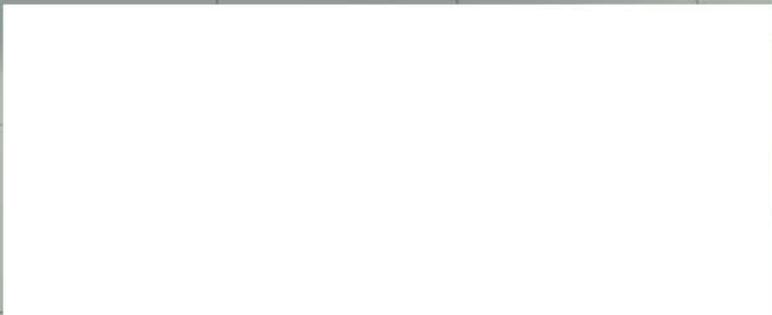


the Postal Supervisor

April 2015

**Turning
Obstacles Into
Opportunities,
Challenges Into
Triumphs**

page 4



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Branch officer articles (maximum 350 words), "Letters to NAPS" (maximum 200 words), "Ask NAPS" queries, reprint requests and other correspondence may be addressed to Karen Young; phone/fax, 540-636-2569; kbalentyoung@gmail.com.

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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Challenges Can Become Triumphs

We already are nearly one-quarter the way through 2015. It's time to take a moment and reflect on where we have been and what we have to look forward to the rest of this year. The past year was a positive one in terms of generating revenue for the Postal Service. We took on a greater portion of the parcel and package business, becoming a real force in this business arena.



Louis Atkins
President

This year promises to be even better. But that promise cannot be fulfilled without an EAS work force that is the backbone of the USPS. That very backbone currently is under attack.

I have said over and over that the managers, postmasters and supervisors who make up NAPS are the real backbone of the Postal Service. Without their experience and knowledge of operations, we would not be able to deliver the

high level of service Americans have come to expect from us.

This is not just about protecting jobs; it is about protecting an agency that has done so much for the nation. Everyone in this organization has put forth too much sweat and effort to let the USPS fall into decline. We must stand up for the USPS when others will not.

One of our first initiatives this year was to address problems with the Supervisory Differential Adjustment (SDA). There are too many cases of supervisors being paid less than the craft employees they manage. Not only is this fundamentally unfair, but it removes any real motivation for supervisors to advance their careers in the Postal Service. And it denies the USPS the opportunity to get the best and brightest to fill EAS vacancies.

We also will be looking at how SWCs are calculated in order to relieve some of the pressure on the EAS work force. Too many times, there has been an insufficient number of supervisors in the workplace, causing those working to be pushed to the breaking point in order to maintain operations. We are delivering mail seven days a week, but the USPS has not authorized an increase in EAS staffing.

The Postal Service continues to close mail processing facilities throughout the country. We have been driving home the point with our lawmakers that protecting service standards must be a national priority. Despite the fact the USPS was allowed to begin consolidations, we still believe this is an opportunity to draw a line in the sand and protect our ability to deliver the mail and serve our customers.

As I noted previously, we are taking on more and more of the parcel and package business; we deliver packages on Sunday and are starting to deliver groceries in some areas. It does not make sense to slow down how we deliver the mail. Considering the growth potential the Postal Service is exhibiting, we shouldn't be the ones responsible for stopping our forward progress.

This year will be filled with challenges—the ones in front of us and those that have yet to confront us. However, within all these obstacles may be found opportunity. More than ever before, the USPS is helping drive our economy.

This is, indeed, a period of change for everyone in the postal world. As we know, though, change can sometimes present challenges. As long as we work together toward a common goal, though, we'll turn those challenges into triumphs.

naps.la@naps.org

The Postal Supervisor 2015 Production Schedule

| Issue | Copy Deadline* | Mails |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| MAY | MAR 18 | APR 9 |
| JUNE | APR 22 | MAY 12 |
| JULY | MAY 22 | JUNE 11 |
| AUG | JUNE 15 | JULY 6 |
| SEPT | JULY 13 | AUG 7 |
| OCT | AUG 20 | SEPT 15 |
| 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.

A Force for Change

just returned from speaking at the 17th Annual California Postal Legislative Coalition’s legislative information event, held at the Laborers’ Local 185 office in Sacramento, CA.

I want to thank the NAPS members in attendance; your support was greatly appreciated. I also want to thank the group as a whole for your hospitality and engagement in this unique coalition of postal employ-



Ivan D. Butts
Executive Vice President

ees (craft unions, management associations and NARFE), working together on legislative issues for the good of the Postal Service. I especially want to thank Western Region Vice President Marilyn Walton for the hospitality she extended to my wife Laurie and me.

I spoke to the group about the legislative landscape with 74 freshmen coming into office and both houses’ leadership in Congress changing to a Republican major-

ity. There was discussion surrounding two resolutions

and a bill that serve to convey the spirit of the House on Postal Service issues:

- **H. Res 12**—Urges the Postal Service to take all appropriate measures to ensure continuation of six-day mail delivery.
- **H. Res 54**—Expresses the opinion of the House that the Postal Service needs to use all means possible to return to service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012.
- **H.R. 784**—Moves to reinstate overnight delivery standards for market-dominant products.

The participation by everyone attending the coalition event was tremendous. The open discussion of our common goals for the success of the Postal Service was encouragement for all to continue moving forward to see what the end will be. I spoke on the banking initiative, which has become one of my most passionate initiatives. I cannot remember this agency ever having a revenue-generating initiative within its reach that can—by OIG estimations—generate \$9 billion in new revenue per year. This could be the game changer this agency needs and, with all hands on deck, we can help make it happen.

The one statement I heard a few times was that all member groups leaving their egos at the door helps make the coalition successful. The California Coalition employs one of the oldest networking principles for addressing issues: Strength in numbers, with some common goals and purposes, yields a force for change. What is being done in California is worthy of replication across our great country.

I close with the statement I made in this magazine in the past concerning our strength in numbers, via a quote by our first postmaster general, Benjamin Franklin. At the signing of the Declaration of Independence, he stated, “We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.”

In solidarity ...

naps.ib@naps.org

NAPS 2015 State Conventions

| Dates | State(s) | Location |
|----------------|-----------------------|--|
| April 10-11 | ND/SD | Prairie Knights Casino, Ft. Yates, ND |
| April 24-25 | TN | Westgate Smoky Mountain Resort & Spa, Gatlinburg |
| April 29 | CA/HI | Ala Moana Hotel, Honolulu |
| April 30-May 2 | IL | Embassy Suites Chicago—O’Hare/Rosemont |
| May 7-9 | MINK Area | Hilton Promenade, Branson, MO |
| May 14-16 | WI | The Osthoff, Elkhart Lake |
| May 14-17 | New England Area | Red Jacket Mountain View, North Conway, NH |
| May 16 | Rocky Mountain Area | Tropicana, Las Vegas |
| May 25-28 | NY | East Wind Conference Center, Wading River |
| June 4-6 | MI | Mackinac Resort, Mackinac Island |
| June 4-6 | MN | Fair Hills Resort, Detroit Lakes |
| June 4-7 | FL/GA | Sirata Beach Resort, St. Petersburg, FL |
| June 4-7 | Capitol-Atlantic Area | Doubletree, Annapolis, MD |
| June 5-6 | KY | Crown Plaza, Louisville |
| June 18-20 | AL/LA/MS | Embassy Suites, Montgomery, AL |
| June 18-21 | PA | Clarion Hotel, Essington |
| June 28-30 | NJ | Resorts Hotel and Casino, Atlantic City |
| July 8-12 | TX | Wyndham Garden, Austin |
| July 31-Aug. 1 | OH | Holiday Inn, Fairborn |

Please report state convention dates to NAPS Headquarters as soon as they are known.

Public Scholarship Announcement (PSA)

Ever notice that, during certain times of the year, there always seems to be some form of advertisement or public service announcement (PSA) reminding you to buy or do something? During November and December, the USPS always is reminding customers to mail early for the holiday season. Then there are those income tax commercials from February to April, reminding people to file early for a refund to “Get your billions back, America.”



Brian J. Wagner
Secretary/Treasurer

It is not like we don't know that the income tax deadline and holiday season don't come around every year. But, as our lives get busier and busier, having a friendly PSA reminder may just be all we need to avoid missing out on something special. This is why I am providing you with a NAPS Public Scholarship Announcement, or, in this case, a Palladino Scholarship Article (PSA), about our NAPS Vince Palladino Memorial Student Scholarships.

As many members know, but many new members may not, NAPS annually sponsors and awards 10 \$1,000 Vince Palladino Memorial Student Scholarships

in memory of the late NAPS president and in honor of his dedication to NAPS members and their families.

Eligible scholarship applicants are the children or grandchildren of living active or associate NAPS members and must be attending or have been accepted by an accredited two- or four-year college or university. Don't forget, scholarship applications must be received at NAPS Headquarters no later than July 31, 2015.

Specifically, there will be two \$1,000 scholarship winners randomly selected from each NAPS region: Northeast, Eastern, Central, Southern and Western. Winners will be announced this year in mid-August. Scholarship winners will receive a check, made payable to the college or university listed on the application.

Scholarship proceeds may be used to pay expenses in the student's current or following semester. In addition, the names of the winning students will be published in a future issue of *The Postal Supervisor* magazine.

In this issue, you will find the 2015 Vince Palladino Memorial Student Scholarship application and rules on the next page. The scholarship form also is available on the NAPS website at www.naps.org. I encourage our members to give a PSA directly to their respective qualifying children

and grandchildren with the hope they will take the time to submit an application and take advantage of one of the best membership benefits NAPS has to offer.

