



# NAPS Branch 61 NEWS

## with Branch 31



Volume XV Issue II

“In a moment of decision, the best thing to do is the right thing, the next best thing is to do the wrong thing and the worst thing to do is nothing!”  
Theodore Roosevelt (10/27/1856 - 1/6/1919)

February 2015

### Executive Board

*President*

**Bjoern Gruetzmacher**

*1st Vice President*

**Zak Jennings**

*Recording Secretary*

**LaTanya Patterson**

*Treasurer*

**Janet Doyle**

*Sergeant-at-Arms*

**Santio Barbosa**

*Legislative Chairperson*

**Michael Ware**

*Editor*

**Rich Wilson**

*Trustees*

**Nick Chicka**

**James Reedy**

**Art Williams**

### **President's Corner**

The Postal Service continues to move forward with a plethora of changes in the way we do business. In

some of these changes we can see the benefits and in others we wonder how in the world we are going to get from point A to point B. What I hope you all are aware of is this culture of change will continue and I do not see any end in sight.

The Postal Service is looking to begin replacing our delivery vehicle fleet in 2018. The potential cost of this initiative is \$6 billion. For those of you who have paid close attention to our legislative and budgetary issues you might wonder where is this money coming from. Take a close look at the Postal Service balance sheet and while you'll see a \$5.2 billion expense for a liability for retiree health care benefits, yet you will not see an actual payment. By the year 2018 the requirement for pre-funding would have ended in 2016 and a possible default on five years of payments would add up to a tidy sum of \$26 billion. Amazing what a little fuzzy math can do!

Once again delegates from Branch 61 will be visiting Washington DC, March 8 - 11, to participate in the annual NAPS Legislative Training Seminar (LTS). We will be visiting our Washington State elected representatives to lobby for legislation which does or will impact the Postal Service in positive ways and against legislation which would negatively impact the Postal Service. The ideas we will present (below) is referred to as common-sense reforms and they lie at the heart of our agenda.

#### Innovate to Survive

As First-Class mail volume continues to decline, LTS delegates will educate Congress why it needs to permit the Postal Service to adapt by growing new lines of business, including banking, enhanced mail products, and government services.

#### Preserve Service Quality

Building tomorrow's postal system requires the preservation of speed and reliability, the hallmarks of service quality and business success. LTS delegates will educate the Congress on the need for the Postal Service to remain a speedy mes-



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### **Share Best Practices** - by Drew Aliperto, Vice President, Western Area Operations

Boxing champion Oscar De Le Hoya once said, "There is always space for improvement, no matter how long you've been in the business."

Our organization has been in business since the dawn of the country, and despite our vast experience, we still have room for improvement. Modified consumer demand, technology improvements, and tougher competition have acted as a catalyst to drive innovation at every level of our business. One of the best resources we have to adapt to changing conditions is the knowledge of our employees.

While we have an amazing pool of talent within our organization, no two individuals possess the same experiences and background. As a result, a unique solution to a common problem may be developed at one facility but not another. Sharing these best practices with others in the organization is a good way to replicate success, but they might not always be proactively disseminated. That's when observation and communication can be valuable tools to help identify and implement improvement.

Start by comparing performance among facilities and find ones with consistent success. Once you've identified top performers, interview key personnel at one or more of these facilities to discover how and why they excel. Validate and adapt the processes you discover for use at your facility. Once you've integrated them successfully, record the steps you took to enhance operations so that you may easily share them.

Sharing knowledge is one of the best ways to improve performance across the Postal Service. Whenever you have the opportunity, communicate your success with others to make our business even stronger.



**President's Corner - cont.**

senger and courier, reliant on a robust processing and transportation network that preserves customer loyalty and assures a stronger bottom-line.

***Strength through Financial Stability***

Continued Postal Service financial losses are chiefly the result of excessive Congressional mandates, draining USPS of the capital necessary to upgrade its fleet, modernize its network and expand its product lines. LTS delegates will urge Congress to temper those mandates and return to the Postal Service its pension overpayments, making the Postal Service financially stronger.

We will likely face a less than receptive audience overall with the House and Senate being controlled by the Republicans. Although Republican control would seem to put a roadblock in front of our goals it must be known that the passage of any legislation can often take many years of lobbying to push through. Look for reports from our delegates in our next newsletter.

Integrity in the Postal Service continues to be a point of emphasis. Everything we do while in the performance of our duties can be put under scrutiny. Knowing that our actions can always be second-guessed, I need, once again, to emphasize the need for integrity in how we do our jobs.

