



NAPS Branch 61 NEWS

with Branch 31



Volume XV Issue IV

“All human situations have their inconveniences. We feel those of the present but neither see nor feel those of the future; and hence we often make troublesome changes without amendment, and frequently for the worse.”
Benjamin Franklin (1/17/1706 - 4/17/1790)

April 2015

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President's Corner

It seems as if I have written more than twenty articles for our newsletter as President of Branch 61, a small



price to pay as your elected officer. We have a small core of committed members who regularly attend meetings. Out of that core we also have a dedicated group who advocate for members who need representation when faced with the need. Our branch is supported by the dues of over 270 members encompassing an area of just north of Tacoma to the Canadian border, hemmed in on either side by the Cascades to the east and Puget Sound to the west. Your active members have traveled all over this area to represent you.

While we are successful in finding someone to advocate for members when needed we are always looking for more members willing to give of themselves. It's important to remember we are volunteers of our time and all have lives outside of NAPS and the Postal Service. We receive no financial gain and most often our reward for a job well done is not tangible. None of your fellow members who work for you have been forced to do what they do, they represent you out of a greater desire to serve others which in this case is you as NAPS members.

So what am I saying? We need more active members!!! Our activities and need for participation don't end at advocacy. We are currently getting prepared for our yearly brunch. This event doesn't occur on its own. Most often this event and the committee assigned to it consists of the same people year after year. While the key members who have led this committee are talented beyond compare and have hosted events that have been spectacular, an infusion of members who have not participated previously would lighten the load greatly and help to ensure the continued success of Branch 61.

Sometimes one might ask, what is in it for me? First and foremost I would point out is the opportunity to network with other supervisors, managers, postmasters and senior level managers in the Postal Service. The ability to reach out to someone who is either walking in your shoes or has walked in your shoes is invaluable. Sometimes you might feel, as an agency, we are disjointed and might not be as connected as we could be to ensure all of our success. Giving of yourself and taking the time to actively participate in NAPS is an instant ice breaker to make a connection. I know I have benefited greatly from my connections in NAPS and hope I have shown that I have paid it forward.

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Be The Best You Can Be - by Drew Aliperto, Vice President, Western Area Operations

Yesterday, the Postal Service issued a new stamp to honor Maya Angelou who passed away last year. The accomplished writer and actress persevered through countless challenges throughout her life to pursue her passions. She provided inspiration to the world through her work which continues to have a meaningful impact with generations of fans to this day.



Maya's courage is an example we can all follow to overcome obstacles, pursue new challenges, and strive for excellence in everything we do.

Success isn't easy, and it requires a lot of hard work and determination to make it happen. But when we choose to make the commitment to strive for excellence, it not only influences our own lives, the efforts also have a tendency to cause a ripple effect that can positively inspire others as well.

Everyone has the opportunity to make an impact in the lives of those around them. Choose to be the best that you can be to encourage others to do the same.

“Nothing will work unless you do.” ~ Maya Angelou

President's Corner - cont.

Participation begets even greater opportunities to participate. Just this past April, 9th ten members of NAPS from Washington State were attendees at Senator Patty Murray's 20th Annual Golden Tennis Shoes Awards luncheon. The only requirement to attend this event was NAPS membership and being a member active enough to be on the mind of an executive member, attendance at a branch meeting can accomplish this. Our group was fortunate enough to be seated at a table just left of center less than thirty feet from the speaker's dais. This table did not come without a cost, but none of that cost was borne by the attendees. The NAPS Supervisor Political Action Committee paid for our table and simply required us to fill the ten seats with Washington State NAPS members.

The luncheon opened my eyes to some of the inner workings of how the political machine works while honoring three individuals who have given of themselves for the greater good of their communities. Senator Al Franken from Minnesota was a guest speaker who entertained us with some humor while showing his support for his colleague and friend Senator Murray and her quest for reelection in 2016. I would like to point out that none of us had to support Senator Murray and her campaign but were enriched by the chance to see the most deserving award recipients.

Accountability continues to be a hot issue in the Postal Service. I find more and more managers at all levels holding individuals accountable. While you might not always agree with the methods given to you to achieve success you are responsible to carry out those methods nonetheless. As long as a directive cannot be considered illegal, unsafe or immoral it must be followed. NAPS and Branch 61 will never back down in your defense when you do what you are told. Failure to follow instructions on the other hand will require mitigating circumstances to successfully protect your rights.

Documentation will always be provided to justify an action against you but how often do you consider documentation to refute an action and protect you? As burdensome as this might seem it is one of the first things I ask for when speaking with someone who is requesting representation. If you question a directive, summarize it in an email to the individual giving it to you, bcc it to your own personal email and you now have your own documentation. If you get a response forward it to your personal email and you now have even more documentation. Lastly if you can't support your

The Next Branch Meeting

will be held on *Tuesday*,

April 28, 2015

at *The Eagles*

8201 Lake City Way NE

Seattle WA at 7:00 p.m.

actions with solid documentation and your actions could be determined to be a falsification and be aware you could be accused of just that.