As I have stated in previous articles, my father's PSA was, “Get an education because no one can ever take that away from you.” There is nothing more special than investing in the futures of our youth. With an education, there is nothing to lose and everything to gain.

naps.bw@naps.org

| Thrift Savings Plan | | | | | |
|---|----------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| Fund | G | F | C | S | I |
| February 2015 | 0.13% | (0.19%) | 5.95% | 6.05% | 5.97% |
| Past 12 Months* | 2.22% | 5.68% | 15.60% | 8.50% | 0.26% |
| 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 |
| February 2015 | 1.19% | 2.95% | 3.80% | 4.39% | 4.99% |
| Past 12 Months* | 4.16% | 6.35% | 7.42% | 8.13% | 8.60% |
| 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 | | | | | |

National Association of Postal Supervisors

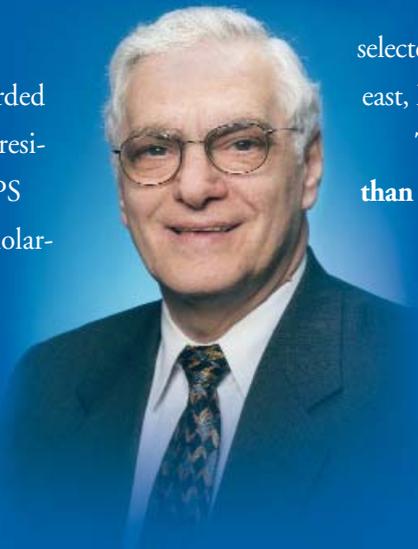
Vince Palladino Memorial Student Scholarships

2015 Official Application Form

The **Vince Palladino Memorial Student Scholarships** are awarded in memory of the late NAPS president and honor his dedication to NAPS members and their families. These scholarships are sponsored solely by NAPS.

Applicants for this scholarship must be the children or grandchildren of a living NAPS member, active or associate, at the time of drawing. Furthermore, the children or grandchildren must be attending or have been accepted by an accredited two- or four-year college or university.

NAPS will award 10 \$1,000 **Vince Palladino Memorial Student Scholarships**. Two winners will be randomly



selected from each of the NAPS regional areas (Northeast, Eastern, Central, Southern and Western).

This application must be received no later than July 31, 2015, at the address provided below.

Scholarship winners will be announced in August. In addition, the scholarship winners will be listed in the November 2015 issue of *The Postal Supervisor*.

Members whose child or grandchild have been awarded a **Vince Palladino Memorial Student Scholarship** will receive a check, payable to the college or university listed in the application, in September 2015. Scholarships may be used to pay expenses in the student's current or following semester.

Student's name (please PRINT legibly)

Major course of study

Name of accredited two- or four-year college or university attended or will be attending

City and state of the college or university

NAPS member's name

NAPS member's branch number

Student's relationship to NAPS member (son, granddaughter, etc.)

NAPS member's PO box/street address

City

State

ZIP+4

**Applications must
be received at
NAPS Headquarters
no later than
July 31, 2015**

Please mail completed application to **NAPS Scholarships, Attn: Brian J. Wagner, Secretary/Treasurer, 1727 King St., Suite 400, Alexandria, VA 22314-2753**. Thank you.

A 'Noble Experiment' Celebrates 25 Years

In 1990, John P. Kimball, a retired Baltimore, MD, Customer Service manager and former president of NAPS Baltimore Branch 42 and the Maryland State-DC Branch, informed then-President Rubin Handelman of his plan to form an organization to allow retired NAPS members in the Baltimore area to get together regularly for lunch and conversation. On May 16, 1990, Kimball mailed a letter to a large group of retired NAPS members, announcing his intentions and scheduling an organizational meeting.

The meeting was on June 6, 1990, at a Baltimore banquet hall and, over a \$3-a-person buffet lunch, the decision was made to proceed with forming the retiree group. Within five months, meetings were

held that produced a constitution and bylaws and procedures for banking, electing and installing nine officers and collecting dues from 130 charter members; NAPS RG#1 was in operation.

Early on, the group met at the banquet hall six times a year for a short business meeting and luncheon attended by supervisors, their spouses and invited guests. NAPS RG#1 also took advantage of the bounty of the nearby Chesapeake Bay by holding oyster roasts and shrimp and crab feasts each year. Bus day trips also were arranged to dinner theaters and nearby places of interest.

As the years progressed, many changes had to be made. Attendance dwindled as the membership aged; the frequency of luncheons was reduced to four a year and moved to a buffet restaurant to control food

prices. Due to a lack of interest, NAPS RG#1 discontinued the crab, oyster and shrimp parties, as well as the day trips.

We continued to print a newsletter four times a year to keep members informed of matters of importance to the USPS, NAPS, supervisors and, of course, retirees. Our group currently has 35 members (14 of whom were among the 130 charter members). Only one member of the initial slate of officers elected 25 years ago still is living. Attendance at our luncheons averages between 15 and 20 persons.

Our biggest challenge is we have been able to recruit only a handful of new members in the past 15 years, due to the strict privacy measures instituted by the USPS (the agency won't let us know who has retired). However, we remain determined to keep the late John P. Kimball's dream alive; he died at the end of 2013.

Submitted by Theodore J. "Ted" Lingelbach, a 42-year active and retired member of NAPS Branch 42 and its former legislative rep (1984-2000), as well as the NAPS RG#1 president/secretary/editor; tedlingelbach@aol.com.



Patti Lynn, Branch 296, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, was busy Jan. 15 attending the congressional swearing-in ceremonies for Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL), Lois Frankel (D-FL) and Patrick Murphy (D-FL).



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.

Business Development Specialists' FY15 Goals, Impact of OWC on Operations Among Items Discussed

Executive Vice President Ivan D. Butts was present for the Feb. 11 consultative meeting with the Postal Service. President Louis Atkins and Executive Board Chair Larry Ewing attended via telecon.

Representing the Postal Service were Jenny Utterback, Organizational Effectiveness, and Bruce Nicholson and Phong Quang, Labor Relations specialists.

Agenda Item #1

NAPS has received concerns surrounding the PFP goals of Business Development specialists for FY15. This position is going to be tasked with a revenue goal of \$2.5 million. The training scheduled to help achieve this goal is to be completed in February 2015. NAPS asked what mitigation will be put in place to address the five months that have passed between the issuance of goals and the training to achieve these goals.

The 2015 PFP indicators, targets and goals all were part of consultation with NAPS. Mitigation requests, as NAPS knows, may be initiated after performance outcomes are reported. Whether mitigation is requested, whether it will be granted and, if it is requested and granted, what it might be are matters to be determined in accordance with the rules developed through consultation with NAPS.

Agenda Item #2

NAPS requested updating standard position descriptions for EAS-17 supervisor, Customer Service, and EAS-17 supervisor, Distribution Op-

erations. This is needed to properly reflect the duties and responsibilities attributed to this work in today's postal environment.

If NAPS believes these standard position descriptions should be updated, it may submit its specific recommendations with supportive substantiation/reasoning for consideration.

Agenda Item #3

NAPS requested a briefing on plans for modifying Priority Mail business rules.

NAPS must provide further information to identify what USPS functional leader could address this issue. The USPS will schedule a separate telecon once the appropriate function has been identified by NAPS for the Priority Mail standard changes.

Agenda Item #4

NAPS requested a briefing on the progress of OWC and its impact on postal operations, such as EXFC scoring for individual product lines tracked by the process, as well as financial data, such as schedule premiums and transportation costs

being paid since the implementation of OWC.

Network Operations already was scheduled for a meeting on the day of consultation with NAPS; a briefing with NAPS and Network Operations will be scheduled.

Agenda Item #5

NAPS requested Postal Headquarters' position on Handbook AS-353 and Publication 550 as they pertain to requests for information made by NAPS.

Based on what NAPS has provided, Handbook AS-353 and Publication 550 apply to information requests from NAPS as provided in those materials. If NAPS has any specific questions, we will facilitate the effort to respond.

Agenda Item #6

NAPS requested information on the upcoming plant consolidations. The latest list posted on the RIBBS website (*listed below, as of Jan. 29, 2015*) has consolidations scheduled for as early as March 14, 2015, through April 18, 2015. When will affected EAS employees be officially

Continued on page 11

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Kokomo, IN, P&DF | Paducah P&DF | Industry P&DC |
| Redding CSMPC | Athens, GA, P&DF | Pocatello, ID, CSMPC |
| Lafayette, IN, P&DF | Salina, KS, P&DF | Central Mass P&DC |
| Kalamazoo P&DC | Duluth P&DF | Cape Girardeau P&DF |
| Asheville P&DF | Fayetteville P&DC | Minot CSMPC |
| Grand Island P&DF | Norfolk, NE, P&DF | Elko CSMPC |
| Mid-Hudson P&DC | Akron P&DC | Toledo P&DF |
| Bend CSMPC | Pendleton CSMPC | Erie P&DF |
| Lancaster P&DF | Florence P&DF | Beaumont P&DF |
| Houston P&DC | La Crosse P&DF | Wausau P&DF |
| Rock Springs CSMPC | | |

The USPS Is Not for Sale!

By Marilyn Walton

Western Region Vice President

The California Postal Legislative Coalition hosted its 17th annual event, Sunday, Feb. 8, at the Laborers' Local 185 Hall in Sacramento CA. The coalition is made up of members of management associations, unions and retirees; members participate voluntarily. They work to educate state and federal legislators about postal issues and keep Postal Service employees up to date on legislation that could impact them and the Postal Service. We meet quarterly, hosted by the NALC at the Richmond, CA, local office. Our meetings also are accessible by telecon; all are welcome to call in and participate.

This year's program was called to order by Susan Hammer, a representative of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU). Each year, the moderator is selected from one of the unions or management associations.

We were honored with three national presentations. Ivan D. Butts, NAPS executive vice president, and his wife Laurie attended; he was the keynote speaker. We had Skype presentations from John Hatton, NARFE deputy director of legislation, and Bob Levi, NAPUS director of government relations.

Ivan's presentation introduced us to the new

114th Congress' key players dealing with postal and federal issues. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) is the new chair of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Ron Johnson (R-WI) is the new chair of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. Ivan included pictures of the House and Senate government committee members and information about their background and party affiliations.

The feedback from attendees was it was great

to put a name with the face; there have been some significant shifts in committee memberships. As all the groups prepare to travel to Washington, DC, this is the time to look up members and research their committee assignments and who the ranking majority and

minority members of these important committees are so Hill visits can be more effectively planned. With the new Congress, postal organizations are starting fresh with the hope we will be able to educate, inform and gather support.

In addition to this information about who's who on the Hill, Ivan shared that the USPS is the most trusted and secure federal agency. His presentation provided great information and ended with one important fact: The U.S. Mail is the most secure and private way to share a message; a letter "cannot be hacked!"

