAP website, www.EAP4YOU.com, can provide additional information on these topics.

Your overall well-being, mood, energy, safety, concentration, health and memory all are at stake. Why wouldn't you want to feel the best you can?

The Future of NAPS

By John Farrell

You hear it on the news all the time: The aged infrastructure across our country is starting to fail. Old roads, bridges, some buildings and other structures have lived their lives and now need to be replaced. Outdated, deteriorated and structurally unsound, they no longer can do the job in a safe, efficient manner. Patchwork repairs can extend their lives temporarily, but the bottom line is new structures have to be designed and built for today's world.

Similarly, our organizational structure is feeling its age. The web

of local branches—connected by states, areas and regions—is being affected by the closure of post offices, the elimination of EAS jobs and the trend of today's members being less inclined or unable to actively participate in the organization. While our organization is financially stable for now, its branch infrastructure is becoming increasingly unworkable.

Some branches have become inactive; some struggle to fill officer positions or attain quorums at their meetings; others have no regular contact with their membership. Consolidating or re-energizing branches and reducing quorum requirements provide temporarily relief in some in-

stances, but these measures really are just patching a structure with an outdated design destined to inevitably fail. With its present structure, how well will our organization be able to fulfill its mission five, 10 or 20 years down the road?

Taking a fresh look, recognizing systematic failures and inefficiencies, initiating dialogue with a careful design and implementing change are required in order to maintain NAPS' effectiveness. The appointment of standing NAPS Executive Board committees by the president is an important first step in confronting and responding to change. But, any member can propose improvements

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at the national, state and local levels using motions, resolutions or amendments. It is our organization and our responsibility to propose change, rather than bemoan ineffectiveness.

How should the organization change in order to better serve its purpose? What new organization structures, systems and practices can improve NAPS? These are questions

for us—today's NAPS members!
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John Farrell is a NAPS Mideast Area member.

How Many Balls Do You Have in the Air?

By Scott Slayton

It's not really a question of how many balls you have, but which one you will drop and what the consequence will be. Our front-line Customer Service and plant EAS employees have the most difficult jobs in the Postal Service. They work in the "bottleneck," where all the directives and duties come crashing into the wall of implementation and execution. Every department wants or

needs something from them—now!

Unfortunately, no matter how many times it's addressed, the workload still far exceeds the allocated hours. Supervisors, managers and postmasters are forced to choose what tasks (balls) they are going to omit or do a sub-par job just to keep up with the barrage of "action" items.

The sooner Postal Service leader-



ship acknowledges this simple truth and starts working with NAPS to fairly quantify this workload, the better off all of us will be. Hats off to New York Area Vice President Jimmy Warden and his team for pursuing this

issue with USPS Headquarters.

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Scott Slayton is a NAPS New York Area member.

Do Leaders Eat First or Last?

By Mary Burkhard

This article is not about food, but I hope it gives us all "food for thought." If you work in the

Sierra Coastal District, you know I am referencing the book, "Leaders Eat Last," by Simon Sinek, management theorist and leadership expert, who says:

"Returning from work feeling inspired, safe, fulfilled and grateful is a natural human right to which we are all entitled and not a modern luxury that only a few lucky ones are able to find. The true price of leadership is the willingness to place the needs of others above your own. Great leaders truly care about those they are privileged to lead and understand that the true cost of the leadership privilege comes at the expense of self-interest."



We learned about this author because the goal of our district manager, Kerry Wolny, is to prepare postal management for a 21st century work force: Today is much different than

the 90s. Kerry said, "We [SC district] are thinkers and not autocratic; we do not beat people up on telecons like some do. We need a new management style that better suits our employees who are millennial and currently outnumber baby boomers in the workplace." He recently tasked EAS employees with watching the 45-minute YouTube video synopsis of Sinek's book multiple times. Later, we spent the better part of a day in a meeting discussing it via breakout session and again as a group. The information was then to be shared with all, even craft employees.

