



# NAPS Branch 61 NEWS

## with Branch 31



Volume XV Issue VI

“The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word 'crisis.' One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger - but recognize the opportunity.”

John F Kennedy (5/29/1917 - 11/22/1963)

June 2015

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### **President's Corner**

I have been asked most recently about the mission of NAPS. Some of you have brought this

question to me when looking to recruit new members or during the process of advocacy when seeking representation. Quite often there is an assumption that we are a union, not true. For comparison's sake I decided to do some research on the various postal organizations' official websites to see their mission or purpose. Here are some of the things I found:

- The National Rural Letter Carriers Association was founded to improve the methods used by rural letter carriers, to benefit their conditions of labor with the United States Postal Service, and to promote a fraternal spirit among its members.
- The National Postal Mail Handlers Union is a national organization of employees dedicated to advancing the interests of its members and their families.
- The American Postal Workers Union (APWU) states that they have fought for dignity and respect on the job for the workers they represent, as well as for decent pay and benefits and safe working conditions. As an AFL-CIO affiliate, the APWU supports the struggle for social and economic justice for all working families.
- The National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) has had a long and distinguished history of defending the rights of letter carriers before abusive supervisors, unfair presidential administrations and indifferent Congresses. The NALC is the only force that fights to protect the interests of



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### **Little Things Are A Big Deal** - by Drew Aliperto, Vice President, Western Area Operations

Each and every day, we should all be asking ourselves, “How can we get better?” During last week's senior leadership meeting in Minnesota, Area executives and I had the chance to review performance and discuss opportunities to do just that, get better.

One of the topics we covered included 3-5 Day mail scores. There have been too many failures recently, and our customers deserve and expect better performance. We move the mail 7 days per week, and it doesn't require extraordinary creativity to get the job done. It takes a plan and consistency to meet and hopefully exceed our delivery goals.

We also discussed our 2-Day scores, which place the Area second in the nation. While this level of performance is good, a customer who experienced a delay wouldn't agree. We can't be satisfied with the status quo. We have to pinpoint problems that may prevent higher performance, and it's often helpful to turn the mirror on ourselves to identify and fix hidden issues.

As you know, additional Area Mail Processing consolidation has been put on hold until next year. This has created a prime opportunity for us to concentrate on fixing the little things that are preventing higher levels of performance. It doesn't take monumental actions to make a difference and little fixes add up to meaningful improvement over time.

The book *Don't Sweat the Small Stuff... And It's All Small Stuff* may be true – but I think we all know that rolling up our sleeves and putting in a little sweat equity will make a big impact.



**President's Corner - cont.**

city letter carriers.

All these statements are found within the first sentence or paragraphs of these association's websites. It's quite a clear message as to their intents.

Compare this to NAPS:

On September 7, 1908, 50 postal supervisors from post offices in 13 states met in Louisville, Kentucky to establish an association that comprised of members dedicated to the welfare of supervisors within the then-United States Post Office Department. NAPS promotes the prosperity of its members **and the Postal Service.**

I highlight that last part to identify the most conspicuous difference. As NAPS members we are directly involved in and concerned with the prosperity of the Postal Service.

Now I know from my own investigation that you can find references in those associations regarding the Postal Service's benefit, the reference for the NALC was buried in their constitution and not front and center as is the case with NAPS.

I point this out to make sure all are aware of the expectations of this organization. While the first concern is the welfare of members we will not be able to continue in our role as member advocates if we don't help the Postal Service to prosper.

The Western Region Training Seminar will be held in Bellevue at the Hilton August 20 - 22. This will be an excellent opportunity for Branch 61 members to showcase our hospitality while being able to network and learn in our own backyard. Costs associated with this event will be covered by Branch 61. The Registration Fee of \$170.00 covered by the Branch. Two nights' accommodations at \$179 plus tax... covered by the Branch. An opportunity to increase your knowledge and benefit your Postal career... priceless!!!

While a minimum attendance at Branch meetings is required for participation in NAPS events such as the Western Region Training

## **The Next Branch Meeting**

will be held on *Tuesday*,  
**June 30, 2015**  
at *Round Table Pizza*  
15730 1st Ave S  
Seattle WA at 7:00 p.m.