Hatton provided information on legislation that would impact retirees and emphasized the importance of their commitment to supporting important postal legislation. Levi provided us with 30 years of

history regarding what has occurred since organizations began their annual treks to Capitol Hill. He reminded us of how the country and culture have changed, as well as the inner

workings of Congress and lack of bipartisan legislation. He reminded us that we face some very big challenges as we plan how to deal with this new Congress.

The coalition's panel discussion included all representatives: the APWU, NAPS, NPMHU (mail handlers), NRLCA (rural carriers), NARFE, NAPUS, NLPMP (the League) and the



NAPS Executive Vice President Ivan D. Butts was the keynote speaker at the California Postal Legislative Coalition's annual event Feb. 8.



Participants at the California Postal Legislative Coalition's event included, from left: Ivan D. Butts, NAPS; Sheri Hetzler, NLP; Jeanne Anne Landi, NRLCA; Anne Marie McClure, NAPUS; Michael Evans, APWU; Susan Hammer, APWU; Ron Jones, NALC; Ernie Grijalva, NPMHU; Marilyn Walton, NAPS; and Helen Zajac, NARFE.

NALC. The discussion was informative and demonstrated our organizations have a common goal: Save the Postal Service. As a coalition including postal/federal/retirees, we support legislation that will:

- keep six-day delivery
- impose a moratorium on closures
- maintain door-to-door delivery

- keep service standards
- provide relief for the USPS' mandate of prefunding retiree health benefits

The coalition is concerned about the rapid changes and ended this year's event with a rally cry, "The USPS Is Not for Sale!"

The coalition's Sacramento Capitol Lobby Day traditionally coincides

with NAPS' annual legislative event; however, this year it was scheduled for March 10. This is the day the organizations jointly visit the state capitol to educate and inform and promote positive ideas, programs and statistics that demonstrate the value of keeping the Postal Service strong and viable in California!

marilynwalton@comcast.net

Feb. 11 Consultative

Continued from page 9

notified of impending consolidations and be given opportunities to apply for positions and be notified of their RIF rights?

USPS Headquarters said the situation was not yet stable enough to provide any specific notification; it intends to wait until closer to the actual dates. The agency will continue with the RIF-avoidance process. After RIF avoidance, the USPS will follow with the RIF rules.

The following agenda items were approved convention resolutions at the 2014 NAPS National Convention in San Diego this past August.

Agenda Item #7

Resolution #69: A local issue from the field has revealed attempts by the agency to extend EAS lunches as long as four hours in an attempt to address staffing shortfalls. NAPS requested Postal Headquarters provide clear language stating all EAS employees' lunch schedules can be no more than one hour.

Determinations concerning individual work schedules are made locally based on local operating/business needs/requirements. NAPS has made this inquiry previously; the Postal Service has responded similarly. The Postal Service does not intend to establish the new rule NAPS has requested.

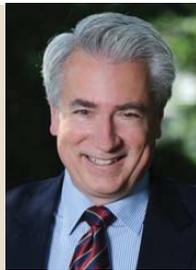
Agenda Item #8

Resolution #77: EAS employees have to bid on jobs through eCareer. The information maintained by the system and reviewed by the selecting official is above and beyond information needed when selecting candidates for jobs. NAPS requested that, when going through the selection process in eCareer, selecting officials only be able to view pertinent information—not the history of jobs bid on or withdrawn.

The hyperlink that enables review committees and selecting officials to view an applicant's application history has been deactivated. This modification to eCareer was updated in June 2014.

Bruce Moyer

NAPS Legislative Counsel



650 appeals are heard by the Postal Service each year.

S. 606 and H.R. 1198

The Tester bill (S. 606)

and the Connolly bill (H.R. 1198) would restore fairness to the appeal process by amending 39 U.S.C. 1005 to extend MSPB appeal rights over adverse actions to any employee covered by the Executive and Administrative Schedule (EAS) of the Postal Service. Included would be employees in professional,

technical and administrative positions, whether or not they exercise supervisory responsibility.

Measures similar to the Tester and Connolly bills were introduced in the past Congress, but did not pass either chamber. The Senate MSPB bill was added to a comprehensive postal reform measure approved in January 2014 by the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. The postal measure languished in committee for the rest of the session and was not brought to the Senate floor for action.

Today, most EAS supervisors, postmasters and management personnel (approximately 70,000 employees) possess MSPB appeal rights. But those without MSPB appeal rights can only challenge the most significant kinds of personnel actions—removals, suspensions of more than 14 days, reductions in grade or pay and furloughs of 30 days or less—internally.

How the Appeal Gap Arose

This gap in appeal coverage was brought about by restrictive federal

appeals court interpretations of the “Employee Appeal Rights Act of 1987,” which originally provided the right of MSPB appeal to supervisors, postmasters and managers. Prior to 1987, only veteran preference-eligible postal supervisors, postmasters and managers had possessed the right of appeal to the MSPB. Soon after the 1987 law was enacted, the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals interpreted the law to exclude employees who did not perform supervisory or management-related responsibilities, even if they were unrepresented by a labor union and outside the protection of the collective-bargaining unit.

In reaching that conclusion, the court relied on the interpretation of “the supervisor or a management employee” language in the 1987 law, which replicated language previously construed by the National Labor Relations Board as requiring the incumbent to exercise supervisory responsibilities.

The 1987 law passed with broad bipartisan support, reflecting a desire by Congress to give equal protection to all EAS employees. Unfortunately, the language used by Congress was interpreted narrowly by the federal courts, creating the subclass of EAS employees without MSPB appeal rights.

Ever since, this restrictive interpretation has prevented thousands of USPS mid-level managers from enjoying the right of appeal to the MSPB over adverse personnel actions, even though they are covered by the EAS and outside the collective-bargaining unit. The Tester and Connolly bills finally would restore fairness to the management ranks of the Postal Service by correcting this statutory flaw.

brumoyer@verizon.net

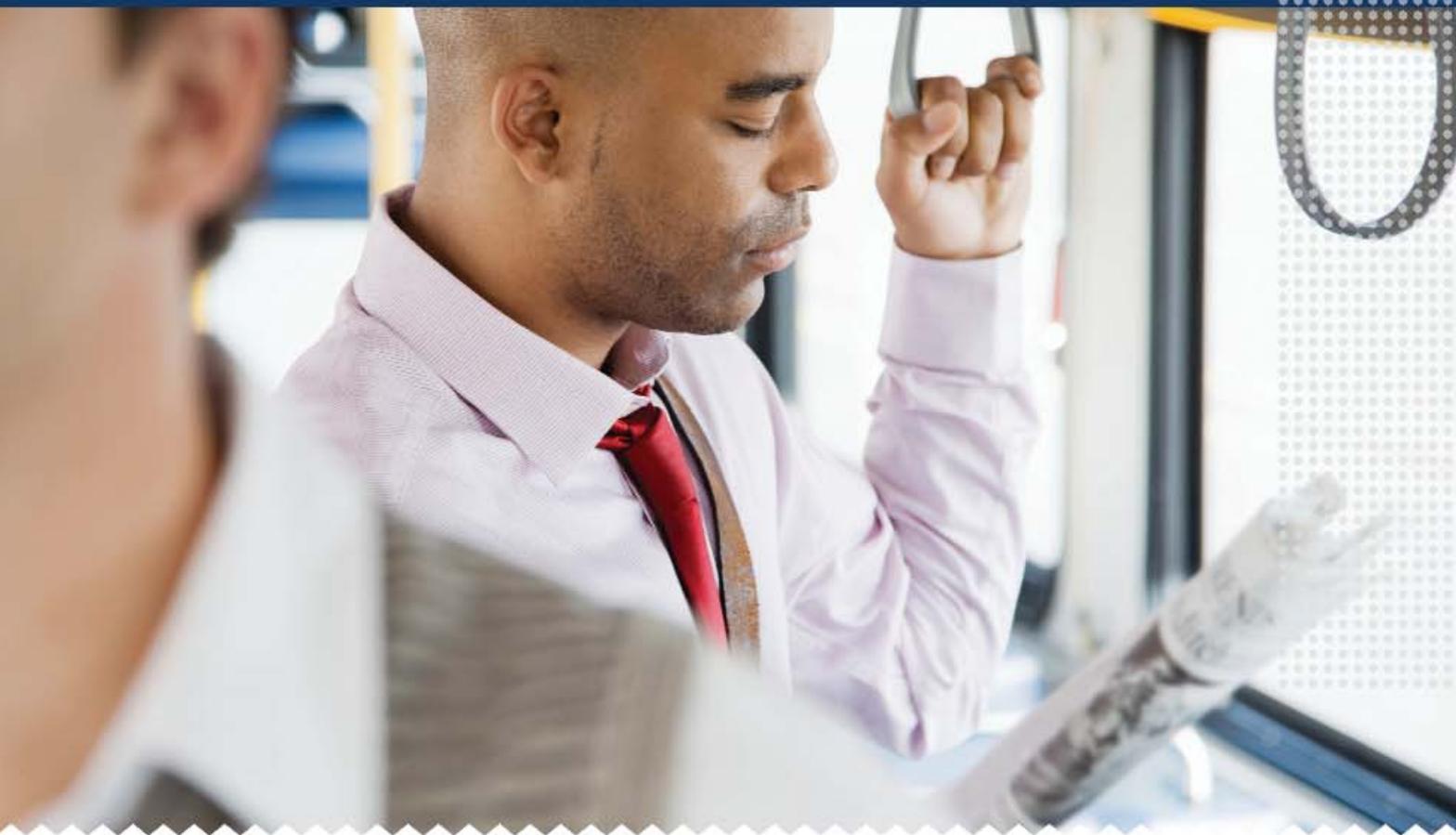
Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) and Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA) have introduced bills in the Senate and the House to standardize Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) appeal rights for all EAS postal employees. Their measures would correct a long-standing flaw

Bills Seek to Provide MSPB Appeal Rights

in statute that has barred approximately 7,500 mid-level management postal employees from appealing adverse personnel actions to the MSPB. The board is an independent, quasi-judicial agency in the Executive Branch that serves as the guardian of federal merit systems and hears most adverse action appeals taken against federal employees.

Currently, the only way postal managers without MSPB appeal rights can challenge adverse actions taken against them is through the internal grievance process under Section 650 of the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*. The *ELM* 650 process frequently has been criticized for its one-sidedness, acquiring the label “kangaroo court” because the process involves little more than reconsideration by higher-level officials within the Postal Service more likely to rubber-stamp the original punishment imposed.

