



# NAPS Branch 61



Volume 9 Issue 2      *"You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time."*      February 2009  
 Abraham Lincoln (1809 - 1865)

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## President's Corner



I know all of you are aware the Postal Service is in acute financial crisis, we hear it everyday from our employees, friends, families and our bosses. The Postal Service lost \$700 million in the month of January alone. The Seattle District lost \$12 million, if we don't make changes in our business model and get help we may not be able to make payroll by September. All of you need to urge your House Member today to cosponsor H.R. 22; this is legislation that will allow the Postal Service to use funds it already has in reserve for the funding of Retiree Health Benefits. This is not a bail out (Wall Street gets bailed out). By being able to use these funds the Postal Service will save \$2 billion a year. The USPS will still pre-fund Health Benefits, we are just asking for a little needed relief during this economic crisis. Please go to [www.naps.org](http://www.naps.org) click on Legislative News and complete the message to your House Member. Do it today!

The other hot issue with many of us is the "no overtime" by EAS employees. Yes they can ask this of us, and yes you can be required to take up to a 2 hour lunch. We do have a small perk as EAS employees I know many of us use. It would be that we come to work, work 7 hours and then you ask to go home early, and you still get paid for eight hours. I know this happens but what also happens is the next day you may have to work 7 1/2 hours do we give back the half hour? Some do and some don't! We expect to be able to leave early when we need to and then again we expect to get paid that additional straight time when we work a little longer. Is that fair? The times have changed this is not the Postal Service of even 6 months ago. We need to step up and do whatever we need to, to keep our organization afloat. I am not asking you to be abused, if any of you are being asked to take more than a 2 hour lunch you need to let us know, if you are being required to work without being paid, or you are being verbally abused and threatened you can contact any branch officer [branch61@comcast.net](mailto:branch61@comcast.net). Times are changing! If you think you can kick back and take it easy you have another thing coming. This is the time to take charge, address issues, work together and make the Postal Service stronger. We all have a responsibility to lead by example. We cannot be making inflammatory remarks, and we do need to let our employees know what is happening. We need to be prepared in these uncertain times.

Personal leave is another hot issue. The Employee and Labor Relations Manual Section §519.7 states you do not accumulate "Personal Leave" hours by working more than eight hours per day and you will not be allowed to take time off because of those additional hours. You may request "Personal Leave" for portions of a day in the event

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## Business As Unusual - by Sylvester Black, VP, Western Area Operations

We often approach change with a wary eye. It might look uncomfortable. It feels different. And before we even try it, we often dismiss it. "It won't work." But like it or not, we've all been forced to rethink our ways. It's no longer business as "usual." In fact, now it's business as "unusual," as we have all had to adapt to the challenges that come our way. I know things haven't been easy. Many of you are asking, "What's next?" But we are proving our mettle. We are showing our strength. We are standing up to the challenge. The Postal Service is proving our critics wrong. We are finding ways to control our costs, despite turbulence in fuel and cost of living and additional new deliveries. We are finding ways to improve our service. We are doing this without cutting our core identity – universal service. We don't need the crutch of "the way it's always been done." We can respond, adapt and change. And no one is better at it than the U.S. Postal Service.

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**President's Corner - continued**

you have something planned occurs during your tour of duty. A full day of Personal Leave will not be granted. If you need a full day off work, consider changing your day off or take leave. There is no such thing as "Comp" (compensatory) Time.

I know all of us are dedicated to our jobs. We all work hard and want to see this organization be successful. We must be proactive! We can't be sitting around waiting for what is going to happen next. The Seattle Air Mail Center is destined to close this year. Will it happen in next month as previously stated? I don't know, what is going to happen to all of the employees, we don't know. Currently Article 12 of the APWU National Agreement has been invoked for a 300 mile radius. Do we want them all to have jobs? Most certainly! If anyone would like to submit an article to be published your Branch 61 Newsletter please submit it to [branch61@comcast.net](mailto:branch61@comcast.net). You can have your say as long as it is not libelous, slanderous, or personally attacking someone. Branch 61 would like to invite all of its members to our membership Brunch on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at Noon. It will be held at Salty's on Alki. Attending our Brunch will be Jay Killackey, NAPS National Secretary/Treasurer, Lou Kush, Washington State President, Ben Clapp, Northwest Area Vice President and Kathi Clapp, Oregon State President. Let's all get together and enjoy an afternoon together, if you have any questions