Seminar, a waiver can be made by the Executive Board if requested. The Western Region Training is a chance for Seattle Branch 61 to shine and participation at this event will go far in achieving that luster. There is no better time than now to become active in Branch 61 and see all the benefits that can be realized. Come to our next meeting to be considered for attendance. Our meeting will be held on June 30, 2015, beginning at 7:00 p.m. at Round Table Pizza (see above for address) This is a great time to get involved with your organization, what with all the organizational changes that are taking place. I hope you take an hour and a half of your time to find out by attending our meeting.

## **What's The Purpose of the OPM Attack?** - by David A Graham, The Atlantic

One of things that make hacking so unsettling is the asymmetry of the situation: Unlike with a physical theft, the victims sometimes don't know they're victims for a long time, and once they find out, it's hard to tell just how badly they've been victimized.

That's true of the massive data breach revealed Thursday affecting 4 million current and former federal employees. There's still a great deal that hasn't been explained about why and how the hack happened, and whose data was compromised. (Angry federal employees took to the Facebook page of the Office of Personnel Management to complain about feeling left in the dark about the attacks.) There are, however, some emerging answers to three key questions: Who did it, why, and how it happened.

Early on, the government fingered Chinese hackers in the leak. Bruce Schneier has written for *The Atlantic* about the dangers of uncritically accepting initial attributions for attacks. The Chinese government has also rejected the claim, saying that it's a victim of hacking itself. (That's probably true—and the U.S. admits that it also hacks foreign governments.) But officials say there are fingerprints of known Chinese hackers. Another they're pointing at China—rather than, say, Russian organized-crime hackers who have also assaulted American computer systems—is the kind of data taken and what's been done with it.

"They didn't go to sell the data, which is what criminal groups usually do," James Lewis of the Center for Strategic and International Studies told *The New York Times*. The government and outside experts think that, along with the fact that the leak targeted government employees suggest an elaborate effort to build a huge database of information on federal employees. The data reportedly cover employees going

## **Failure To Meet The Requirements Of The Position** - by Eric Colon, EEO/ADR Specialist

Hello, I am Eric Colon, currently an EEO/ADR Specialist domiciled in Seattle and a longtime member of Branch 61. My purpose in writing this article is to ask of you one simple question and that is “exactly what requirement was not met and what did you do about it?” Okay, two questions then.

Receiving complaints from recently terminated employees are especially difficult due to the amount of passion associated with the event. Traumatic as it is, it is doubly troubling when an employee is being held accountable, but has no idea how to correct deficiencies or is even aware there are deficiencies in their work effort until the very end; attendance and accidents notwithstanding of course. For example, when I was a PTF City Letter Carrier, and towards the end of my probation my Supervisor would slap a 3996 on my case, and tell me I would be given an hours’ worth of help that day. However, I was never told (but found out later during my ASP Training) that meant to set aside an hours’ worth of mail for another Carrier to deliver. I didn’t even know how to cut an hours’ worth of mail out of my route in order to comply. So I took my entire route out and delivered it as best I knew how. Very troubling upon my return was the absence of any questions concerning the hours’ worth of mail I should have left behind. But that’s for another article. Naturally my termination during probation followed with the “Failure to Meet the Requirements of the Position” justification.

If your charges are failing to meet the requirements of the position are you telling them? Or are you just circling the “U”? Are you telling them exactly how they are not measuring up? Are you helping them to measure up by providing some instruction or a success plan or just waiting for the 90 day clock to expire and then starting over with a newer employee, hoping perhaps this one will get it? When you do terminate your employee for failing to meet the requirements are you documenting exactly how this failure impacted your ability to meet the needs of the business?

I’ll end with one more question. If this were your personal business enterprise would you go through all the expense of recruiting, setting up the application infrastructure, the cost of Background and Drug Testing, the expense of interviewing applicants, and the craft training just to start over again in 90 days or less?

To those of you who know me the answer will be an unequivocal “forgetaboutit”.

## **What’s The Purpose of the OPM Attack?** - by David A Graham, The Atlantic (continued)

back as far as 1985, and includes information on employees who applied for security clearances.

How did they do it, though? The government has a large, costly, sophisticated, and mostly secret system for protecting its data. But that system is, even according to the government, obsolete. It follows an old protocol of attempting to keep hackers outside, like a fence. Newer systems assume hackers will get through the outside defense and try to stop them once they’re inside.