In some cases, the *ELM* 650 process has prevented the disclosure of fraud, waste and abuse in cases involving whistle-blowing and claims of reprisal. Approximately 50 *ELM*



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Postal Reform That Meets **Reinforcing the**

The U.S. Postal Service is returning to a profitable financial condition. After several years of decline, triggered by the worst recession in 80 years and a 2006 law that needlessly required the Postal Service to prefund its future obligations far into the future, there is moderately good news on the horizon for the Postal Service.

Letter revenue is again rising. Online shopping has boosted package revenue. The Internet is a net positive force for the USPS, suggesting continued growth in the years ahead. And the Postal Service's package delivery competitors, UPS and FedEx, rely on the Postal Service for "last mile" delivery to millions of customers. The Postal Service's expansive and efficient processing, delivery and transportation networks afford significant savings to its

customers and private carriers.

The Postal Service supports itself by revenue earned from selling stamps and postal services—not taxpayer money. Increased package deliveries last year helped the Postal Service earn an

Tomorrow's Needs: **Return to Profitability**

operating profit of \$1.4 billion for Fiscal Year 2014. Operating profits for just the recently concluded first quarter of Fiscal Year 2015 skyrocketed to \$1.1 billion for the quarter. Its \$6 billion in cash assets is its highest in years. The Postal Service has been operationally profitable since October 2012.

Overall, the financial picture is less positive, but for reasons of flawed public policy. The Postal Service showed a net financial loss of \$754 million for the quarter after factoring in the Postal Service's obligation to prepay its retiree health benefits. But for the prefunding payments, the Postal Service would have operated in the black.

This underscores the need for Congress to take comprehensive legislative action that strengthens the financial stability of the Postal Service by restructuring the prefunding obligation. Strength through financial stability represents the first of three steps to returning the Postal Service to profitability.

The assurance of prompt delivery stands as the second step. Congress should assure the continued prompt delivery of mail by requiring the Postal Service to honor the delivery standards that were in effect before a massive contraction of the delivery network began.

Innovation represents the third step in the USPS' return to profitability. Congress should encourage the Postal Service to create new, innovative postal products and services that produce new revenue, adapt to changing technological trends and continue to serve America's versatile needs.

Step One: Strength Through Financial Stability

Continued Postal Service financial losses are chiefly the result of burdensome congressional mandates. Flawed public policy, not technological change, is draining the USPS of the capital necessary to upgrade its fleet, modernize its network and expand its product lines. The Postal Service cannot re-

turn to profitability without the passage of comprehensive reform legislation. Congress needs to temper those mandates and return to the Postal Service its pension overpayments, making the Postal Service financially stronger.

In 2006, the lame-duck Congress mandated that the Postal Service prefund future retiree health benefits. This has caused the Postal Service to suffer huge losses and a severe lack of liquidity. No other public agency or private company is required to fully prefund for even one year; the Postal Service must prefund 75 years into the future and pay for it all in a 10-year period.

That \$5.6 billion annual charge is the dead weight that continues to drown the Postal Service in red ink. Last year marked the fourth time in a row the Postal Service was forced to default on its required prefunding retiree health benefit payment obligations, despite already depositing more than \$42 billion over the past eight years into the Postal Service Retirement Health Benefits (RHB) Fund.

Congress needs to address this unfair mandate, rather than allowing service cuts to degrade mail service to residents and businesses, especially in rural states. Congress can repair the damage previous lawmakers have done by passing legislation that restructures USPS payments to the RHB Fund as specified in the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act of 2006.

The restructuring of the prefunding payments was included in legislation approved in the 113th Congress by the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. President Obama's FY16 budget proposal also endorses restructuring the prefunding payments, providing the USPS with more than \$13 billion in financial relief through 2016.

Congress also should refund any outstanding FERS overpayments by the Postal Service (estimated in 2014 at \$1.5 billion) and adjust future FERS payment amounts using postal-specific demographic and salary growth assumptions.

Step Two: Assurance of Prompt Delivery

As the Postal Service returns to profitability, Congress should enact postal legislation that serves tomorrow's needs. Building tomorrow's postal system requires the preservation of speed and reliability, the hallmarks of service quality and business success.

However, USPS operational changes are headed in exactly the opposite direction, actually slowing down the mail. Since July 1, 2012, the USPS has undertaken cost-cutting actions that have increased the expected number of days it can take to deliver some types of mail. The Postal Service has relaxed its delivery standards by taking more time (roughly one more day) to deliver First-Class, advertising and other kinds of mail. This has permitted the Postal Service to consolidate 82 more mail processing centers and capture additional savings, projected to achieve \$750 million annually over the next five years.

These actions have slowed down the postal system by virtually eliminating overnight delivery of single-piece First-Class Mail and adding an additional day of delivery time in most areas across the country. This slow-down in mail is beginning to harm businesses and the economy. Rural and small-town America will be especially hard hit by these changes, as a recent GAO report has shown (*see page 19*).

As the GAO has noted, "USPS mail delivery standards and performance are central to its mission of providing postal services to all communities and have been long-standing concerns for mailers and recipients." (GAO, "U.S. Postal Service: Information on Recent Changes to Delivery Standards, Operations and Performance," Sept. 25, 2014.)

Congress should take action to prevent the mail from slowing down by enacting legislation that assures speedy delivery and maintains the Postal Service's reputation for prompt, reliable service. Unless Congress acts, USPS market strength will threaten to erode the promise of universal postal service to all parts of the nation, especially rural America.

NAPS supports H. Res. 54, which would express the sense of the House of Representatives that the Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012, the date on which the Postal Service instituted new service standards that began to slow down mail service and will virtually eliminate overnight deliv-

ery of regular First-Class Mail.

NAPS also supports H.R. 784, which would mandate preserving mail standards in effect on Dec. 31, 2011. The legislation would assure that Americans continue to enjoy prompt and reliable First-Class Mail service, especially in rural areas. And it would assure that the Postal Service remains a speedy messenger and courier, using a robust processing and transportation network that preserves customer loyalty and assures revenues without reliance on taxpayer dollars.

Congressional action addressing the speed of mail and the establishment of mail standards is a proper exercise of congressional power, established by the U.S. Constitution (Article 1, Section 8, Clause 7).

Step Three: Innovate to Prosper

Like its competitive counterparts, the Postal Service needs to generate new revenue as aggressively as it pursues efficiencies in mail processing and delivery. This involves pursuing business opportunities within existing authority, as well as offering new services subject to congressional approval.

For example, current law permits private shippers to ship alcoholic beverages, but the Postal Service cannot. Congress should authorize the Postal Service to ship wine, beer and distilled spirits when they are mailed in accordance with state and local laws.

Numerous ways exist for leveraging the Postal Service's presence in every community to generate new sales. The Postal Service should be permitted to provide notary and Internet services; issue state licenses (drivers', hunting, fishing); distribute and reload government-issued "cash cards" for federal benefit programs, such as Social Security and emergency assistance programs through FEMA; and follow the practices of foreign postal services through offering limited banking services.

Finally, Congress also should encourage the Postal Service to continue to tap into a \$300 million market within the Postal Service's own backyard. This involves selling shipping services to federal agencies through the GSA Schedule. Last year, the Postal Service's share of the GSA schedule market for shipping services registered 1.4 percent, compared to FedEx (56 percent) and UPS (41.2 percent). This largely is because the USPS is a late entrant to the federal market.

The Consequences of Congressional Delay

Over the past several years, without congressional action, the Postal Service has had little choice but to cut costs in ways detrimental to service to its customers, American business and long-term loyalty to the Postal Service brand. These service reductions have reverberated across the American economy in countless negative ways, given the breadth of the postal system and businesses' reliance on it. Their origins as service reductions come about because of the dynamics of logistics and how the postal network works.

Postal supervisors direct and manage the many steps in the mail cycle involving the acceptance, processing and delivery of mail and packages. Their work has helped make America's mail system the most efficient in the world. Because of their front-line responsibility, postal supervisors also have witnessed firsthand how recent cost-focused cuts in service have brought about changes in mail service that have degraded service and threaten to diminish

customer confidence and loyalty.

These cost-focused cuts have resulted in:

- reduced overnight delivery,
- late mail delivery,
- reductions in retail unit hours,
- the need to replace the vehicular fleet and
- harm to the Postal Service brand.

Many of these moves could have been avoided had Congress intervened earlier to provide the Postal Service the authority it needs to grow revenue, innovate and improve customer service. A closer look below at each cost-focused cut reveals its negative consequences:

Reduced Overnight Delivery: While Americans look for more speed and convenience in every aspect of their lives, the Postal Service has slowed down mail service in order to cut costs. Mail service is slower than it used to be, according to service standard reductions established by the Postal Service in 2012. As a result, overnight mail service has shrunk to only areas within metropolitan regions. Why? Closure and consolidation of hundreds of

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processing plants across the country have generated greater distances that mail must travel for processing. This, in turn, requires greater time for mail travel, making overnight delivery more difficult in a greater number of areas. Further reductions in service will occur as more processing plants are closed and consolidated.

Late Mail Delivery: Greater mail travel time, brought about by fewer processing plants, has resulted in later availability of mail to letter carriers for delivery. This, in turn, has caused carrier report times in some areas to be moved from the early morning hours to mid-morning, some as late as 9 a.m. The result: Letter carriers are increasingly delivering mail during evening hours, sometimes as late as 9 p.m. This situation has been disastrous for American businesses and residential customers who need their mail delivered during normal business hours. Late delivery has created threatening safety problems for mail carriers as well. A letter carrier in the Washington, DC, area was murdered while on his route during the evening hours. Other assaults, including shootings and robberies of postal employees, have become more prevalent during early evening darkness, especially in the winter months.

Reductions in Retail-Unit Hours: The Postal Service deflected congressional concern over proposed closures of small, rural post offices by switching gears and reducing the hours of operation of thousands of post offices and replacing postmasters and career employees with non-career workers. The savings from these measures have been marginal in relation to the total size of the Postal Service budget. The intangible cost of loss of good will and diminished presence in communities across the country will be of greater consequence to the Postal Service in the long run.

The Need to Replace the Vehicular Fleet: The Postal Service maintains the largest commercial fleet in the world, with more than 212,000 vehicles, using more than 190,000 of them to collect and deliver mail. The postal fleet is inefficient and outdated, with the vast majority of vehicles now reaching the end of their 24-year operational lives and in need of replacement.