There are five chemicals in our

bodies that have kept us alive over the centuries: cortisol, dopamine, endorphins, oxytocin and serotonin. If we encourage work environments where we protect each other, practice teamwork, sacrifice and are generous, then the good chemicals—endorphins, oxytocin and serotonin—thrive. These encourage feelings of trust, friendship and safety, thus increasing our ability to solve problems and be creative, while keeping our bodies healthier.

If we do the opposite and create unpleasant work environments where employees are afraid, paranoid or always looking for danger, then we encourage the production of cortisol, which shuts off immune systems and growth—more suited for fleeing danger in less civilized times. Kerry said, "When the workplace does not make us feel safe, we are unhealthy. If our jobs are killing us, then the responsible parties are

the leaders. We need to invest time in people." He encourages us to walk up to someone and say something nice. Managers and supervisors should set the example by being honest, reliable, respectful and appreciative of employees and share all information.

Leadership starts at the top, but leaders are not supposed to just protect those in "their circle." Leaders should be inclusive and enlarge the circle to include everyone. They sacrifice for the good of the group and exhibit acts of generosity, without getting anything in return. If you are in "the circle," but do not give of yourself in return, then you could be, by your own actions or lack thereof, taking yourself out of the circle.

In the words of Sinek: "If our leaders are to enjoy the trappings of their positions in the hierarchy, then we expect them to offer us protection. The problem is, for many of the overpaid leaders, we know they took the money and perks and didn't offer protection to their people. In some cases, they even sacrificed their people to protect or boost their own self-interests. This is what so viscerally offends us. We only accuse them of greed and excess when we feel they have violated the very definition of what it means to be a leader."

He encourages us to be the leaders we wish we had. "You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him. The rank of office is not what makes someone a leader. Leadership is the choice to serve others with or without any formal rank."

So, what did you do today to live up to this definition of a leader? Even more importantly, what will you do tomorrow?

Mary Burkhard is a NAPS Pacific Area member.

Notes

from the National Auxiliary

Rebuilding the Postal Brand

By Rick Hall

Treasurer

In the memoirs of the biblical character Nehemiah, we learn he was tasked with restoring the great wall of protection that surrounded the ancient city of Jerusalem. The wall had been largely destroyed and was in appalling condition—a remnant of what was once great and fortified. Despite the wall's desecration, Nehemiah was determined to rebuild it.

His passion was so great he could not be distracted or hindered; he realized how important the wall was to his culture. It signified the resurgence of something great and also was representative of more than its protective borders. It was symbolic of a society where dignity and respect flourished and were the cornerstones of human ethics.

Similar to Nehemiah's mission, our Auxiliary predecessors galvanized a path to provide support to the National Association of Postal Supervisors. They undertook challenges to help build a protective border during an era where working conditions were nothing less than deplorable. Feeling the personal impact, local family members rallied together and formed an Auxiliary coalition that evolved into a national organization.

The National Auxiliary and NAPS joined forces to improve working conditions for supervisors and managers. The mantra was and still remains: "One Voice and One Mission." Both still are standing on the

vanguard to meet challenges and make positive changes. We must continue to ensure that postal supervisors have a platform from which to voice concerns about working conditions and ideas to improve the operational efficiency of NAPS.

During my tenure as an Auxiliary officer, I have heard the personal confessions of many postal supervisors and managers regarding how proud they were to work for the United States Postal Service. I also have heard some testi-

monials regarding harsh treatment and poor working conditions, which were very disheartening to hear. The reality is the employee always will be a reflection of the organization's brand, whether that is perceived to be positive or negative.

My sincere desire is to continue to help improve and preserve a positive working environment for all postal supervisors and managers. I believe the future of the Postal Service will rely heavily on everyone's commitment toward working together collectively. As did Nehemiah, we must rebuild communications and work for ethics and boundaries that reinforce dignity and respect. Most importantly, we all must aspire to keep humanities in the workplace in conjunction with being the brand, reflecting the brand, improving the brand and protecting the brand.

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