



NAPS Branch 61 NEWS



“Tomorrow is the most important thing in life. Comes into us at midnight very clean. It's perfect when it arrives and it puts itself in our hands. It hopes we've learned something from yesterday.”
Volume 8 Issue 4 ~~ John Wayne (1907 - 1979) April 2008

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President's Corner



I can't believe that it is April, aren't we suppose to have sun a few showers and temperatures in at least the high 60's and 70's.

The weather is just like the Postal Service cold.

Art Williams, Yolanda Grayson and I were your representatives to our Legislative Conference in Washington DC. Normally we have a large contingency from Washington State. For reasons beyond anyone's control the representative from Spokane was unable to attend and the two from Tacoma had to leave early. I must commend Art and Yolanda who truly stepped up and took over. The three of us attended a total of 10 meetings with our Members of Congress and Senators. We had the pleasure of actually meeting with Senator Cantwell, Members of Congress Jay Inslee and Dave Reichert, and numerous representatives. We addressed four issues this year: 1. Expand the use of voting by mail; 2. Provide a lump sum payment to FERS-covered employees for unused sick leave. Legislation on this issue is currently moving through a congressional committee; 3. Make health care more affordable through premium conversion for federal civilian (this includes postal retirees as well) and military retirees; and 4. Protect the federal employment rights of military veterans.

Washington State does use compulsory Vote by Mail in all of the counties except King County. What does Vote by Mail do? It reduces reliance on overburdened polling locations. It eliminates the need to stand in long lines to cast a ballot. It increases voter participation, especially in low-turnout elections. It is more convenient for voters, by giving voters more time to study the ballot issues. The program has built-in safeguards to increase election process integrity. Vote by Mail will help increase postal revenues. As you are aware, First-Class Mail volumes continue to decline because of such things as electronic payments via the internet better know as electronic diversion.

Lump sum payment for FERS employees: Currently those CSRS employees receive a boost to their retirement pension through credit for their sick leave balance at retirement rounded to whole months. FERS employees are covered by a "use it or lose it" rule. Those of you who are supervisors in a city or plant operations are keenly aware of how this affects your operations. H.R. 5573 will serve as an incentive to discourage the use of sick leave. It would authorize a lump-sum payment up to \$10,000.00 for FERS-employees possessing substantial amounts of unused sick leave at retirement.

More affordable health care for our federal civilian and military retirees: Currently we as Federal Employees pay our health insurance premiums with pre-tax dollars. It does not make sense that our retirees who are bringing home substantially less pay must pay their health care premiums with after tax dollars. Making their annuity checks even smaller.

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Shake it off! - by Sylvester Black, VP, Western Area Operations

There's a story about a farmer who had a mule fall in an old well and he couldn't get it out. It was too expensive to pay for a crane or tractor to lift it out, so he just decided to fill the hole with dirt. But with every shovelful, the mule simple shook off the dirt and stomped it below his feet. After a while, as the hole filled, the mule just stepped up and out.

We can relate! When others try to bury us or put us down, we just need to shake it off and step up out of our pit.

There are those in the industry, politics and the media who are trying to write us off. They stand, shovels in hand, trying to put us down. But we've been there before. We shook it off then and eventually rose to the top.

I'm confident that we can do the same thing today. We have bright men and women at every level who will innovate and create solutions for today's challenges. Every single person has a role to play. Collectively, we can rise to our feet, shake it off, and do the work that we are called to do.

President's Corner - continued Protect the employment rights of military veterans as postal and federal employees. This will prohibit government agencies in downsizing actions better known as reduction-in-force (RIF's) from involuntarily reassigning military veteran employees to locations outside their geographic (50 mile radius) area. It also assures veterans RIF and Merit Systems Protection Board appeal rights. Why do we support this legislation? Because the Postal Service employs thousands of veterans, the Postal Service has issued rules allowing it to involuntarily transfer military veteran employees far from their homes (beyond the 50 mile radius) without RIF or MSPB appeal rights. These USPS rules apply only to management and supervisory employees. Employees covered by collective bargaining are covered by their respective National Agreements.

Flat Sorting Sequencing is coming if you don't think that this is going to impact our jobs you are seriously wrong. We need legislation so the spirit and intent of veterans' preference protections are upheld for all Postal Service employees.

We were unable to have the NW Area Vice President sponsored raffle drawing at LTS for our Supervisors Political Action Committee (SPAC). A decision was made to hold the raffle on May 2nd at the Northwest Area Convention being held in Boise, Idaho on May 2-3. I have 15 tickets still left at \$20.00 a piece 1st prize is \$1,250.00, 2nd prize \$500.00 and 3rd prize is \$250.00. A total of 500 tickets are being sold. Please contact me by April 30, 2008, if you would like to purchase a ticket.

The Next Branch Meeting

will be held on
Tuesday,
April 29, 2008,
**at The Fraternal Order
 of Eagles Club,
 6205 S Corson Ave
 Seattle WA at 7:00 p.m.**

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 29, at the Fraternal Order of Eagles (see the address above). I hope to see you all there.