Falsification of documentation is a charge that seems to be very prevalent currently. Change a clock ring? You better have a Form 1260! Recording volumes in DOIS? You better have a count sheet utilized while walking your unit while measuring with an accepted measuring device. Using an operation code that could be questioned, such as training? You better have an employee's signed training record or record through the Learning Management System online.

Our actions are being scrutinized at levels that I have not seen in my ten year career in management and if your actions are suspect and can be documented as willful NAPS can only attempt to lessen the negative impacts to your career.

Take care of yourself so you can take care of others.

Building A Healthy Workplace - by Ivan Butts, NAPS National Executive Vice President

I am writing this article just as I finished speaking with a manager concerning being contacted by an MCSO while out on sick leave. It brought back memories of a Postal LINK titled "Treating employees with respect." In this LINK, the agency stated it was committed to providing a workplace free of discrimination and harassment along with fostering a climate where all employees reach their highest potential. We have all heard this statement before. For years, the Postal Service has stated that this type of behavior will not be tolerated.

Meanwhile, NAPS continues to receive feedback from members who are being berated, belittled and humiliated on work floors. This often happens in front of craft employees, over open handheld radios, and on daily telecoms by the very managers that are charged with maintaining respect within the workplace.

The LINK identified three points that all employees should do in achieving a workplace free of threats or harassment. My issue is I find generic points such as these are not effective when attempting to address the issues facing EAS in the workplace. You may remember in my July 2012 article titled - "We'll Always Be 'One of Them'", where I spoke of the term "robust dialog" that was used by a former Area Vice President to validate issues raised surrounding the creation of hostile work environments.

This fine line between robust dialog and a hostile work environment is easy to blur, cross or erase by managers who conduct themselves in a manner that USPS leadership openly states will not be tolerated. Yet, by their inaction in dealing with these issues, agency leadership is indeed condoning this behavior in some degree.

I did some analysis on this issue and made this conclusion; if I am a leader who has made career advances within this agency and I have a history of creating a hostile work environment, why should I consider my conduct inappropriate? Simply put, if a manager is rising through the ranks by employing a leadership style that berates, belittles and humiliates some of the "all employees", then that person believes that this is the leadership style the USPS desires.

So, the question is does this agency really not condone the behavior or does it fulfill some legal obligation to openly state that it does not, while continuing to tolerate, support and advance another type of leadership model?

Defending Those Who Served - by Louis Atkins, NAPS National President

For the last few years, federal and postal employees have been front and center in the minds of certain Members of Congress looking to balance the nation's books on the backs of those who have chosen a life of service. Whether it be through pay freezes, hiring freezes or reducing the resources needed to do our jobs, federal employees have been used as a type of blank check to make up for past fiscal mistakes.



Last week, NAPS, working in concert with other federal employee groups, rigorously opposed such an effort. NAPS sent a letter to over 1,100 staff members within the United States House of Representatives urging them to oppose anti-federal employee measures within the FY 16 Budget Resolution. Some of these proposals would force federal and postal employees to contribute more towards their health benefits along with increasing health care costs for employees. In addition, the most popular plan within the Thrift Savings Plan, the G Fund, would be reduced to being a junk fund due to proposed changes in how its rate of return is calculated.

The budget resolution passed the House on partisan lines with the majority mostly voting in favor of it.

Now, there is one thing to keep in mind: this is only a budget resolution. Nothing is binding; nothing is heading to the Senate or to the President. This is only a road map for future government appropriations. However, we have a clear understanding of where Congressional budget priorities are and we now understand the fight ahead of us.

There is some good news. 17 Republicans did vote against the budget. Some of these represent some of the most hard-line fiscal "hawks" who feel that cuts should be even higher than those proposed in the budget resolution. The good news was that there were a few that did see the harm this budget would cause to the federal workforce. It is our intention to work with these Members of Congress to educate the rest of the Republican Conference to moderate their stance on the budget and embrace the notion of shared sacrifice.

In the meantime, our legislative team will work with our allies on the Hill to solidify their opposition to this proposal and work to build coalitions that look for real solutions when it comes to the budget. As the summer approaches and these measures come up for a real vote, we will be mobilizing our NAPS legislative network through 'CapWiz' and our other tools in order for you to urge your lawmakers to vote "no" on yet another assault on the benefits and livelihoods of those individuals who only seek to serve.

