



NAPS Branch 61 NEWS



Volume 8 Issue 3 ““There’s a difference between interest and commitment. When you’re interested in doing something, you do it only when circumstance permit. When you’re committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results.” - Unknown March 2008

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President’s Corner



I want to thank all of you who attended our last meeting.

We had the pleasure of Eugenia Vasquez from EAP addressing our group. The information was well received by all in attendance, Eugenia is excellent with presentations, and is available to come to your individual offices. She provided us with great information on how to reduce our stress levels.

She was very enthusiastic in her presentation enlisting participation from those in attendance. Eugenia took time out of her busy schedule to accommodate us. I was disappointed at the turnout for this meeting.

I have received numerous calls concerning the Supervisor, Customer Services Staffing preference sheet emailed to all of you. The Supervisory Workload Credits (SWCs) were recalculated, which caused 26 vacancies in the District. Each Supervisor and ASP was given the opportunity to preference any of the 26 available positions. It is my understanding that you will have to be interviewed for the position; you will not necessarily get the office that you prefer.. We still have questions regarding the seniority issues, who will make the decisions on who gets placed in each position, when these 26 positions are filled will the newly vacated positions be posted, or will another preference sheet be sent? We will keep you posted on what is happening. The Seattle District is the only district that has implemented a preference sheet. Hopefully you all responded by the due date of March 11 2008 at Noon.

The last day to submit for Pay For Performance (PFP) recourse was March 10, 2008. If you feel that you were unfairly denied please send me your information I will need all of your documentation to present to NAPS headquarters. If you were told that you should have changed your goals I will need that information as well. Your goals are set at the beginning of the year and according to program rules, are not to be changed. So again, some of you were improperly denied your proper rating. I am aware of instances where one person in an office had his/her recourse approved. Another supervisor in the same office was denied. What is exacerbating is they both had the exact same core requirements, but there were two different higher level approvers. This just does not make sense to me, how can that be? I personally believe that the PFP needs to be revamped. Not only should we be held responsible for our goals, but upper level management needs to be held responsible for

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We Can Make it! by Sylvester Black, VP, Western Area Operations

The story of Sir Ernest Shackleton, who captained a ship trapped in a crushing Antarctica ice flow in 1914, should inspire every leader who faces a difficult situation.

The crew of 27 men faced unrelenting cold with few provisions and little hope. They had to wait an amazing 590 days for rescue, and yet not a single life was lost. Most historians point to Shackleton’s leadership skills as the key to their survival.

Shackleton had many admirable traits. Foremost, he was a communicator, clear in his direction. He was honest about their situation, yet still optimistic, never quitting. He listened to his crew’s concerns and implemented their suggestions.

Shackleton gave each team member specific duties, so they could work together for their survival. He also insisted on respect for the plan and for each other. He enforced common courtesy.

“We are one,” was his anthem.

While it is doubtful any of us will need polar survival skills, we can learn from these principles. Our days ahead are filled with challenge. With the right leadership principles, we will not just survive, but thrive.

President's Corner - continued their changes to our ratings.

National Convention is in September this year and the branch is in need of a new design for our pin. If you have any ideas please submit them to the branch. Notice we have a new address. It is PO Box 19185, Seattle WA 98109-1185. I still have tickets available for the Northwest Area SPAC (Supervisor Political Action Committee) Raffle. Tickets are \$20.00 apiece 1st prize is \$1250.00 2nd Prize is \$500.00 and 3rd prize is \$250.00. The drawing will take place during the Legislative Training Seminar March 30 to April 2. If you are interested contact a branch officer.

I hope to see more of you at our next general membership meeting on Tuesday March 25. We're meeting at the Fraternal Order of Eagles. Come to the meeting be informed!

Next Branch Meeting

**The Branch 61 Meeting
will be held on Tuesday,
March 25, 2008,
At The Fraternal Order
of Eagles Club,
6205 S Corson Ave
Seattle WA at 7:00 p.m.**

Are You Prepared for the new May 1 Rate "Adjustment" - from the USPS WEB Page

Shipping Services:

On May 12 the US Postal Service will adjust prices for our shipping services. Express Mail, Priority Mail, Parcel Select, Parcel Return Service, and International Mail. For the first time our pricing includes commercial volume and contract prices, rebates, online price reductions, and other new incentives.