What kind of duties can point back to you? TACS! The input of clock rings in the TACS environment creates a trail. This trail can be easily tracked back to an individual, whether or not that individual made the entry or not. TACS creates a trail as soon as you log in with your personal ID. When making TACS entries they are all linked to your "Logon ID with a date and time. All of your TACS entries are also linked to the workstation of entry as well.

Do you ever "loan" your login ID and password to another individual? STOP!!! Not only does this put into question your integrity but is a violation of "Postal Policy". Don't let a manager senior to you make you feel in order to do their job they need access to your credentials. Any manager

**The Next Branch Meeting**

will be held on *Tuesday, February 24, 2015*  
at Zouave Restaurant  
2615 NE 65th St  
Seattle WA at 7:00 p.m.

worth his or her salt knows this and should never breach this line of integrity. Realize the possibility if you "loan" or divulge your credentials to another individual you are now responsible for everything they do with that access as if it was you.

Lastly don't allow the pressure of management above you to do something against Postal Policy. Poor performance in and of itself can bring questions from upper management but that is to be expected. Where most individuals get in trouble is by making a decision that goes against policies or procedures, submits a report or makes an application entry that is false. These are decisions that can have immediate and lasting negative impacts on your careers.

**January 2015 Branch 61 Meeting Minutes?** - by Janet Doyle, Branch 61 Treasurer

- Meeting called to order by President Bjoern Gruetzmacher at 7:20 p.m. Pledge of Allegiance led by James Reedy Finance Report read by Bjoern for Anne Kush. Art Williams motioned to accept the Finance Report as read, Rich Wilson seconded, motion passed.
- Legislative Report read by Michael Ware - PMG Donahoe will be retiring this month, Megan Brennan will take over as PMG, more talk regarding the 82 Postal Mail Processing Center Consolidation as the consolidation schedule is still in place and on schedule. Everyone needs to go to the NAPS Web Page ([www.naps.org](http://www.naps.org)) and send correspondence to their Member of Congress and Senators to let their voices be heard regarding the moratorium on the plant closures. The USPS still has not paid the Pre-Funding requirement for three years now.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Welcome to Cathy Fowler-Turner and Mike Milsted who attended their first Branch 61 meeting. Motion was made by Art Williams to provide both Cathy and Mike a Branch 61 padfolio. Janet seconded the motion, motion passed. Rich Wilson will mail the padfolios to their residence.
- Branch 61 will be hosting the Western Region Training this year on Saturday, August 22nd, 2015 at the Bellevue Hilton. More information to follow.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- Legislative Training Seminar (LTS) Training - March 8-11, 2015. Right now six members are qualified to attend based on the meetings they have attended. Two members, one just missed the meeting requirements and the other member did not make the required meetings prior to LTS. Not enough meetings to qualify. A motion was made seconded and passed for the Executive Board in their meeting immediately following this meeting to allow two additional delegates to the six who've already qualified. The members that will be attending are: Anne Kush, Tanya Patterson, Bjoern Gruetzmacher, Zak Jennings, James Reedy, Michael Ware and Rich Wilson. There will be an Executive Board Meeting immediately following the Branch 61 meeting to discuss the additional people wanting to attend the LTS this year. James Reedy made a motion to accept the 6 members currently in good standing be able to attend LTS, Zak seconded the motion and motion passed. Make your own airfare reservations. Editor's note: The vote of the Executive board in their meeting resulted in two additional members becoming delegates and are now authorized to attend the LTS. They are James Reedy and Art Williams.

## February 2015 Branch 31 Meeting Minutes - By Georgia Taylor, Branch 31 Secretary

- Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Dexter Baldwin.