My 2015 LTS Experience - by Michael Ware, Branch 61, Legislative Chair

The NAPS Legislative Training Seminar (LTS) was, once again, a successful event. People from all across the country gathered with the intention of discussing with the Congress some issues and concerns, requesting the congressional delegations to be supportive of them. Some of them were, plant closures, more vehicles, and how the OND (Over-Night Delivery Area) will no longer exist. OND mail now takes two to three days for a piece of mail to get just across the street for delivery.

Plant closures will cause some employees to relocate from their families and for others to load up the truck and family and move, disrupting school for their kids and spouses would have to find other jobs. The Postal Service will not pay all the moving expenses in some cases. These would be additional and exceptional costs families shouldn't have to incur.

We are having more vehicle breakdowns without a spare to replace them. In order for our vehicle operation to run successfully, it needs to have extra vehicles available to replace those breakdowns. The fleet is switching from our 30 year old Long-Life Vehicles (LLV) which are nearing or have reached the end of their life-cycle with new Dodge Ram vans. However, once the LLV goes in for repair we rarely get a replacement vehicle. Ron Stroman, the Deputy Postmaster General stated to the delegates, "More vehicles will be coming on board by the end of the year".

NAPS and other postal organizations were advocating for their behalf. I saw members of an organization who were 9/11 survivors sharing their issues and concerns with their congressional delegations as well. These are issues occur daily and we have to call around to other stations for vehicle assistance. This will cause more people to use the internet instead of using the mail to conduct their personal business. Hopefully these concerns will be addressed and resolved in Congress which also will provide more stability for the Postal Service.



NAPS Branch 31

April 2015

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

Greetings Branch 31 Members. Here we are, already April 2015, and it's the same old story with the Postal Service. No action from Congress and the closure/consolidation of 82 processing plants still hanging over our heads. As you all know, NAPS members from around the United States converged on Capitol Hill last month to talk to our Senators and Members of Congress about NAPS/Postal issues.

The Washington contingent came away with overall positive feelings from our meetings with our lawmakers. Hopefully, the meetings will make a difference when Postal Issues hit to floor in congress to be voted on.

On April 9th, members from the Seattle and Tacoma NAPS Branches attended the 20th Annual Golden Tennis Shoes Awards luncheon sponsored by Senator Patty Murray. We will be hearing from our Tacoma members who represented NAPS and what they came away with from the luncheon.

Our National President Louis Atkins urged lawmakers to oppose the Republican-proposed FY 2016 Budget Resolution (H.Con.Res 27), which would impose massive, unprecedented hits on the health and retirement benefits of federal and postal employees, as part of a \$6 Trillion deficit savings package. This resolution would open the door to subsequent legislation that places a greater share of deficit reduction on the backs of federal and postal employees (yes again), both active and retired, amounting to more than \$300 billion over the next 10 years.

Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) covered would have to contribute an additional six percent towards their retirement with no increase in benefits. The House budget plan would also end the "special retirement supplement" that pays benefits to FERS retirees who retire at their Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) until they reached their Social Security eligibility age.

Locally, we again have to talk about ethics and falsification. Remember folks, we are EAS and have always been held to a higher standard, as well as we should be! We still have members getting into trouble for changing clock rings for their employees without their employees' knowledge. The idea apparently is to stay off the list and not get in trouble. DO NOT change clock rings without a legitimate reason and documentation (Form 1260) just to avoid getting yelled at. The bottom line is that getting yelled at is better than the possibility of losing your job. Have ethics in what you do. Also, Do Not use postal G-10 envelopes for any personal reason. They are only to be used for Postal communications. Remember, if you don't put yourself in a position to get in trouble, trouble will never come.

So our summer brunch will be held at C.I. Shenanigans on July 12 at 11:00 a.m. Some of featured speakers include National NAPS President Louis Atkins, Western Region Vice President Marilyn Walton, Northwest Vice President Cindy McCracken and possibly another guest.

The Western area Training Seminar will be held August 21-22, 2015 in Bellevue at the Bellevue Hilton. If you are interested in attending, contact your NAPS officers to see if you are eligible to attend.

Our Installation dinner for 2016 will be at 6:00 p.m. on January 23, 2016 at the Emerald Queen Casino.

Here are some tips for making you workplace a successful workplace. If these concepts are used in the workplace, it will make life a lot easier for all of us.

Behavior

All companies specify what acceptable behavior is and what it 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



NAPS Branch 31

Branch 31 President's Message – by Dexter Baldwin, Branch 31 President

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, it will make your office a better workplace and make the Postal Service a better organization.

Make sure you ask for NAPS representation if you are getting an Investigative Interview. Our branch advocates are who will be able to provide some assistance during investigative interviews: Dexter Baldwin, Michael Gillett, Dee Dee Emmett, Michael Hart, James Haslett, Charlie Krogh, James Gibson and Georgia Taylor. We are still looking for more members to become advocates. If you are interested, contact one of your branch officers.