Until recently, the Postal Service lacked sufficient capital to improve and replace its fleet. Its long-life vehicles (LLVs) are ill-equipped to handle packages, not fuel-efficient nor alternative-energy powered. Its



A typical fender-bender involving a USPS mail truck escalated into a full-blown fire in Port Royal, FL, in 2012. Today, most USPS trucks are reaching the end of their 24-year operational lives. Source: *Naples Daily News*.

liquidity crunch for the better part of the past decade caused the Postal Service to apply increasingly inefficient and expensive “fix as fails” maintenance to its vehicles to keep them operating. In one Postal Service district alone, with slightly more than 5,000 LLVs, more than 925 had their rusted-out frames replaced at a cost reaching \$5,000 per vehicle, far above the \$3,500 reinvestment threshold that cautions against further maintenance.

Today, as the Postal Service returns to profitability, it is beginning to turn the corner on replacing its fleet. The Postal Service announced in January that it was in the preliminary stages of a \$6 billion purchase plan to acquire 180,000 new postal trucks—better built in a variety of ways and better equipped to handle parcels.

Delivery of the first new vehicles is expected by the start of 2018. This is a positive sign, amid cautionary signals about the impact of service reductions on the Postal Service brand and its long-standing reputation for speed and reliability.

Harm to the Postal Service Brand: Since the implementation of Postal Service organizational changes that began with plant consolidations in 2012, the Postal Service’s own performance reports reflect a continuing trend of reduced service for all of its market-dominant products, including First-Class and advertising mail. Without congressional intervention that stops this downward trend in service, the Postal Service risks harming its brand and reputation for speed and reliability. New, innovative postal services and products, including postal banking, can help offset brand erosion and restore the Postal Service to financial profitability.

Stop the Postal Service's Plan to Slow Down Mail Service

In January 2015, the Postal Service began to consolidate 82 mail processing facilities in 37 states. The USPS plan will eliminate overnight First-Class Mail service in much, if not all, of the country and slow down the postal system in ways that could disrupt business and the economy. Rural and small-town America will be especially hard hit.

The USPS mail processing facility consolidation initiative constitutes Phase II of the Mail Processing Network Rationalization Plan the Postal Service announced in 2012. Consolidations of 141 processing facilities occurred in 2012 under Phase I of the plan.

Mail service quality has eroded as a result of Phase I consolidations, despite the Postal Service's claims that service is at an all-time high. Steady declines in mail service quality have occurred in the overnight and 3-5 day markets.

Ultimately, these reductions in service will harm millions of businesses and households, lead to the dismantling of the current mail processing and transportation network, eliminate thousands of jobs and erode the Postal Service brand and future revenue.

Serious concerns about the USPS plan have been raised by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Office of Inspector General (OIG) of the Postal Service and members of Congress over the impact of the slow-down in mail service, as well as the failure of the Postal Service to provide communities with the opportunity to provide input on the consolidations.

Rural and Small-Town America Will Be Harmed, as Well as USPS Revenues

The GAO's report in October 2014 on the impact of Phase I consolidations shows they have caused delays in the delivery of mail, especially in rural America, which Phase II consolidations will only exacerbate (see "Examples of Change in Delivery Standards for First-Class Mail" below).

Rural areas are especially vulnerable due to the longer distances mail needs to travel to be processed. Longer distances also will increase USPS fuel consumption and costs, adversely impacting the environment and further diminishing cost-savings of the consolidations. The Postal Service has estimat-

Examples of Change in Delivery Standards for First-Class Mail

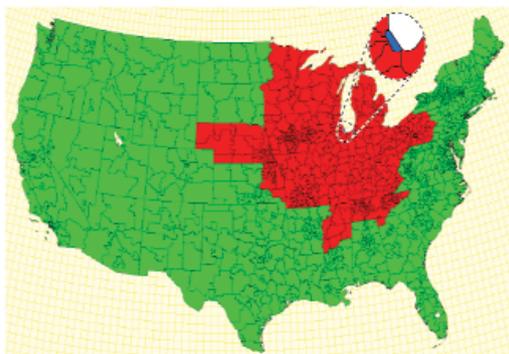
Chicago, IL

Scope of 1-day (blue) and 2-day (red) delivery standard areas decreased; 3-day (green) delivery standard area increased.

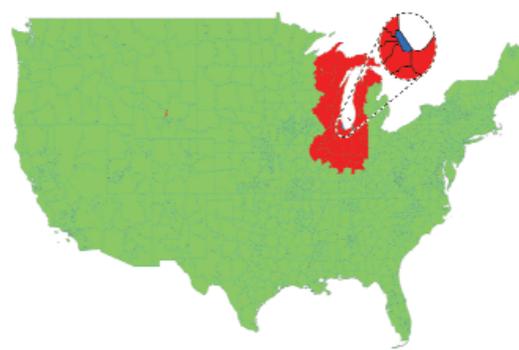
1 day 2 days 3 days

Bismarck, ND

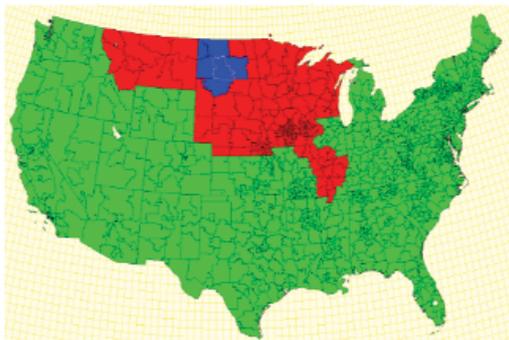
Standards as of Quarter 1, FY 2008



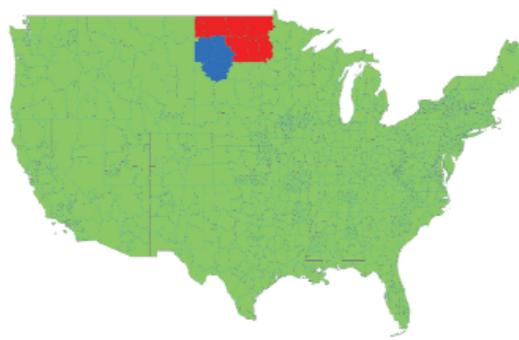
Standards as of Quarter 3, FY 2014



Standards as of Quarter 1, FY 2008



Standards as of Quarter 3, FY 2014



Source: "U.S. Postal Service: Information on Recent Changes to Delivery Standards, Operations and Performance," U.S. Government Accountability Office, GAO-14-8282R Postal Delivery, published Sept. 25, 2014, publicly released Oct. 27, 2014.

ed consolidations in Phase II will achieve approximately \$750 million annually over the next five years. The Postal Service also has projected that 15,000 employees will be impacted by the consolidations.

The consolidations require the Postal Service in many cases to deliver mail later in the day and, in some locations, even into the evening hours, creating customer dissatisfaction and subjecting mail carriers to unsafe conditions. These conditions are likely to only worsen as further processing facilities are consolidated.

Postal customers, including printers and commercial mailers, are becoming increasingly frustrated by these delays and are likely to become even more frustrated over further reductions in service. This likely will erode customer loyalty to the USPS, generate interest in alternate delivery methods through USPS competitors and diminish future revenue.

The Postal Service Has Failed to Properly Assess the Impact on Mail Service and Receive Input from Affected Communities

Meanwhile, the Postal Service has sped ahead, attempting to consolidate greater numbers of facilities without providing the public an analysis of the impact of the consolidations on mail service quality, as required by the law and Postal Service policy. The Postal Service OIG, in a management alert dated Oct. 6, 2014, challenged the Postal Service's planned consolidation actions of the 82 facilities as incomplete for failing to disclose the impact of these consolidations on customer service in each affected delivery area, as required by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. The OIG also criticized the Postal Service for not making information available to affected communities about the impact of the planned service standard consolidations and not providing affected persons and communities the opportunity to provide input on the proposed consolidations.

These actions are key statutory requirements, established by Congress in 2006, to assure that all mail facility consolidations are reasonable and successful. In failing to disclose the impact of these consolidations on customer service in each affected delivery area, the Postal Service has violated its own policy, which affirmatively requires its determination whether there is a business case for relocating and consolidating processing and business distribution operations based on current data. In pursuing the 82 consolidations, the Postal Service is relying on data that is now three to four years old and no longer current or necessarily accurate.

Single-Piece First-Class Overnight Mail Service Will Be Eliminated

The USPS acknowledges that overnight mail service will worsen as a result of the consolidations. This change will eliminate overnight mail service for virtually all Americans,

except business customers who prepare and deliver their mail to the processing facility 11 hours earlier than previously required before the new service standards went into effect.

Fuzzy Math Generates Questions Over Cost-Savings

Will these consolidations save money? Take a look at the Postal Service's fuzzy math. The USPS continues to claim significant savings from these consolidations—as much as \$750 million annually—yet has provided little verifying data on the savings to Congress or the public. The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) in 2012 issued an advisory opinion on the financial savings and soundness of the Postal Service's mail consolidation plan, prior to implementation of Phase I. The PRC calculated savings to be as low as \$46 million nationally, compared to \$2.1 billion the USPS originally claimed; the PRC cited concerns over USPS methodology, the analysis of savings and the impact on service standards.

Meanwhile, the Postal Service shows signs of increasing profitability, especially through expanding e-commerce package delivery. These improvements in the Postal Service's financial picture call into question the need for cost savings (and service cuts) of the scale planned by the agency.

In fact, the Postal Service would have earned a net profit in 2014, but for the statutory burden imposed by Congress to annually prepay approximately \$5.5 billion each year in future retiree health benefits. The modification of the prefunding burden represents one of several key actions Congress must undertake as part of a larger set of postal reforms.

What Congress Should Do Now

In the 113th Congress, a majority of senators and nearly 200 House members favored the preservation of USPS mail standards and a one-year moratorium on mail processing facility consolidations. Support for the preservation of USPS mail delivery standards continues in the 114th Congress.

NAPS encourages House members to support:

H. Res. 54, which would express the sense of the House of Representatives that the Postal Service should take all appropriate measures to restore service standards in effect as of July 1, 2012, the date on which the Postal Service instituted the new service standards that began to slow down mail service and will virtually eliminate overnight delivery of regular First-Class Mail.