**Old Business:** No old business.

### New Business:

- Mike Gillett: Recent Investigative Interviews are revealing members are still handling their own issues with management. Management issues Letters of Warning and states "it would go away". Low and behold when a later discipline issue arises, the letter is still in the file. Get it in writing, better yet, call for a NAPS representative before answering any questions. Be sure and tell your NAPS representative if you have previous discipline. NAPS representatives are Dexter Baldwin, Dee Dee Emmett, Michael Gillett and Mike Hart. We are still looking for additional advocates for investigative interviews. Let any Branch 31 Officer know if you are interested.
- Question was asked from the membership if NAPS had noticed any common offenses? Falsification of time is a common theme dealing with street time and coming back into the office.
- If you're working more than eight hours in a day and you're special exempt, use your gold card to clock those hours. We need a true representation of our work week. Also, notify your manager if you can't get the job done in time.
- Dexter: Special thanks to Dawn and Georgia for their work on the annual installation dinner this year at Emerald Queen Casino. Nothing but good things have been said about the location, food, setup and prizes, etc. The summer brunch will be held at C.I. Shenanigan's, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 and the annual installation dinner will be at the Emerald Queen Casino again next year.
- LTS: There was a new House Resolution introduced January 28, 2015, H.R. 54. It is by-partisan to restore service standards of July 1, 2012. Tacoma P&DC is currently under OWC "operating window change". Objective is to increase efficiency, customer service and minimize cost. Hopefully something will be done in Congress this year.
- We have been challenged by Branch 246 in Tucson AZ to raise \$100 and bring to LTS. Let's get all members to donate any amount and we'll take it to D.C.
- We're always looking to take members to LTS, National and Area training who have not been before. You need to have attended six meetings in a calendar year to be eligible. The annual dinner/brunch counts towards meeting the requirement.
- Door Prize winner was Calvin Edwards.
- Next meeting will be on Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m. at Mona's Pizza/Pasta.
- No further business, Michael Gillette motioned for adjournment, Georgia Taylor seconded, motioned was carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.
- Reminder, if you have moved recently, go into liteblue to change and notify me at [kgtaylor69@comcast.net](mailto:kgtaylor69@comcast.net)

## January 2015 Branch 61 Executive Board Meeting Minutes? - by Janet Doyle, (A) Secretary

- Meeting called to order 8:45 p.m. by Vice President, Zak Jennings
- We need to vote on additional members attending LTS this year and who are not qualified at this time to go due to insufficient meeting attendance. Art Williams is short two meetings but due to his willingness to help with Investigative Interviews and helping the Branch out where needed, it was expressed that we should allow Art to go to LTS. Bo Barbosa has attended just meetings thus failing to qualify for the LTS trip so we all mutually agreed that he would not be able to attend with Branch 61 this year. As of right now we have eight members authorized and scheduled to attend LTS. It will cost approximately \$2100.00 each which will be around \$16,800.00. What will save the Branch some money is the Western Region Training in August will be in Bellevue Washington. The branch will save approximately 50-75% of expenses due to it being held in Bellevue. We will not have the travel expenses we would normally have going out of town. Bjoern Gruetzmacher motioned to allow Art Williams to attend the LTS even though he was two meetings, to represent Branch 61 at LTS. Michael Ware seconded the motion and was passed by the Executive Board.
- Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

## January 2015 Branch 61 Meeting Minutes? - by Janet Doyle, Treasurer, (continued)

- Have Newsletter articles to Rich no later than 2/11/15.
- \$25.00 Raffle won by Cathy Fowler-Turner.
- Next Meeting will be on February 24th at Zouave Restaurant, 2615 NE 65th St, Seattle
- Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.



# NAPS Branch 31

February 2015

## Branch 31 President's Message - by Dexter Baldwin, President, Branch 31

Greetings NAPS Branch 31 members. It's already February and time seems like it is flying by. For you who could not attend last month's installation dinner, you missed out on a great evening. The event was held at the Emerald Queen Hotel and Casino New Conference Center.

First of all, kudos go out to Branch 31 Secretary Georgia Taylor and Branch 31 Treasurer Dawn Boivert for doing an outstanding job in planning and coordinating the event. We had guest speakers which included Northwest Area Vice-President Cindy McCracken, Washington State NAPS President Chuck Roberts, Oregon State NAPS President Joe Lahmann, Seattle Branch President Bjoern Gruetzmacher and NDC Branch 551 President Manny Sablan. NW Area VP Cindy McCracken did the swearing in of your NAPS Tacoma Branch 31 officers, President (Dexter Baldwin) and Secretary (Georgia Taylor). After having a wonderful dinner and hearing the guest speakers, the raffle drawings took place. The prizes included three Seahawk Jerseys and a 50/50 drawing. About \$190 of the 50/50 drawing went to one lucky winner (Debbie and Jim Gunder) and the other \$190 was donated to SPAC under member Jim Gunder's name. There were also door prizes given out along the evening to many lucky members. It was indeed a wonderful event. The facilities, food and wait staff were awesome and we are looking forward to having a few more events at the Emerald Queen Casino and Hotel Conference Center.