On a final note, thanks for all you do for the Postal Service, without your knowledge and expertise, the Postal Service would be in a world of hurt. Thanks again and until next time... be safe, be respectful & be the best you can be.

April 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: None

New Business:

- Dexter: The Tacoma Plant won't be closing. The O and O (cancellations) will be moving. Tacoma will keep primary and secondary letters and flats. Parcels will go to the NDC. Nothing in writing yet and the plant is still on the consolidation list.
- NAPS opposes House Res 27. HR 27 wants federal workers to pay 6 percent more to retirement, do away with social security supplement, eliminate union bargaining rights, and change to high five from high three for computing retirement annuities. Go to NAPS website and contact your Member of Congress.
- Our branch has 22 non-members. Let's reach out to them, invite them to a meeting and encourage them to join. Headquarters is developing a new welcome packet. Contact Dex for a list of the Branch 31 non-members.
- Legislative Training Seminar (LTS) - Georgia attended Secretary/Treasurer Training facilitated by Brian Wagner. Brian provided a thumb drive to keep and share files and information pertinent to these positions. Training included duties of the Secretary, membership, updating member addresses, Dues Check Off list, non-member list, and ideas for encouraging new members. Treasurer Training emphasized importance of non-profit status and filing taxes and handling money properly, and good record keeping.
- Charlie Krogh was a first-timer at LTS. Charlie spoke about his impression of the training, guest speakers, our legislative visit, how it open doors up on the hill and the atmosphere of it all. How easy it is to go to your Congressman's office, knock, enter and speak with the aides about your issues. The aides are up on the current issues we were there to present and speak with them about.
- James Gibson attended Patty Murray's 20th Annual Golden Tennis Shoe Award Luncheon in Seattle on April 9th. NAPS Headquarters paid for the \$500.00 plate for the 10 NAPS members from the state to attend. Headquarters will pay the fee if we have ten or more members to attend the local political fund raisers and speak with the representatives on NAPS issues.
- Dex: By going to fundraisers politicians notice which organizations are attending. Two or more tables get noticed, and the politicians are interested in speaking with us.
- Our annual brunch will be July 12, 2015, 11:00 a.m. at C.I. Shenanigan's, and the installation dinner will be January 28, 2016, 6:00 p.m. at the Emerald Queen Casino Convention Center. Mark your calendars and save the date!
- The Vice President and Treasurer positions will be up for election this fall. Michael Gillett will not be running for office this year. Nominations will be accepted at October's meeting with the election at November's meeting.
- Door Prize winner was Georgia Taylor.
- Next meeting will be on Thursday, May 14, 6:30 p.m. at Mona's Pizza/Pasta.
- No further business, Charlie Krogh motioned for adjournment, Dexter Baldwin seconded, motioned carried.
- Meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Reminder, if you have moved recently, go into liteblue to change your address and notify me at kgtaylor69@comcast.net

Branch 31 Financial Report March 2015	Branch 61 Financial Report - March 2015	
Beginning Balance: \$ 11,380.39 Income: 2,126.00 Expenses: 4,521.72 Ending Balance: \$ 8,984.67 Expenses over Income : \$ 1,715.29 Respectfully Submitted: Dawn Boivin Branch 31 Treasurer 	Beginning Checkbook Bal. \$ 42,130.89 <b style="text-align: center;">Income Member Dues \$ 3,172.50 NAPS Reimbursement 250.00 Interest <u>1.68</u> Total Income \$ 3,423.68 <b style="text-align: center;">Expenses Newsletter 317.63 2015 Legislative Training 3,565.66 VISA Statement \$ <u>2,247.81</u>	Total Expenses \$ 6,131.10 Income over Expenses \$ 2,707.92 Ending Checkbook Balance \$ 39,423.97 Respectfully Submitted: Janet M. Doyle Branch 61 Treasurer 

FIRST-CLASS MAIL

Return Service Requested

Editors Request:		
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: branch61@comcast.net . Your privacy is respected and assured!	Contacting your Member of Congress or Senator is relatively easy to accomplish. Go to http://www.house.gov/ for Members of Congress and http://www.senate.gov/ 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.	Dave Reichert ; 8 th District 22605 SE 56th St Ste 130 Issaquah WA 98029-5297 425.677.7414 office Adam Smith , 9 th District 3600 Port of Tacoma Rd Ste 106 Tacoma WA 98424-1040 253.896.3775 office Senator Maria Cantwell 915 2 nd Ave Ste 3206 Seattle WA 98174-1011 206.220.6400 office Senator Patty Murray 915 2 nd Ave Ste 2988 Seattle WA 98174-1080 206.553.5545 office