



# First Class Leader

NAPS Branch 66  
Portland OR

[www.napsnw.org](http://www.napsnw.org)

December 2008

## From the President's Desk

Thanksgiving is over and the Christmas "rush" will be starting soon, at least we certainly hope it will. It is no secret to anyone that these are hard times. The Postal Service is trying to come up with solutions to address OUR financial straits and loss of mail volume. As you know, one of those "ideas" was to have us graciously forgo any NPA payout we might be receiving. Never mind the fact that most of our goals last fiscal year were either unmeasurable, unattainable, or so vague that your rating depends on your boss's mood.

Recently, I was reading an article in the Postal Supervisor magazine authored by Mr. Jay Killackey. In the article, Jay talked about the founder of the Wal-Mart chain, Mr. Sam Walton. Jay quotes something Sam said about getting out into the stores and listening to what the associates have to say. According to Sam, some of the best ideas come from the clerks and "stock boys". I have been giving Revenue Generation training around the District and have been listening to the window

clerks and management as they speak up about the struggles of manning the window with less employees only to get beat over the head with long wait-time-in-line scores. One office was patted on the back for a huge savings in Function 4 hours but then condemned for very long wait-time-in-line scores on their last two Mystery shops.

Mystery Shops are a test and most industries contract to have them done. But the questions, offerings, and parameters are based on employees doing the right thing. For instance, Express Mail should be offered to customers first because we make \$6.24 above and beyond the service rendered.

In this issue we have tried to inform you about what SPAC is and why it is important to our survival. Right now, NAPS is working on legislation to secure locality pay for EAS employees. We are selling raffle tickets to fund SPAC so we can continue to influence legislation on issues important to our members. In addition to the drawing in May, our local branch will

hold periodic drawings for additional prizes. We'll hold our first drawing at the January meeting and the prize will be a gas card.

During our December meeting, we'll be reviewing and voting on the 2009 budget that was put together by a committee. Also, the results of the election will be decided by a count of the votes by the Ballot Committee. Please plan on attending the meeting. The details are listed in the box to the right.

We are having a member appreciation dinner in February and the new officers will be installed. I urge you to attend as it is a good opportunity to meet a National officer and to network with your fellow NAPS members. Please R.S.V.P. to the email addresses listed on page 3 of this newsletter or call one of your local NAPS reps.

Now that I have stepped down off my soapbox, I wish you and your families a happy, peaceful, and safe Christmas; and a healthy New Year.

DeeAnn DeSimini

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### Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, December 9th  
6:30 p.m.  
Membership Meeting  
Izzy's Pizza  
Buffet dinner for just \$6.00!  
1307 NE 102nd St, Portland  
(Gateway Shopping Center)

Tuesday, January 13th  
6:30 p.m.  
Membership Meeting  
Izzy's Pizza  
Buffet dinner for just \$6.00!  
1307 NE 102nd St, Portland  
(Gateway Shopping Center)

Saturday, February 21, 2009  
7:30 p.m.  
Membership Appreciation and Installation Dinner  
Milwaukie Elks Club  
13121 McLoughlin Blvd  
Milwaukie OR

## Need a Great Stocking Stuff Idea?

A Northwest Area SPAC Raffle ticket could be your ticket to fame and fortune. Okay, well maybe nobody's going to ask you for an autograph, and that house on the coast will still be out of reach.

But hey, who couldn't use an extra \$250.00, \$500.00, or \$1,250.00? Tickets are limited and are on sale now. These little babies are this year's hot ticket and are selling fast so get yours today. Want to know how to buy one? Here's a hint ... read the SPAC article on page 2.





## Question of the Month ... What is SPAC?

Special Postal Air Conditioning? Stop Partying At Conventions? Slimeball Politicians Are Corrupt?

SPAC actually stands for the Supervisor's Political Action Committee. This committee is funded solely by NAPS members as explained in the following paragraphs. When you make a contribution to SPAC, it is pooled into one large fund that is administered by the National Vice President of NAPS. The funds are then utilized to make contributions to political campaigns.

That's the short explanation. Here's a better explanation taken from a NAPS training manual:

"With the influence Congress has over the future of the Postal Service, and on the benefits of working and retired postal

supervisors, it has become increasingly important that NAPS members do everything possible to help elect or re-elect members to both the House and Senate who are supportive of supervisor's interests. But with the cost of political campaigns increasing, how can an individual supervisor have any real impact on a political campaign? Political action committees, or PACs, were created for just this purpose.

PACs collect contributions from individuals in the same business or industry and combine them for maximum impact. The PAC then can make a more substantial contribution to their legislator's campaign in the name of their organization. In the case of a NAPS member, they contribute to SPAC—the Supervisor's

Political Action Committee.