Dealing With Difficult People" - From David Burns, Feeling Good Handbook; provided by Eugenia Vasquez

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE - DISARMING CRITICS GIVES YOU THE ADVANTAGE

When people are criticized, their usual response is to defend themselves by arguing against the criticism. Unfortunately, this response usually steps up the battle. The critic and the person being criticized become polarized, and seldom gain in their understanding of each other.

A better response is to disarm one's critic by agreeing with the criticism, says David Burns, a psychiatrist. Disarming is a powerful listening skill. It means finding some truth in what the other person is saying, and agreeing—even if you think they're off base. Disarming is effective because it takes the wind out of the other person's sails and has a calming effect.

Suppose your boss approaches you with a shaky voice and red face and says, "This proposal stinks! Were you day-dreaming when you wrote it?"

Let's assume you put a great deal of effort into the proposal and felt proud of it. You would like to lay into your boss. Instead, you're better off disarming him by responding like this:

"It sounds like I really missed the boat on the proposal, even though I worked hard on it. Could you tell me what you liked and disliked about it?"

The first part of this reply will calm your boss, who will go on to communicate specifically about what's really bothering him.

When you agree with criticism, you let your critic know you're not afraid of criticism and you're willing to listen. That attitude will almost always melt the hostility and win the day.

Let's say a co-worker tells you, "You're too emotional and irrational. Why don't you use a little logic once in a while?"

You could disarm the co-worker by telling him, "I agree with you. I often overreact and get illogical. It must be frustrating to be around me when I do that."

People usually criticize out of frustration, Burns says. Recognize that their feelings of frustration are valid.

Here are Burns' techniques for disarming a critic:

- Remember that there is always a grain of truth in criticism, even if it sounds obnoxious and insulting.
- Resist the voice inside you that tells you to defend yourself.
- Be genuine in agreeing with your critic.
- Look for a common framework so you can begin to understand each other.
- Maintain a sense of self-esteem when you agree with criticism. If someone says, "You're a jerk," don't become morose and reply, "Yes, I really am a worthless jerk." Maintaining your sense of self-esteem, reply (with a twinkle in your eye), "I probably do come across as a jerk at times."
- Disarming takes practice; make opportunities to perfect it.

Cont. bottom of Pg 3

March 2008 - Branch 61 Meeting Minutes - By Alisa Masunaga, Trustee

- Meeting was called to order by President Cindy McCracken at 7:09PM
- Pledge of Allegiance was lead by Art Williams
- Cindy motioned to waive the reading of the February meeting minutes. Nick Chicka seconded. Passed unanimously.
- Nick Chicka motion to waive the reading Treasurer's Report. Bjoern Gruetzmacher seconded. It passed unanimously.

Old Business:

- Legislative Chairperson Bjoern made his report relative to the upcoming Legislative Training Seminar (LTS) Capitol Hill appointments. Currently we have 6 confirmed appointments out of 9 Members of Congress and both Senators. NAPS Legislative briefing will be given to delegates attending LTS. There are 16 pages of the agenda. All the pages are available on the website at www.naps.org Schedule so far as follows: (I couldn't get all the information). The current appointments for April 1 are: Senator Patty Murray at 10:30 a.m.; Norm Dicks at 11:30 a.m.; and Rick Larson at 3:30 p.m. and on April 2 are: Senator Maria Cantwell at 2:30 p.m. and Adam Smith at 3:15 p.m. Appointments still to be scheduled are Dave Reichert, Brian Baird and Jay Inslee. Appointments for Doc Hastings and Cathy McMorris-Rodgers will be made by the Spokane Branch 60. Lou Kush will coordinate with Tacoma NAPS. We are still waiting for word from Spokane and NAPS State Legislative Representative James Poole Jr. Bjoern has put together some information. He will finalize it and send out to those that are going to LTS. It will include the sponsors from Washington State for the legislation NAPS is supporting.
- Members from Seattle Branch going to LTS are Cindy McCracken, Yolanda Grayson and Art Williams. Members from Tacoma branch going are Jack Coburn and Georgia Taylor. The member from Spokane branch going is Gene Taylor.
- Northwest Area Vice President Ben Clapp is conducting a NAPS SPAC raffle. Tickets are \$20.00 each. Cindy needs to have the unsold tickets back by this Friday. They will plan to sell and have the drawing at LTS. Cindy still has more to sell. First prize \$1200.00. Second prize is \$500.00. Third Prize is \$250.00.
- Guest Speaker – Lou Kush, Washington State Branch 954 President. He announced that John Aceves is running again for National Secretary/Treasurer. Lou mentioned this is the one year he wishes we could send more people. East Coast branches are supporting Jay Killackey, the incumbent National Secretary/Treasurer. Currently branches have one vote per 10 members. The East Coast branches are trying to change the National Constitution and Bylaws to one vote per person. Branch 61 currently has 320 members, which is approximately 32 votes. National officers will be elected at the National Convention to be held in Louisville Kentucky on September 8-12.
- Regional Level-SWIECS. Lou is meeting with Harold Matz on Thursday, March 27. Some offices are losing EAS some are gaining. Western Area has taken the position they want to go with earned credit. Currently it is by the # of employees you are in charge of. If it goes to earned credit then some offices could possibly decrease the number of EAS employees in an office. Lou needs to know of any offices that are having a decrease of EASE employees. He is also trying to find out if this is a local or national level decision.
- OSHA visits – Lou would like to be notified via email regarding any OSHA visits to offices. Email lou.g.kush@usps.gov
- The NAPS Northwest Area Convention is scheduled for May 2-3, in Boise Idaho. A golf tournament will be held on May 1.
- The NAPS National Convention- Louisville Kentucky, September 8-12, 2008.