The U.S. had been warned that it wasn’t ready in an inspector general’s report late last year. By the time the report landed, it was apparently too late, but many of the steps it recommended still haven’t been taken. For example:

In the most egregious case cited by the inspector general, outsiders entering the system were not subjected to “multifactor authentication” — the systems that, for example, require a code that is sent to a cell phone to be entered before giving access to a user. Asked about that in an interview, Donna Seymour, the chief information officer at the Office of Personnel Management, said that installing such gear in the government’s “antiquated environment” was difficult and very time consuming, and that her agency had to perform “triage” to determine how to close the worst vulnerabilities.

The government will now institute two-step verification—a step that longtime *Atlantic* readers will remember as early as the spring of 2011.

Generally, U.S. systems for data don’t seem to have wrapped themselves in glory concerning the hack. In 2014, then-Attorney General Eric Holder called for rules forcing companies to make disclosures to customers quickly when their information was hacked; it seems the government wouldn’t have met those guidelines. Critics have also wryly noted that a huge incursion into sensitive employee information tends to undermine the government’s claims that its intelligence apparatus can protect huge amounts of personal information swept up in surveillance dragnets. As one former senior official told the Times, “The mystery here is not how they got cleaned out by the Chinese. The mystery is what took the Chinese so long.”



# NAPS Branch 31

June 2015

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

I hope that June's newsletter finds all Branch 31 members in good health and good standing. And I definitely hope everyone is out enjoying this beautiful weather. In case you haven't heard, the Tacoma Processing and Distribution Center will not be consolidating into the Seattle Processing and Distribution Center in July as planned. Seems it has been put on hold, yet again, for at least another year or "TBD" (to be determined). The same has been done with the Wenatchee plant and the East DDC.



Locally, we again have to talk about ethics and falsifying. Remember folks, we are EAS and have always been held to a higher standard, as well we should be. We still have members getting into trouble for changing clock rings for their employees without their employee's 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 just to avoid getting yelled at. Bottom line is that getting yelled at is better than possibly losing your job. Have ethics in what you do. Also, "DO NOT" use postal G-10 envelopes for any personal reason. They are to be used only for official postal communications.

Our summer brunch will be held at C.I. Shenanigans on July 12 at 11:00 a.m. Some of featured speakers include NAPS National President Louis Atkins, Western Region Vice President Marilyn Walton, Northwest Vice President Cindy McCracken and possibly other guests. If you have not yet sent your R.S.V.P. to Georgia, please do so as soon as possible the deadline is July 1, 2015.

The Western Region Training Seminar will be held August 20 - 22 in Bellevue this year at the Bellevue Hilton Hotel. Seminar registration is \$170.00.

Our Installation dinner for 2016 will be at 6:00 p.m. on January 23, 2016 at Emerald Queen Casino. Georgia will be sending out invitations later on in the year.

In October this year, we will be taking nominations for the Branch 31 Vice President and Treasurer positions for the 2016-2017 calendar years. Each position carries a two-year term. If you are interested or know someone who is interested, make sure you come to the October meeting to nominate and the November meeting to vote. Voting is done by the membership who attends the November meeting.

Here is a piece of NAPS trivia for Branch 31: Tacoma Branch 31 Trivia: our Branch was the 31<sup>st</sup> NAPS branch created in the United States. The branch was founded somewhere between November 12<sup>th</sup> and November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1908, exact day hasn't been found yet. Tacoma Postmaster at that time was H.L. Votaw. The first NAPS branch in the United States was founded in Louisville, Kentucky on September 8, 1908, thus labeled branch 1. So Branch 31 was only a couple months behind the first branch.

### SUPERVISORS POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

So you've heard of SPAC.....what exactly is it and what does it do?

In 1978, the NAPS Executive Board established the Supervisors Political Action Committee (SPAC) as the legislative fundraising arm of the organization. Since then, SPAC has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to aid political candidates who support the organization's issues. Only NAPS regular, associate or auxiliary members are eligible to donate to SPAC. Members can donate online, through payroll deductions or by sending a check or money order to NAPS Headquarters. If you are interested in donating, you can go to the NAPS website, [www.naps.org](http://www.naps.org), then click on legislative center, then click on SPAC. We encourage donating to SPAC especially through payroll deduction.

Here is an article I found that is helpful in the workplace.

### **COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKPLACE—Author unknown**

#### **Why is communication important in management and leadership?**

Communication is essential for effective functioning in every part of an organization. Although marketing, production, finance, personnel, and maintenance departments may receive direction from corporate goals and objectives, communication links them together and facilitates organizational success. The importance of effective communication for managers cannot be overemphasized for one specific reason: everything a manager does, involves communicating. Communication is needed to increase efficiency, satisfy customers, improve quality, and create innovative products.