SPAC is a bipartisan contributor, with most funds going to campaigns of postal oversight committee members—both Democrats and Republicans. Donations are only allowed from supervisors (including retired supervisors) and their families. They may be collected at branch meetings, legislative meetings, and state and national conventions."

Although the funds are administered by the National Vice President, any NAPS branch can submit a funding request for events such as meetings or dinners with legislators.

The easiest, pain-free way to contribute to SPAC is to buy a Northwest Area SPAC raffle ticket. The tickets are on sale now for the low price of \$10.00 each. Your \$10.00 invest-

ment earns you the chance to win one of three prizes: \$250.00, \$500.00, or \$1,250.00 in cold hard cash.

Tickets are available for purchase from any NAPS officer or you can send an email to: napsnews@comcast.net and an officer will contact you. The drawing will be held on May 16, 2009 at the NW Area Convention in Bend, Oregon.

Your raffle ticket will also be entered in prize drawings at Branch 66 membership meetings. In January, a drawing will be held for a gas card. The only way to win is to buy a raffle ticket.

Only 1,000 tickets will be sold so make sure you get yours today!

## Current Legislation—Key Bills In Congress

### H.R. 281 Universal Right to Vote by Mail Act of 2007

Amends the Help America Vote Act of 2002 to prohibit a state from imposing additional conditions or requirements on the eligibility of an individual to cast a vote in federal elections by mail, except to the extent that it imposes a deadline for requesting the ballot and returning it to the appropriate state or local election official.

### H.R. 728 Veterans Reassignment Protection Act

This bill would ensure the application of veterans' preference protections to

postal and federal employees who are the victims of downsizing actions that involuntarily reassign them to locations far from their homes.

### S. 773 Federal, Postal Military Retiree Premium Conversion

### H.R. 1110 Federal, Postal Military Retiree Premium Conversion

Both bills amend the Federal tax code to allow Federal civilian and military retirees - as well as active duty military employees - to pay their health insurance premiums on a pre-tax basis, as active federal civilian

employees can already do.

### S. 206 Repeal the Government Pension Offset & Windfall Elimination Provision Relief Act

### H.R. 82 Repeal the Government Pension Offset & Windfall Elimination Provision

Both bills amend title II (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) (OASDI) of the Social Security Act to repeal: (1) Government Pension Offset; and (2) Windfall Elimination Provision with respect to computation of an individual's primary insurance amount.

### H.R. 726 Windfall Elimination Provision Relief Act

Amends current law to relieve the unfair impact of the windfall elimination requirement for persons whose combined monthly income from the primary OASDI insurance amount and the portion of the monthly periodic payment attributable to non-covered service performed after 1956 exceeds \$2500 and future COLA-adjusted amounts.



## Recent Press Release

### U.S. Department of Labor final rule will expand FMLA for military families and clarify rules for workers and employers

Final rule brings two-year public process to close with common sense reforms for modern workforce

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Labor will publish a final rule on Nov. 17 to update its regulations under the 15-year-old Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) — a measure that will help workers and their employers better understand their rights and responsibilities, and speed the implementation of a new law that expands FMLA coverage for military family members.

“This final rule, for the first time, gives America’s military families special job-protected leave rights to care for brave service men and women who are wounded or injured, and also helps families of members of the National Guard and Reserves manage their affairs when their service member is called up for active duty,” said U.S. Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao. “At the same time, the final rule provides needed clarity about general FMLA rights and obligations for both workers and employers.”

“This common sense, balanced rule is the product of a two year-long transparent process involving about 20,000 public comments and reflects the careful consideration of the views of FMLA’s stakeholders,” said Victoria A. Lipnic, assistant secretary for the Labor Department’s Employment Standards Administration.

Provisions in the final rule call for increased notice obligations for employers so that employees will better understand their FMLA rights, while revising the employee notice rules to minimize workplace disruptions due to unscheduled FMLA absences. The final rule also contains technical changes that reflect decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court and lower courts.

Featured final rule actions implementing the statutory expansion of FMLA for military families:

**Military Caregiver Leave:** Implements the requirement to expand FMLA protections for family members caring for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty. These family members are able to take up to 26 workweeks of leave in a 12-month period.

**Leave for Qualifying Exigencies for Families of National Guard and Reserves:** The law allows families of National Guard and Reserve personnel on active duty to take FMLA job-protected leave to manage their affairs — “qualifying exigencies.” The rule defines “qualifying exigencies” as: (1) short-notice deployment (2) military events and related activities (3) child-care and school activities (4) financial and legal arrangements (5) counseling (6) rest and recuperation (7) post-deployment activities and (8) additional activities where the employer and employee agree to the leave.

There are additional regulatory provisions associated with this bill.

To view the entire text of the final rule as it will appear in the Federal Register at:

[http://www.federalregister.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2008-26577\\_PI.pdf](http://www.federalregister.gov/OFRUpload/OFRData/2008-26577_PI.pdf).