Nationally, Congress still has yet to move on Postal Reform but a House Resolution has come up. H.R. 54 moves to restore service standards to those service standards in effect on July 1, 2012. On January 27, 2015, a bi-partisan group of House members co-sponsored their support of H.R. 54. The Resolution was introduced by Congressman McKinley (R-WV). Members from both sides are joining their colleague, expressing the urgency for Congress to act and restore service standards back in effect on July 1, 2012.

Here are some highlights from President Obama's postal reform in the 2016 budget proposal: President Obama's proposed FY 2016 budget, sent to Congress earlier this week, continues the call for major changes in the U.S. Postal Service by infusing greater savings and relief into the cash-strapped agency. The budget also proposes a 1.3 percent pay raise next year for federal employees and service members, a mark which typically serves as a guide for annual adjustments in pay raises for postal employees.

The President's budget, released one day after new Postmaster General Megan Brennan took office on Feb. 1, proposes a [series of reforms](#) similar to ones previously favored by the White House and some lawmakers on Capitol Hill. These include:

- Restructuring the prefunding of retiree health care benefits required by the 2006 postal law, by deferring the fixed payments due in 2015 and 2016 (a savings of \$13 billion) and creating a new 40-year amortization schedule beginning in 2017;
- Returning to USPS its FERS overpayments (estimated at \$1.5 billion) and requiring the Office of Personnel Management to use postal workforce-specific assumptions to calculate these payments;
- Cutting Saturday mail delivery, once volume declines to 140 billion pieces for four consecutive quarters, a level the White House expects the USPS to hit by late 2018;
- Allowing the Postal Service to shift away from door delivery to centralized or curbside delivery "where appropriate";
- Establishing in law the current administrative plan to avoid small and rural post office closures;
- Providing USPS with more flexibility in creating new business opportunities, as well as enlarging cooperation with state and local governments to offer services at post offices;
- Making permanent the emergency price increase set to expire this year; and
- Enhancing Postal Service governance to allow USPS management and its Board of Governors to more quickly and effectively respond to market opportunities and challenges, while retaining strong oversight from the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) and Congress.

These moves, the White House said, will provide "specific authorities to improve USPS efficiency and net revenue, along with financial relief measures, grounded in principles of fiscal responsibility as well as sound financial management."

So what's new locally? Our branch is sending four members to the Legislative Training Seminar in Wash-



# NAPS Branch 31

## **Branch 31 President's Message** – (continued)

ington D.C. next month. Our NAPS Branch members will be joining other Washington State NAPS Branch members . and will lobby postal issues with our states Senators and Members of Congress.

Change, yes change is happening again. If you haven't heard, the Tacoma Plant, as well as the Seattle P&DC and East DDC, is undergoing mass changes with the moving of automation of earlier start times on Tour 2 as opposed to Tour 1. This is all part of the OWC or operating window change. So what really is the goal of OWC? OWC is supposed to increase efficiency by improving mail flow in our network. It will improve customer service by dispatching DPS/Manual mail earlier and will minimize costs. Many DBCS machines will be running 2 or more DPS sort programs during the day. So with all the changes going on, we as management must learn to change as well to be successful. Management and workers need to recognize the different reactions to change and deal with those which are stumbling blocks to progress. So ask yourself this question, "Do I resist change"?

Become aware of your reactions. Take a mental step back and ask yourself whether you are reacting instinctively. If you recognize you are automatically resisting the change and putting up a barrier to objectivity, drop the barrier, examine the change, find the positive, which may be the most difficult part of the process and accept the change. Acceptance lowers your stress level and makes your job and life easier. Accepting change does not mean that you must suffer gladly changes that have a negative impact on your job satisfaction. You simply have to accept the fact that a change is under way. We will never be successful if we do not accept changes that are going on in the Postal Service. Here are some components to workplace success.

### **Behavior**

All companies specify what is acceptable behavior, and what is not. Many even summarize expected conduct in job descriptions or handbooks. Acceptable behavior is a must for success. Non acceptable behavior creates conflicts which can no doubt lead to possible corrective actions or termination.

### **Integrity**

A key component to workplace ethics and behavior is integrity, or being honest and doing the right thing at all times. For example, health care employees who work with mentally or physically challenged patients must possess a high degree of integrity, as those who manage and work primarily with money. Workers with integrity also avoid gossip and sneakiness while on the job. Integrity is important in the eyes of your bosses. Gaining that trust through integrity will make not only yourself but your workplace successful.