# NAPS Branch 31

## **Branch 31 President's Message** – by Dexter Baldwin, Branch 31 President (continued)

Effective communication is so important for organizational success that not only managers, but also their employees must be effective communicators. One role of a manager is to help employees improve their communication skills. When all members of a team, department, or organization are able to communicate effectively with each other and with people outside their group, they are much more likely to perform well. The successful manager, therefore, needs effective communication skills.

### **What is communication you ask?**

Communication is the sharing of information between two or more individuals or groups to reach a common understanding. The most important part of this definition is that the information or ideas conveyed must be understood. To see what this definition means in practice, consider giving or receiving incomplete information. With only a partial understanding, problems will occur.

Good communication is often incorrectly defined by the communicator as agreement instead of clarity of understanding. If someone disagrees with us, we may often assume the person just did not fully understand our position; but a person can clearly understand us and simply not agree. In fact, when a manager concludes that a lack of communication must exist because a conflict between two employees has continued for a long time, a closer look often reveals that, to the contrary, plenty of effective communication is going on. Each fully understands the other's position, but their communication does not necessarily produce agreement.

The communication process consists of two phases.

- the transmission phase
- the feedback phase

In the transmission phase, information is sent from one individual or group-the sender-to another individual or group-the receiver. In the feedback phase, a common understanding is assured.

To begin the transmission phase, the sender decides on the message, which is the information the sender wants to communicate. The sender translates the message into symbols or language, a process called encoding. Once encoded, a message is transmitted through a medium to the receiver. The medium is simply the pathway, such as a phone call or letter, through which an encoded message is transmitted to a receiver.

The feedback phase is initiated by the receiver, who becomes the new sender. The receiver decides what message to send to the original sender (now the new receiver), encodes it, and transmits it through a chosen medium. The message might contain a confirmation that the original message was received and understood, or a restatement of the original message to make sure that it was correctly interpreted, or a request for more information.

So you see that communication is important for success in all parts of the Postal Service. It must start at the top and filter down the chain and end up with all of the craft employees. There has to be good communication between operational areas as well. Mail processing operations must communicate with customer services and vice versa to ensure we have a great product. Maintenance must communicate with operations to ensure machines are operating optimally. Collections must communicate with stations and the plant, just to name a few. Without good communications, the link could be broken and issues could arise.

So take a minute to think about your communication skills with whom you associate at every level. Do you give the communication you expect from others? If not, think about how you can communicate more effectively. It will make you and the Postal Service more efficient and successful.

## **Attention Branch 31 Members** - by Georgia Taylor, Branch 31 Secretary

Our Annual Brunch will be Sunday, July 12, 2015, 11:00am at C.I. Shenanigans, 3017 Ruston Way, Tacoma 98402. You may bring one guest, must be 21 or older. There will be door prizes, SPAC raffles for Seahawk, Mariners and Sounders sport jerseys and special guest National NAPS President, Louis Atkins. You must reserve your spot by contacting me at (253) 847-8110 or [kgtaylor69@comcast.net](mailto:kgtaylor69@comcast.net) no later than July 1, 2015.

This will be the last meeting until September. Hope to see all of you at the Brunch!

<b>Branch 31 Financial Report May 2015</b>	<b>Branch 61 Financial Report - May 2015</b>	
Beginning Balance: \$ 9,505.69	Beginning Checkbook Bal. \$ 37,203.32	<b>Total Expenses</b> \$ 4,500.88
Income: 2,117.00	<u><b>Income</b></u>	Expenses over Income \$ 1,348.37
Expenses: 246.95	Member Dues \$ 3,151.00	Ending Checkbook Balance \$ 35,854.95
Ending Balance: \$ 11,375.74	Interest <u>1.51</u>	
	<b>Total Income</b> \$ 3,152.51	
<b>Income over Expenses :</b>	<u><b>Expenses</b></u>	
\$ 1,870.05	Spring Brunch 3,730.70	
	Meeting Fee 50.00	
	Door Prize (Mar & Apr) 50.00	
	2015 Legislative Training <u>670.18</u>	
Respectfully Submitted:		Respectfully Submitted:
Dawn Boivin		Janet M. Doyle
Branch 31 Treasurer		Branch 61 Treasurer
		

## ***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 eNews-letter. 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>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>
	<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>	