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP APPRECIATION AND INSTALLION OF OFFICERS DINNER

February 21, 2009

7:30 PM at the Milwaukee Elks Club

No Cost to Member Plus One Guest

Back by Popular Demand—Auction Featuring Reece Steelman as the Auctioneer

*R. S. V. P to:*

*napsnews@comcast.net or siminide@msn.com*



## Branch 66 At Work For You

In December 2004, our previous district manager, Dallas Keck, issued a memo to Portland District Senior Staff regarding EAS discipline. In that memo he stated that "many Letters of Warning recently issued to EAS employees, while technically "justified," could have been handled short of the formal disciplinary measures that were taken. "

He went on to acknowledge that "the LOW which is preceded by the obligatory investigative interview for a relatively small viola-

tion of a rule or procedure has enormous impact on that manager's self-esteem."

He then issued a directive that instructed managers to forward ALL EAS discipline to the Manager, Labor Relations, for review prior to the investigative interview or issuance of formal discipline.

Recently, three NAPS members were subjected to investigative interviews at the Portland Plant. These interviews were not conducted in accordance with Mr. Keck's directive. Once

your Branch 66 officers became aware of the problem, they arranged a meeting with our new district manager, Mr. Kim Anderson, to discuss the situation.

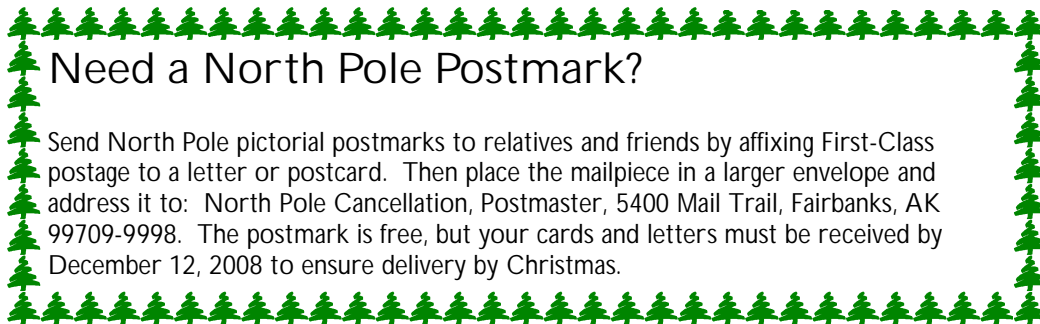
As a result, Mr. Anderson reissued the original memorandum and notified senior staff that the guidelines were still in effect and must be adhered to.

Your Branch 66 officers are here to help you. If you are having a problem in the workplace, please contact any of the officers listed below for assistance.

## Volunteers Wanted!

Are you laying awake at night wondering how you can help your fellow NAPS members loosen up a bit? Well, here's the solution! Volunteer for the NAPS Branch 66 Recreation Committee.

The committee will be given a budget and creative license to organize and plan a fun membership event in the summer and the annual golf tournament. This could be your 15 minutes of fame so volunteer now by contacting a branch officer, attending a membership meeting or sending an email to: [napsnews@comcast.net](mailto:napsnews@comcast.net)



## Need a North Pole Postmark?

Send North Pole pictorial postmarks to relatives and friends by affixing First-Class postage to a letter or postcard. Then place the mailpiece in a larger envelope and address it to: North Pole Cancellation, Postmaster, 5400 Mail Trail, Fairbanks, AK 99709-9998. The postmark is free, but your cards and letters must be received by December 12, 2008 to ensure delivery by Christmas.

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## Your Branch 66 Officers

President	Dee Ann DeSimini	503-294-5716
Legislative Vice President	Dan O'Donnell	503-650-8725
Secretary	Sarah Link	503-286-1033
Treasurer	Michele Grigoriouff	503-774-3009
Vice Presidents	Doug Stephens (Associate Offices) Reece Steelman (City Operations 1) Jeremy Blow (City Operations 2) Aleks Navarro (Plant)	360-992-5020 503-591-9822 503-968-2991 503-282-0912
Sergeant-at-Arms	Nancy McVicker	503-234-3104
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Oregon State President	Kathi Clapp	503-294-2235
NW Area Vice President	Ben Clapp	503-663-4508

### The NAPS Newsletter

"First Class Leader" is the official publication of NAPS Branch 66, Portland, Oregon. It is published monthly and is intended to inform, educate, and entertain members of Branch 66. All members in good standing receive this publication as part of their membership dues.

Any member may submit an article for publication but submissions should be limited to 300 words or less. The decision to edit or publish submitted articles remains with the Editor, Branch 66.

Please notify the Newsletter Editor of any changes in address or send an email to:

[napsnews@comcast.net](mailto:napsnews@comcast.net)