### **Accountability**

Taking responsibility for your actions is another major factor when it comes to workplace ethics and behavior. That means showing up on scheduled workdays, as well as arriving on time and putting in an honest effort while on the job. Workers who exhibit accountability are honest when things go wrong, then work toward a resolution. Don't blame others for your mistakes.

### **Teamwork**

A vital aspect of the workplace is working well with others. That includes everyone from peers to supervisors to customers. While not all employees will always like each other, they do need to set aside their personal or even work-related differences to reach a larger goal. In many instances, those who are not considered "team players" can face demotion or even termination. On the other hand, those who work well with others often can advance on that aspect alone, with teamwork sometimes even outweighing performance.

### **Commitment**

Ethical and behavioral guidelines in the workplace often place a high amount of importance on dedication. Although possessing the necessary skills is essential, a strong work ethic and positive attitude toward the job can carry you a long way. Plus, dedication is often viewed in the business world as "contagious," meaning employees who give a strong effort can often inspire their co-workers to do the same.

If you take all of these components and integrate them into your job, it will not only make you a better employee and manager, it will make your office a better workplace and make the Postal Service a better organization.

<b>Branch 31 Financial Report</b> <b>December 2014</b>		<b>Branch 61 Financial Report - November—December 2014</b>	
Beginning Balance: \$ 10,696.81		Beginning Checkbook Bal. \$ 43,316.81	
Income: 3,225.21		<b>Income</b>	
Expenses: 2,193.50		Member Dues \$ 3151.75	<b>Total Expenses</b> \$ 2,000.00
Ending Balance: \$ 9,665.10		Interest <u>1.80</u>	Income over Expenses \$ 1,153.55
<b>Expenses over Income :</b>		<b>Total Income</b> \$ <b>3,153.55</b>	Ending Checkbook Balance \$ 44,472.11
\$ 1,031.71		<b>Expenses</b>	
Respectfully Submitted:		Legal Retainer \$ <u>2,000.00</u>	Respectfully Submitted:
Dawn Boivin			Janet M. Doyle
Branch 31 Treasurer			Branch 61 Treasurer
		<p>Note: Our new Branch 61 officers are listed on Page 1 of this newsletter. They all were voted in by acclamation, because there was just one candidate running for each of the ten offices. There are four fewer officers this cycle due to the bylaws revision past in October. I would like to personally thank Anne Kush for her long-time service as our Branch</p>	

## ***FIRST-CLASS MAIL***

**Return Service Requested**

<b>Editors Request:</b>	
<p>I would like to obtain your current, non-USPS email address. I assure you it will be kept privately by me and inaccessible to anyone. The purpose of my request is that I would like to keep you informed of fast-developing situations relative to your NAPS membership and how NAPS HQ sees things. I will never overwhelm you with emails and I'll send you only USPS or NAPS business related information. I would appreciate you sending your non-postal email address to me at: <a href="mailto:branch61@comcast.net">branch61@comcast.net</a>.</p> <p><b>Your privacy is respected and assured!</b></p>	<p>Contacting your Member of Congress or Senator is relatively easy to accomplish. Go to <a href="http://www.house.gov/">http://www.house.gov/</a> for Members of Congress and <a href="http://www.senate.gov/">http://www.senate.gov/</a> for Senators. At each site, you can subscribe to your Member of Congress's or Senator's eNewsletter. It's great way to be in contact with your elected officials. At each site you will be able to express your concerns about any pending legislation.</p> <p><b>Susan DelBene</b> 1st District - 22121 17th Ave SE Ste 220 Bldg E Bothell WA 98021/7404</p> <p><b>Rick Larsen</b>; 2<sup>nd</sup> District 2930 Wetmore Ave Ste 9F Everett WA 98201-4070 425.252.3188 office</p> <p><b>Jim McDermott</b>, 7<sup>th</sup> District 1809 7th Ave Ste 1212 Seattle WA 98101-1399 206.553.7170 office</p> <p><b>Dave Reichert</b>; 8<sup>th</sup> District 22605 SE 56th St Ste 130 Issaquah WA 98029-5297 425.677.7414 office</p> <p><b>Adam Smith</b>, 9<sup>th</sup> District 3600 Port of Tacoma Rd Ste 106 Tacoma WA 98424-1040 253.896.3775 office</p> <p><b>Senator Maria Cantwell</b> 915 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave Ste 3206 Seattle WA 98174-1011 206.220.6400 office</p> <p><b>Senator Patty Murray</b> 915 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave Ste 2988 Seattle WA 98174-1080 206.553.5545 office</p>