H.R. 784, which would mandate the preservation of the mail standards that were in effect on Dec. 31, 2011. The legislation would assure that Americans continue to enjoy prompt and reliable First-Class Mail service, especially in rural areas. And it would assure that the Postal Service remains a speedy messenger and courier, using a robust processing and transportation network that preserves customer loyalty and assures revenues without reliance on taxpayer dollars.

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| Walsh, John | IL | Branch 289 |
| Massie, Larry | IN | Branch 576 |
| Ewing, Larry | KS | Branch 52 |
| McCartney, Kelly | KS | Branch 919 |
| Yelverton, Michelle | KY | Branch 1 |
| Foley, Paul | MA | Branch 120 |
| LeDoux, Arthur | MA | Branch 6 |
| Moreno, Richard | MA | Branch 498 |

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|---------------------|----|------------|
| Rynkiewicz, Harriet | MA | Branch 43 |
| Walter, Richard | MA | Branch 120 |
| Mason Jr., Garland | MD | Branch 592 |
| Amergian, Raymond | ME | Branch 96 |
| Bartlett, Bruce | ME | Branch 96 |
| Hafford, Darrell | ME | Branch 96 |
| O'Neill, Shawn | ME | Branch 96 |
| Bodary, Joseph | MI | Branch 268 |
| Trayer, Kevin | MI | Branch 142 |
| Van Norman, Gerald | MI | Branch 130 |
| Burger, Lucille | MN | Branch 104 |
| Harvey, Kristen | MN | Branch 16 |
| Vance, Julianne | MN | Branch 104 |
| Goedeken, Carrie | NE | Branch 10 |
| Newman, Edward | NE | Branch 10 |
| Walton, Irma | NJ | Branch 75 |
| Goldstein, Charlie | NV | Branch 463 |
| Burke, Terriann | NY | Branch 11 |
| Englerth, Scott | NY | Branch 11 |
| Middleton, Isaac | NY | Branch 68 |
| Slayton, Scott | NY | Branch 11 |
| Miegl, Cynthia | OH | Branch 2 |
| Needham, Timothy | OH | Branch 133 |
| Smith, Rotishia | OH | Branch 46 |
| Adams, Jeanine | PA | Branch 20 |
| Hinton, Donald | PA | Branch 20 |
| Williams, Darryl | PA | Branch 554 |
| Holt, Brian | RI | Branch 105 |
| Saccoccio, Michaela | RI | Branch 105 |
| Croswell, Darnel | SC | Branch 225 |
| Reese, Patricia | SC | Branch 225 |
| Bowen, Randy | TN | Branch 97 |
| Brooks, Lamarcus | TN | Branch 41 |
| Green, Shri | TN | Branch 41 |
| Clark Jr., Bobby | TX | Branch 124 |
| Conley, Robert | TX | Branch 9 |
| Cooper, Karen | TX | Branch 124 |
| Elizondo Jr., Jaime | TX | Branch 122 |
| Lomba, John | TX | Branch 103 |
| McKelvey, Courtney | TX | Branch 122 |
| Mitchell, Annie | TX | Branch 124 |
| Archer, Sylvia | VA | Branch 98 |
| Jacobs, Charles | VA | Branch 132 |
| Jones, Patricia | VA | Branch 98 |
| Gillett, Michael | WA | Branch 31 |

You Can't Thread a Needle Without Thread

By **Toni A. Coleman-Scruggs**

It's hard to believe we are in March and it's time to head to the Hill to address our concerns to Congress.

Some of us have been in the trenches all year as associate members; I have had an opportunity to do just that. As a branch president from Indiana and lifelong Illinois resident, I get to work with both states, which brings me to this

question: "How can you thread a needle if you don't have thread?" Well, it depends on what you are trying to sew.

First, I would like to congratulate Megan J. Brennan for being named the 74th postmaster general and chief executive officer of the world's largest postal organization. It always has been a pleasure to hear her speak. For our NAPS members still in the trenches, I believe more positive change is going to come.

So, back to that needle. This past



year, we have attempted many sewing projects as I would call them; some of these tasks were quite a bit more than we bargained for. Our tiny branch in Gary, IN—birthplace of Michael Jackson, the "King of Pop," and home of Rebels with a cause—covers the Gary Plant and about 30-plus post offices and stations.

Our members have worked even harder this year to expose the abuse of EAS employees' and craft 204(b) workhours being reduced and EAS employees being forced to work and not paid for several years for hours they worked. After years in the trenches, the continued grievances and hundreds of documents, finally voices were heard, although not everyone was willing to speak up and speak out. Those who did helped bring forth an investigation that still is resulting in change.

I invite you to read the case; hopefully, it will be helpful for our NAPS brothers and sisters to stand up

and use the needle and thread together to assure that all our members are being paid correctly every time. ("Extra Hours Worked by Supervisors in the Greater Indiana District," Audit Report, HR-AR-15-002, Dec. 18, 2014; <https://www.usps.gov/sites/default/files/document-library-files/2014/hr-ar-15-002.pdf>.)

Our needles still

are working. We have reviewed the WEBcoins and SWCs reports, which resulted in a manager position being upgraded; several offices now qualify for more supervisors, as well as other staffing. Sometimes you can thread a needle without thread; it just depends on what you are trying to accomplish.

We still have our management/association meetings where we continue to push forward issues that affect our members, such as T-time, involuntary reassignments, redundant reports and dignity and respect. The support members of Gary Branch 171 deserve a hand for hanging in there through some rough patches. The officers are a great group I really appreciate.

Over the past few months, the relationship with Michiana Area Vice President Kevin Trayer has grown into a bond that is unbreakable. His support, as well as that from Central Region Vice President Craig Johnson, has taught us all that you have to learn to get past yourself; be open-minded to get to know a person. You may be surprised how much you really like a person and things you have in common can develop into some of the greatest friendships in the world. Sew until next time: Get that thread out and see what you can do with the tools you have.

toni.scruggs@yahoo.com

Toni A. Coleman-Scruggs is Gary, IN, Branch 171 president.

| | | |
|------------------|----|-----------|
| Gunder, Jim | WA | Branch 31 |
| Howe, Steven | WA | Branch 61 |
| McCracken, Cindy | WA | Branch 61 |
| Wilson, Richard | WA | Branch 61 |

Continuous Contributor Club (CCC) Earned in February

| | | |
|--------------------|----|------------|
| Harkinson, John | NJ | Branch 74 |
| Mayes, Sean | OH | Branch 29 |
| Smith, Rotishia | OH | Branch 46 |
| Adams, Jeanine | PA | Branch 20 |
| Keefe, Laura | PA | Branch 112 |
| Williams, Darryl | PA | Branch 554 |
| Croswell, Darnel | SC | Branch 225 |
| White Jr., William | VA | Branch 526 |

SPAC Scoreboard

All statistics reflect money collected
between Jan. 1 and Feb. 28, 2015

National Aggregate:

\$46,961

National Per Capita:

\$1.86

Region Aggregate:

| | |
|--------------------|----------|
| 1. Eastern | \$15,654 |
| 2. Northeast | \$11,075 |
| 3. Southern | \$7,822 |
| 4. Western | \$6,483 |
| 5. Central | \$5,926 |

Region Per Capita:

| | |
|--------------------|--------|
| 1. Eastern | \$2.95 |
| 2. Northeast | \$2.27 |
| 3. Central | \$1.39 |
| 4. Southern | \$1.39 |
| 5. Western | \$1.24 |

Area Aggregate:

| | |
|---------------------------|---------|
| 1. New England | \$7,966 |
| 2. Capitol-Atlantic | \$7,247 |
| 3. Mideast | \$4,946 |
| 4. Pioneer | \$3,910 |
| 5. Rocky Mountain | \$3,413 |
| 6. Central Gulf | \$2,805 |
| 7. New York | \$2,660 |
| 8. Texas | \$2,495 |
| 9. Illini | \$1,910 |
| 10. Southeast | \$1,757 |
| 11. Pacific | \$1,620 |
| 12. MINK | \$1,536 |
| 13. Northwest | \$1,450 |
| 14. Michiana | \$1,395 |
| 15. North Central | \$1,085 |
| 16. Cotton Belt | \$765 |

Area Per Capita:

| | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| 1. New England | \$4.79 |
| 2. Central Gulf | \$3.84 |
| 3. Pioneer | \$2.86 |
| 4. Capitol-Atlantic | \$2.85 |
| 5. Rocky Mountain | \$2.27 |
| 6. Mideast | \$2.19 |
| 7. Illini | \$1.73 |
| 8. Northwest | \$1.46 |
| 9. Texas | \$1.46 |
| 10. MINK | \$1.41 |
| 11. North Central | \$1.22 |
| 12. Michiana | \$1.19 |
| 13. New York | \$1.13 |
| 14. Cotton Belt | \$0.88 |
| 15. Southeast | \$0.75 |
| 16. Pacific | \$0.59 |

State Aggregate:

| | |
|------------------------|---------|
| 1. Massachusetts | \$6,717 |
| 2. Pennsylvania | \$3,866 |
| 3. Maryland | \$3,440 |
| 4. New York | \$2,635 |
| 5. Virginia | \$2,599 |

State Per Capita:

| | |
|------------------------|--------|
| 1. Massachusetts | \$8.19 |
| 2. Louisiana | \$7.28 |
| 3. Utah | \$7.17 |
| 4. Maryland | \$5.86 |
| 5. Delaware | \$5.37 |

Continuous Contributor Club

Members by Region:

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| 1. Central | 80 |
| 2. Eastern | 64 |
| 3. Southern | 60 |
| 4. Northeast | 51 |
| 5. Western | 48 |

Aggregate by Region:

| | |
|--------------------|---------|
| 1. Central | \$4,140 |
| 2. Eastern | \$3,592 |
| 3. Southern | \$3,546 |
| 4. Western | \$3,440 |
| 5. Northeast | \$3,224 |

Managing Your NPA Results

By Joe Bodary

It is important to lay the path for a successful NPA early in the year. We now are in the second quarter; if you haven't yet done anything to plan for success, you need to catch up *now*. By now, in fact, all Postmasters should have received their FY15 budgets.