"These innovative pricing incentives will make our products more attractive to all shippers, especially small businesses. We're pricing our products to sell in today's competitive shipping market," said Postmaster General John Potter.

Pricing Highlights:

Express Mail is switching to a zone-based pricing system, resulting in customers paying less for nearby destinations. Customers will receive a 3 percent price reduction by purchasing Express Mail online or through corporate accounts. Additional price reductions are available for those who ship quarterly minimums.

Priority Mail will have an average 3.5 percent savings for customers who use electronic postage or meet other requirements.

Parcel Select — our "last mile" delivery to every door — will feature pricing and volume incentives for large- and medium-size shippers.

Parcel Return Service will move entirely to a weight based pricing system, resulting in significant price reductions for many lighter packages.

"Pricing has always been important to the Postal Service. Now, with greater pricing flexibility than ever, our customers have more choices, and we can price quickly in response to customer needs and the marketplace," said Pricing and Classification Vice President Stephen Kearney/ Mailing Services - On May 12 we will adjust prices for mailing services - First-Class Mail, Standard Mail, Periodicals, Package Services, and Special Services. The average increase by class of mail is at or below the rate of inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

A First-Class Mail stamp will be 42¢. Customers can continue to use the Forever Stamps that they purchased prior to May 12 at 41¢, even after the price change. We will have 5 billion Forever Stamps in stock to meet increased demand before the price change. Forever Stamps are widely available through Post Offices, Contract Postal Units, consignment locations, Automated Postage Centers, vending, and at [The Postal Store®](#). We also will have a 62¢ stamp available shortly after May 12 for 1-ounce non-machinable First-Class Mail letters, such as square greeting cards.

Pricing highlights:

- No change in the First-Class Mail single-piece additional-ounce price.
- Lower additional-ounce price for presorted First-Class Mail letters.
- Lower pound price for Standard Mail saturation and high-density flats.
- Shape-based pricing for First-Class Mail International letters, flats, and parcels.
- First-Class Mail International price groups expand from five to nine groups.

Select prices:

- | | |
|---|--------|
| • First-Class Mail letter (1 oz.) | \$0.42 |
| • First-Class Mail letter (2 oz.) | \$0.59 |
| • Postcard | \$0.27 |
| • First-Class Mail large envelope (2 oz.) | \$1.00 |
| • Certified Mail | \$2.70 |
| • First-Class Mail International to Canada and Mexico (1 oz.) | \$0.72 |
| • First-Class Mail International to all other countries (1 oz.) | \$0.94 |

Editor's Note: Price adjustments, better know as rate increases are difficult, both in preparation for and execution of one. All managers post offices stations and branches need to be ready for this important evolution. I really speak from experience on this subject.

February 2008 - Branch 61 Meeting Minutes - By Rich Wilson, Editor

- The meeting was called to order by Branch 61 President Cindy McCracken at 7:00 p.m.
- The meeting was held at Azteca Restaurant, Bellevue. We were no in a private room.
- The reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance was waived, due to location. The motion was made by Rich Wilson and seconded by Gene Williams. The vote was unanimous.
- The reading of the January meeting minutes was waived due to location. The motion was made by Gene Williams and seconded by Rich Wilson. The vote was unanimous.
- The reading of the financial report as stated in the February newsletter was waived. The motion was made by Rich Wilson and seconded by Gene Williams. The vote was unanimous.

Old Business

- Cindy McCracken announced the Address Management Analyst EAS-15 positions were being posted. This was a result of the favorable decision in the litigations brought against the USPS following an arbitrators finding the AMS positions should be craft position and not EAS positions.
- Associate Supervisor Program graduates will eligible to apply for supervisor positions after final Service Workload Credit (SWC's) issue are resolved. The first choices for positions will be in Seattle and then Tacoma.
- Any EAS employee has until March 10, 2008 at Noon to challenge their final Pay for Performance (PFP) Program rating.
- Eugenia Vasquez from the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) talked to the group about Stress. There is good stress or "Eustress" and there is bad stress or "Distress". She gave us a number of pointers on how stress is created and how to minimize it in our work environment and personal lives. She also provided a number of excellent handouts. She talked to the group for about 4 minutes. This included a wonderful Q&A session.
- While it hasn't been decided who specifically will attend, eight Branch 61 members are budgeted to go to the Northwest Area Convention to be held in Boise, Idaho on May 2 – 3.
- Again, while it hasn't been decided who specifically will attend, 12 Branch 61 members are budgeted to go to the Centennial NAPS Convention in Louisville, Kentucky scheduled for September 8 – 12, 2008