New Business

- Tena Ivory requested roll call of members present today. She feels we should introduce ourselves at every meeting due to the fact that not everyone knows each other.
- Supervisors are concerned about the article regarding higher-level details in the Postal Supervisor. It is regarding the 120-day temporary assignment. Lou will look into it with John Aceves.
- SWIECS Preferential 17s – Lou is meeting with Harold regarding this posting. Seattle District was the only district in the nation that did it this way. It should've been competitive.
- Door Prize Drawing – Mary Collins was the winner.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Cont. from bottom of Pg 2 Remember—you shouldn't have to agree with someone who is being unreasonable. But you will be better off if you do. When you disarm people at first, later on you'll often win them over to your point of view.

Facts About Difficult People


- The proximity and power factor: The closer the person is to you and the more power they have over you directly influences the amount of time and effort you spend learning to cope.
- It's wise to separate the difficult behavior from the person.
- Difficult behavior results from habitual patterns that have worked well for the person using them.
- Difficult behavior creates 50% of all work stress, loss of productivity and declining motivation.
- Difficult behaviors are learned behaviors. They can be influenced by the responses of others.

April is EAP Awareness Month

Return Service Requested

FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Note our new Mailing Address

NAPS Seattle Branch 61 Financial Statement March 2008	Board of Governors Names New Secretary - From USPS WEB Page																														
<table><tr><td><u>Opening Balance</u></td><td>\$ 28,616.31</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2"><u>Income</u></td></tr><tr><td>Member Dues</td><td>\$ 7,645.50</td></tr><tr><td>Interest</td><td>6.60</td></tr><tr><td>Total Income</td><td>\$ 7,652.10</td></tr><tr><td colspan="2"><u>Expenses</u></td></tr><tr><td>Legal Retainer</td><td>\$ 311.00</td></tr><tr><td>Newsletter</td><td>268.15</td></tr><tr><td>General Membership Meeting</td><td>250.70</td></tr><tr><td>Leg. Training Seminar</td><td>4,584.20</td></tr><tr><td>Postage</td><td>14.76</td></tr><tr><td>Door Prizes (Feb & Mar)</td><td>50.00</td></tr><tr><td>Total Expenses</td><td>\$ 5,478.81</td></tr><tr><td>Income over Expenses</td><td>2,173.29</td></tr><tr><td><u>Ending Balance</u></td><td>\$ 30,789.60</td></tr></table>	<u>Opening Balance</u>	\$ 28,616.31	<u>Income</u>		Member Dues	\$ 7,645.50	Interest	6.60	Total Income	\$ 7,652.10	<u>Expenses</u>		Legal Retainer	\$ 311.00	Newsletter	268.15	General Membership Meeting	250.70	Leg. Training Seminar	4,584.20	Postage	14.76	Door Prizes (Feb & Mar)	50.00	Total Expenses	\$ 5,478.81	Income over Expenses	2,173.29	<u>Ending Balance</u>	\$ 30,789.60	 <p>Board of Governors Chairman Alan Kessler announced that Julie Moore has been appointed Secretary of the Board of Governors effective April 16. Moore replaces Wendy Hocking, who began her new assignment in Government Relations.</p> <p>Moore has a wide range of experience, having held assignments in many of the major functions of the Postal Service — at both field and headquarters levels — giving her a cross-functional view of Postal Service challenges and opportunities.</p> <p>In 2000, she was selected as a Sloan Fellow, earning a Master of Science degree in management from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Upon completion of the Sloan Fellows program, she was appointed Executive Director, Postal Transformation. In that role, Moore coordinated the design and development of the 2002 Transformation Plan, analyzed legislative and public policy issues, and participated in the long-term planning process for the Postal Service.</p> <p>Moore has held various leadership roles in the organization, including Acting Vice President Strategic Planning, and her most recent assignment as Acting Vice President Public Affairs and Communications, where she has exhibited the inter-personal skills and leadership qualities needed to effectively work across functions.</p> <p>“Her functional knowledge, strategic perspective and organizational network will be an asset to the Office of the Board of Governors,” Kessler said.</p>
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