It is *very* important to review the workhour plan to make sure it is doable. Actual-to-plan for the workhours is a *very* large part of your NPA. Make sure you review each LDC and check it against reality. I have base hours in LDC 21, carrier office time, for 47:38 per week and for LDC 22, carrier street time, 235:56 per week. Again, the plan is weekly, so I need to cross that with each week in the plan, noting the five-day weeks will be different.

If the amount in the budget is considerably lower than reality (base), there needs to be some discussion with your POOM, such as 40:00 in LDC 21 and 200:00 in LDC 22. It is more important than ever to watch this closely because the goal is to *plan*, not *SPLY*.

In reality, you may do a great job reducing hours from the previous year, but may not even come close to the plan. I hear this every year. It sounds good that you saved the company money by running your operation with a lot fewer hours than last year. But if your budget was not in line with your operation, you will not be recognized on your NPA.

I'm not saying you will get every hour to your base, but it's a start. Then, you need to monitor it every day and week. How close do you make it to plan? This needs to be reviewed with your supervisors *every week* to ensure you all are on the same page. Some weeks you may not make it, but then you tighten up for the next week. Pivot out instead of covering absences.

Keep copies of any budget concerns you shared with your POOM; don't just make calls and think you are going to remember them at the end of the year. E-mails are good documents to keep, along with notes; keep them in a folder labeled "NPA." Plans can be a stretch, but if you can make an argument the plan is way beyond reach, you should be able to file recourse at the end of the year if you can't get it adjusted. Remember, this has to happen *now*—not the last month of the year.

Manage your operation with the guideline of your

budget, and your salaries and benefits will fall into place. Make sure every hour of overtime is needed or if there is an alternative—such as pivoting—to get the job done.

Another tool is to monitor hours you are forced to use due to unanticipated events, such as late-arriving mail. If you must have employees sit and wait because you are surprised on the last trip from the plant, document the time wasted and keep this

in your folder, as well. Send your POOM an e-mail stating how many hours were wasted and, if possible, fill out a budget adjustment form to try to get the hours back. You may not get this approved, but keep the documents in your NPA folder and see if it would have made a difference in your NPA at the end of the year.

One last thing to track: If you have to incur overtime to send a CCA or PSE to another office, it will

affect your budget. Make sure you put a note in your NPA folder *each time* so you can show the difference at the end of the year.

This is the biggest part of your NPA, so it should be among your biggest focuses every day.

jbod@aol.com

Joe Bodary is president of NAPS Michigan State Branch 925 and postmaster of Lincoln Park.

NAPS Training Calendar

Central Gulf Area Training (AL/LA/MS)

April 10-11, 2015

Conducted by: Central Gulf Area VP Cornel Rowel Sr.

Location: The Hilton Garden Inn, 2015 Old Minden Rd., Bossier City, LA 71111; (318) 562-2407

Hotel Rate: \$83/double, with government ID

Registration Fee: \$25; make checks payable to NAPS Headquarters

Training Topics: ELM 650, appeals of LOW, LOW in lieu of, adverse action and debt collection

Instructor: Southern Region VP Tim Ford

Texas Area Training

April 17-18, 2015

Conducted by: Texas Area VP Bob Bradford

Location: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel San Antonio Downtown, 502 W. Cesar E. Chavez, San Antonio, TX 78207; (210) 224-7155

Hotel Rate: \$115 plus tax

Registration Fee: \$30, includes lunch

Training Topics: Officer duties, adverse actions, mediation and retirement

Instructors: Southern Region VP Tim Ford and Bob Bradford

Illini Area Training (IL)

April 30, 2015

(In conjunction with the Illinois State Convention)

Conducted by: Illini Area VP Luz Moreno

Location: Embassy Suites Chicago—

O'Hare/Rosemont, 5500 N. River Rd., Rosemont, IL 60018; (847) 678-4000

Room Rate: \$129/suite

Registration Fee: No charge for Illini Area NAPS and Auxiliary members; \$50 for non-Illini members. Make checks payable to NAPS Headquarters and give to Illini Area VP Luz Moreno; (773) 726-4357.

Training Topics: ELM 650, individual development planning, branch finances

Guest Speakers: Dr. Nancy Wesley, Miguel Rios and Secretary/Treasurer Brian Wagner

Tennessee State Training

April 24-25, 2015

(In conjunction with the Tennessee State Convention)

Conducted by: Cotton Belt Area VP Shri Green

Location: Westgate Smoky Mountain Resort & Spa, 915 Westgate Resort Rd., Gatlinburg, TN 37738; (865) 430-4800

Room Rates: \$79, studio; \$102, one-bedroom villa; \$115, one-bedroom deluxe; \$175, two-bedroom villa

Registration Fee: \$50

Training Topics: TBD

Instructors: TBD

Rocky Mountain Area Training (AZ/CO/NV/NM/UT/WY)

May 16, 2015

(In conjunction with the Rocky Mountain Area Convention)

Conducted by: Rocky Mountain Area VP John Aceves

Location: Tropicana, 3801 S. Las Vegas Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89109; (702) 739-5400; let the registration office know you are with the Rocky Mountain Area NAPS group; cut-off is April 28.

Hotel Rates: \$130, club deluxe; \$145, club deluxe plus; \$255, club suite; all rates are plus tax

Registration Fee: \$30 for Rocky Mountain Area members; \$70 for guests and other attendees (fee covers breakfast and lunch); make checks payable to NAPS Headquarters and send to John Aceves, 4245 W. Mine Shaft Way, Tucson, AZ 85745-4146.

Training Topics: Federal retirement process overview, helpful financial tips, FOIA basics, advocacy training; topics are subject to change.

Instructors: Dianne Graczyk, Myrna Pashinski, John Aceves, Marilyn Walton and Tom Muthur

Pioneer Area Training (KY/OH/WV/Evansville, IN, Branch 55)

July 31, 2015

(In conjunction with the Ohio State Convention)

Conducted by: Pioneer Area VP Timothy Needham

Location: Holiday Inn, 2800 Presidential Dr., Fairborn, OH 45324; (937) 426-7800

Hotel Rate: \$97

Registration Fee: TBD

Training Topics: Consultative process, basic advocacy training

Instructor: Former Capitol-Atlantic VP John Getter

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.

Our Forum Needs Some Dignity and Respect

By **Kenneth Bunch**

In the past few issues of *The Postal Supervisor*, there has been a consistent call for more members to join the NAPS forum on the NAPS website. As one who has spent some time there, reading and posting occasionally, I find myself questioning its value. Not because I don't wish to communicate, but because the forum, in its present state, is not serving as the invaluable communication tool it often is touted to be—at least not for those who are not openly hostile to NAPS' current leadership.

If we look closely, it's obvious that fewer than 1 percent of our members regularly participate on the forum. Why? In the era of Facebook,

Twitter, Instagram, Skype and other social media, you would think members would flock to their own forum. But we don't! Why not?

Could it be that the few members who regularly comment on the forum have created such a toxic environment that the resident, regional and area officers refuse to regularly engage there? Or could it be that opposing views are met with disdain and open hostility? One can understand why the rest of us 99 percent refuse to enter this tomb of toxicity; there is very little room for "agree to disagree."

As an organization, we cannot be an advocate for dignity and respect while being a purveyor of the opposite on our own forum. Why do we keep this tool of the toxic, especially

when it perpetuates that which compromises a foundational principle on which our organization was founded: dignity and respect? If we can't create an environment where our members feel welcome and comfortable expressing themselves, be it in person or in print, then we should reconsider the environment's value to the organization.

How do we turn our forum into a place where our members wouldn't mind engaging with each other? We could start with the premise that if a comment would be inappropriate in a face-to-face conversation, then it's inappropriate on our forum. Perhaps, then, we will get more members participating.

klbinc51@gmail.com

Kenneth Bunch is a NAPS Michiana Area member.



The Level of EAS Commitment—Not the Same as in Past Years

By **Dioenis D. Perez**

The level of EAS commitment is the unspoken language that has all the ranks of upper-echelon managers wondering why these days. EAS employees are on the front lines. The front lines refer to a battle. And that's exactly what every EAS supervisor, manager, postmaster, MDO and SDO is doing every day, six to seven days a week, often-times more. They are battling the crafts and their own micro-managing

superiors at the same time, day in and day out, *ad nauseum!*

This really is nothing new. Working in the field, you always are second-guessed by someone upstairs; it's the nature of the business and you deal with it. Don't take it personally, folks. As long as they express themselves to you with dignity and respect, you deal with it; that's my advice.

Perhaps this is why there's a lack of total EAS commitment:

- Headquarters superiors' lack of

real field knowledge

- Top pay takes forever
- NPA system—questionable/accessible goals
- Working six days a week, constantly
- Not being appreciated
- Constant micromanaging, every day
- SWCs based on five days
- Excessive daily reports
- Telecons
- Amazon on Sundays
- Excessive corrective action issued to EAS employees
- Dignity and respect—a



lack thereof, still

Here's a shout out to all those who e-mailed me from various parts of the country to mention this sad scenario. Someone is promoted because of their social and personal relationships, regardless of how bad they were at their job. Unfortunately, these individuals now believe they were promoted because they

were good at what they did.

The sad truth is everyone in the field knows where these people have all the bodies hidden. Instead of being humbled as a result of their promotion, they continue to act as if nothing they have ever done was wrong. These people should just sit on their hands, face the corner, be happy and learn to be unpreten-

tious. Do the skeletons really need to come out? The job was getting done before they were promoted and will continue to be done; there's no need to wreak havoc!

With dignity and respect, always.
pmob2020@aol.com

Dioenis D. Perez is a NAPS New York Area member.

Bullying Never Is Acceptable

By **Mary Burkhard**

If you see a vehicle bearing the phrase, "Law & Science Serving the Community," you are, most likely, seeing your local coroner in action. Life is precious and very fragile. NAPS was founded in 1908 with goals that reflected this fact by individuals who sincerely wanted to make a positive difference.

We need to ensure that our organization, first and foremost, values human dignity and life—with respect for all—while it shuns disrespect and bullying in all forms, especially by officers in our organization. Bullying never is acceptable or harmless. It can result in unlawful activity, violence and suicide. Unfortunately, many of us are aware of NAPS members who have committed suicide for a multitude of reasons.

To find out why people bully, I looked online and found the following information from these sources: Washington State Department of Labor and Industries, "Workplace Bullying: What Everyone Needs to Know;" *The New York Times* Business section and the Workplace Bullying Institute.