New Business

- Brenda Murphy won the \$25.00 door prize.
- Bjoern Gruetzmacher will be unable to attend the Legislative Training Seminar (LTS) scheduled for March 30 – April 2, 2008. Art Williams will replace Bjoern.
- The March meeting will be held on March 25, 2008 at the Fraternal Order of Eagles at 6205 S Corson Ave, in Seattle.
- Cindy announced there will be an Executive Board Meeting after the next General Membership Meeting.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Survival Tips For Balancing Work and Life Situations - by Eugenia Vasquez, Seattle District EAP Consultant

The growing demands of work and family challenge us to manage our time and balance our priorities better than ever before. These challenges could include but are not limited to your job, supervisor, significant other, financial pressures, etc. The way we react physically or mentally to these life factors and balance them out can be either life-enhancing or stress-producing. Many of us are discovering that a hectic, unbalanced lifestyle can prevent enjoyment of personal relationships, interfere with productivity and happiness at work, and could even be harmful to our health.

Using some tips to balance work and personal needs helps you deal with job-related demands to make your time at work and at home more positive and rewarding. While there are many things you may not have complete control over, such as the number of hours you work, there are actually things you can do to improve your situation. Apply the following tips to the areas of your life that seemed to be out of balance:

- **Know what is expected:** of you as well as your own expectations of work and home situations.
- **Use a calendar or planner:** for all your scheduling needs. Save time by planning and being prepared.
- **Prioritize:** your tasks according to their importance.
- **Set small goals:** that are meaningful to you and that will lead to long-term accomplishments.
- **Communicate your professional and personal needs:** Ask for support. Listen to needs of others and provide support. Tell family when you are in a 'high-stress' period at work. Ask for their support and patience. Remind them that you care about them and their needs.

Return Service Requested

FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Note our new Mailing Address

NAPS Seattle Branch 61 Financial Statement January - February 2008		continued from Page 3
Opening Balance	\$ 24,133.67	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Keep your work area well organized:</u> Get rid of the clutter, so you can only work on one thing at a time.• <u>Cultivate allies at work:</u> Knowing that you have co-workers who are willing to assist in difficult times will reduce stress. Try to help each other by at times trading work hours to allow you each to participate in family events.• <u>Be Efficient:</u> When necessary, hire domestic help; cook bigger portions and freeze for later; batch errands and complete in a reasonable order.• <u>Improve Your Physical and Mental Health:</u> by Engaging in Meaningful Activities. Get regular exercise. Maintain a reasonable diet and healthy sleep habits. Make time for yourself. Use relaxation and meditation techniques.• <u>Avoid the use of alcohol:</u> too much caffeine, non-prescribed medication and other drugs to control stress. Use medications with care and only when warranted by your health condition and prescribed by a doctor.• <u>Surround yourself:</u> with positive people & things that make you happy.• <u>Spend the limited time:</u> you have available with those you love, doing meaningful activities that satisfy everybody's interests. Develop a hobby or project together; schedule time to do what you enjoy.• <u>Consider:</u> counseling if you are having difficulties with one or more areas of your life.
Income		
Member Dues	\$ 7,506.00	
Interest	11.72	
Total Income	\$ 7,517.72	
Expenses		
Legal Retainer	\$ 622.00	
Newsletter	812.88	
Meeting Room Rental	165.00	
PO Box Rental	86.00	
NW Area Branch President's Mtg	264.50	
Legislative Training Seminar	515.00	
Legislative Training Registration	570.00	
Total Expenses	\$ 3,035.08	
Income over Expenses	4,486.64	
Ending Checking Acct Bal	\$ 28,616.31	