A huge reason why people bully is having power. Research indicates



that the very fact of having power may make some people wish to wield it in a noticeable way. But it also is true that people may be given power without being trained in the leadership skills that will help them wield it wisely. Either situation can contribute to people bullying others.

Social issues: The fact that one gets more social recognition for negative behavior than positive also can contribute to why people bully. Situation comedies and reality television, as well as real-life situations in schools, for example, show that acting out is more likely to get one noticed than behaving civilly and courteously. Jealousy or envy and a lack of personal and social skills to deal with such feelings also can be reasons why people bully.

Institutional causes: If the institution at which the bullying takes place—whether home, school or workplace—does not have high standards for the way people treat each other, then bullying may be more likely/prevalent and have an influence on why people bully.

Cultural causes: In a culture fascinated with winning, power and violence, some experts suggest it is unrealistic to expect people will not be influenced to seek power through

violence in their own lives.

Workplace bullying is when a person or group of people in a workplace single out another person for unreasonable, embarrassing or intimidating treatment. Usually, the bully is a person in a position of authority who feels threatened by the victim, but, in some cases, the bully is a co-worker who is insecure or immature. Workplace bullying can be the result of a single individual acting as a bully or a company culture that allows or even encourages this kind of negative behavior.

Workplace bullying can take many forms:

- Shouting or swearing at an employee or otherwise verbally abusing them
- One employee being singled out for unjustified criticism or blame
- Cyber-bullying, -stalking and -harassment
- An employee being excluded from company activities or having their work or contributions purposefully ignored
- Language or actions that embarrass or humiliate an employee
- Practical jokes, especially if they occur repeatedly to the same person

Bullying can have many negative repercussions for the victim: depression, anxiety, social withdrawal, vio-

Continued on page 31



Offering Help

Submitted by the USPS Employee Assistance Program

We all face issues at work and in our personal lives that can cause stress and difficulties. Keeping our work and personal lives separate often is easier said than done. Struggles we face in one area of our life may spill over into the rest of our life. It can be very difficult to get help for ourselves, but it can be even harder to try to figure out how to help someone else who seems to be under pressure.

What do you do when you notice someone struggling or out of sorts? What is the best way to approach that person? How can you help them get the help they need? At work, people's personal lives often can affect their ability to do their jobs and their interactions with co-workers and managers. When people are dealing with personal challenges, it can affect their work performance, productivity, attendance, concentration and interactions with others.

In order to help someone who is struggling, it is important to have empathy and carefully plan your approach with that person. Whether

you are a manager or a concerned co-worker, dealing with an employee who is facing personal struggles may be one of the biggest challenges you will face; the USPS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help employees deal with their troubles.

How can you tell if someone needs help?

It can be difficult to know if someone is struggling or needs your help, but often there are signs along the way that may indicate a problem. The best way to determine if someone is in need of help is to notice what is different about their behavior. If someone's behavior and attitude are different than usual, that may be a sign something is wrong.

If someone who never is late suddenly starts missing work or getting to work very late, they may be having some issues. A worker who typically is a high performer who suddenly misses deadlines or turns in substandard work probably has something impacting their functioning. Some things to watch out for in others include:

- Tardiness
- Excessive absenteeism
- Changes in relationships with co-workers or managers
- Spending more time on the phone for personal calls
- Outward anxiety or stress
- Tearfulness
- Defensive behavior
- Irritability
- Emotional outbursts

Many of us bring our work stress home and create disturbances in our family life. Most of us are unable to leave our personal problems at home and often bring that emotional stress to work. Personal issues easily brought into the work environment include problems with substance abuse, depression, stress, anger, finances and divorce. These issues and others can negatively affect job performance and the work environment.

Approaching others

Noticing that someone is in pain or struggling is the first step. The next step is figuring out what to say to that person to try to be supportive or offer help. Consider how well you

know the person and what your relationship has been. You will naturally feel more comfortable talking to someone you know well than with someone you have known only a short time.

Try to talk with the person in a private, quiet location without interruptions. Take the situation seriously and keep in mind the other person may be feeling vulnerable. Try to listen carefully and patiently without judgment. Approach the other person from a place of concern and let them know you are worried something is wrong and want to make sure they are okay.

During the conversation, be sure to control your own emotions; your job is not to solve the problem, but to offer support and get them to the right help they need. Have the number for your Employee Assistance Program (800-327-4968; TTY: 877-492-7341) on hand so you can give it to them during the conversation. Reassure the person your conversation is private and you will not be sharing any information with anyone else.

Try to be honest, upfront and caring in your approach. Be prepared the other person may not be open to support at this time; don't take it personally. You may have helped even if the person did not openly accept the conversation.

Talking points

- When approaching someone about concerns, try to give specific, factual examples of what you have noticed that is different. Remember to create an atmosphere in which the person feels safe and comfortable and choose a time that is not too busy. Describe behavior; don't try to figure out why they did the behavior. Phrases such as, "I'm concerned about ..." and "It's not like you

to ..." can help get the conversation started.

- Use reflective listening. Summarize what you hear and repeat back to the person what they said. An example might be, "It sounds like you are really stressed because you are caring for your mother." Listen for and respond to the emotions you hear from the other person and reflect that back. For example, "You sound upset. Tell me more about that." Then listen! Remember, it is not your job to be the therapist. Suggest they call the EAP for professional help.

Provide the EAP phone numbers: 800-327-4968 (800-EAP-4YOU); TTY: 877-492-7341. Assure the other person the EAP is confidential, free and available to help.

When you approach someone, there are some things you should not say or do. Don't try to offer a pep talk or minimize the problems. What may not seem like a big issue for you may be huge for someone else. Try not to say, "I've been there," unless you have been there. It's great to be empathetic, but you can't know what someone is feeling unless you have walked in their shoes. Remember, your role is to offer help, not to diagnose or treat whatever is going on; leave that to the professionals.

Referral to EAP: Types of management referrals

The first type is used when a supervisor or manager becomes aware an employee is experiencing personal problems, even though these problems have not yet affected performance or behavior on the job. Early identification of problems and immediate and effective EAP referrals benefit both employees and employers.

As soon as you detect the warning signals of a work or personal problem, such as absenteeism, chron-

ic lateness, personality change, decline in work quality or unusual behavior or appearance, talk to the employee; consider an EAP referral. Remind the employee about the availability of EAP and reassure him or her it is free, voluntary, confidential and private. By providing this information, you will help employees feel confident about EAP services and help them overcome problems that may affect the workplace.

The second type of referral occurs when a supervisor identifies work-performance problems. In these cases, the supervisor or manager should contact the EAP, schedule an appointment and offer it to the employee. Remember to emphasize the EAP is free, voluntary, confidential and private.

Personal issues are difficult to address; the employee must trust that all conversations are confidential to the greatest extent possible. When you talk to employees about the EAP, you can be generic rather than singling out one problem—especially if the employee hasn't revealed what they are dealing with. You can say, "I want to let you know we have trained professionals available to assist employees in a wide range of areas, including family problems, illnesses, elder care, finances, depression, drug addiction and more. Here's how to contact them." This way, you can inform the employee about resources available and leave it up to them to contact the EAP.

It can be very difficult to see someone you know struggling with personal issues. You do not have to feel helpless when this occurs. Take a caring, thoughtful approach to that person and remind them the EAP is available to help. If you know someone who you are concerned about but aren't sure what to do, the EAP also is available for you.

The EAP can work with you on



Prepare for Lifetime Monitoring

By **Sharon Mathews**

President

I'm sure you have heard about Anthem, Inc.'s cyber hack and data security breach. The company, formerly known as WellPoint, announced the breach quickly and immediately set up a website, www.anthemfacts.com, where policy holders could receive the latest information, including how to sign up for free credit monitoring and an identity theft insurance policy. This was far worse than a company's credit card breach; you can cancel a credit card, receive a new one and not be liable for any fraudulent charges.

We all have been advised to make our usernames unique and passwords consist of symbols, numbers and upper- and lower-case letters so they are more difficult to guess or hack when using the Internet. But nothing prepares us to have all our vital information collectively stolen at one time. The information obtained when Anthem was hacked



will need to be closely monitored for the rest of our lives because it contained all the elements necessary to assume your identity. You cannot change your birth date or Social Security number!

Anthem services Blue Cross and Blue Shield; anyone currently covered or formerly covered back to 2004 under a policy—individual or family plan—needs to monitor their credit reports and scrutinize their credit card statements for unauthorized activity.

Many states offer a free credit freeze; check your state's attorney general's website to learn whether yours does and its duration, as well as how to sign up. A credit freeze will keep anyone from accessing your credit report except those with whom you currently have relationships. This allows you to continue using the credit cards you currently have. You can temporarily lift a credit freeze should you need a credit check for any purchases, but there may be a fee.

If you have children, make sure

you freeze their credit reports. Special rules apply for protected consumers and minor children. Depending on their age, it could be years before you are aware of any damage. You must contact each credit reporting agency (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion) individually. It is easier to do this online, but it can be done by mail, with additional information required to prove your identity.

Free annual credit reports may be obtained from the major reporting agencies. You can order these without charge from www.annualcreditreport.com. Be aware that most companies do not report to all reporting agencies and may only report to one. If you order your credit report from just one agency every four months, you can stay alerted throughout the year. You also can sign up to receive a free credit report summary on www.credit.com every month.

Be aware of phishing scams related to Anthem's security breach, whether by e-mail or phone; they already have started. Anthem has said it only will be contacting customers by mail.

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how to approach that person and guide them toward the help they need. They can discuss your concerns and teach you ways to approach the person. The EAP is a valuable source of information regarding helping others, as well as other topics. Please feel free to contact the EAP at 1-800-EAP-4YOU (TTY: 877-492-7341) or www.EAP4YOU.com with any questions or for more information.

Thoughts from the NAPS Branches

Continued from page 28

lence and suicide.

Often, bullies suffer from depression. Bullies, along with their families, may face legal charges for bullying, which is a form of harassment.

Life and health are fragile, so it is up to our organization to take a stand on bullying that includes severe consequences for the perpetra-

tor. We need NAPS members to feel valued, included, respected, appreciated, safe, focused and involved in improving the lives and workplaces of EAS employees.

This article is dedicated to Leanne, who committed suicide on the morning of Jan. 31, 2015.

Mary Burkhard is a NAPS Pacific Area member.

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