**The Next Branch Meeting**

**will be held on Tuesday,  
February 24, 2009  
at the American Legion Hall  
19213 Bothell Way NE,  
Bothell WA at 7:00 p.m.**

we will have the experts there. You'll be receiving a postcard notice with an R.S.V.P card.

Our next branch meeting will be held on February 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM bring your questions, concerns and any issues, we are there to help. See the box above for the meeting location.

**"Veeps Peeps" - by Ron Hansen, 1st Vice President**

I'll bet you were wondering what I would do if they gave me carte blanche to fix the Post Office. I am sorry I have not answered the call before this, because the Post Office needs my muddled opinion now more than ever and I am pretty sure I can't make the process any worse than it already is.

So here goes, and please jump in at any point you want and yell approval or disapproval at the top of your lungs (best left for the privacy of your home with out any family members present that are inclined to have you committed) and then get up and do what you can to fix the PO in your own way. Here is my opinion, thank you very much:

- The **five day work week** works for me, but the idea is a little undercooked and ungarished, so here is what is needed to make it palatable, edible and well plated.
- *First*, we **increase our box sections** by a gynomous amount.
- *Second*, we should have **six day delivery in the box sections** because here people actually pay for their delivery through their box rentals. This would encourage customers to have their street delivery discontinued and centralize delivery significantly.
- *Third*, we should have **premium Saturday delivery for expedited Parcels** (i.e. Priority and Express) to maintain and regain the premium parcel service market. Remember that the increased box sections would hopefully absorb a significant part of the Saturday premium parcel action.
- *Fourth*, we bite the bullet and **centralize as many deliveries as possible**. It might not be popular at first but what we are talking about here is saving the Post Office. Why would we do this? Because the cost of door to door delivery is ridiculously higher. The Injury rate is also significantly increased on walking routes (dog bites, slips, trips, and falls, etc.).
- *Fifth*, we need to start using **gas efficient vehicles**. My carriers tell me they are lucky to get eight miles to the gallon in their LLVs. My Toyota Prius gets over forty miles to the gallon in the city hauling my significant hind end around. It is the right and economical thing to do.
- *Sixth*, **reduce the paper**. Everything we are accountable for is on the computer and we could save a great deal of money and re-sources if we do not print things we seldom look at. I remember when the daily reports were two to three pages. **However, whenever possible :Mail, do not E-Mail**
- *Seventh*, **promote passing the FERS sick leave act** that provides incentives for FERS employees to not use their sick leave; and help promote legislation that removes undo financial burdens on the Post Office.
- *Eighth*, as loyal employees **stop patronizing companies that do not use the Post Office** and let them know that is why you are not patronizing them.
- *Ninth*, **input your ideas and creativity in saving the Post Office** and sell using the Post Office to anyone who will listen, (disown family members who use UPS or Fed Ex)
- *Tenth*, **build positive work environments** that start from the top and avoid demeaning and counterproductive threats and criticisms (walk the talk)
- *Eleventh*, do not sell real estate at the bottom of the market
- *Twelfth, and last but not least*, **Be part of the solution**, come to NAPS meetings and **make your voice heard**, your opinions are as valid as every one's except mine (just kidding).

*P. S:* If you have an opinion that is burning a hole in your head share it in the newsletter for all of us to ruminate over. Contact Rich Wilson the Branch 61 Editor at [branch61@comcast.net](mailto:branch61@comcast.net). He is anxiously awaiting contributions from all of you.

My deep appreciation to anyone who read all of this, and you should be checked out by a competent Medical professional.

## January 2009 General Meeting Minutes - by Rich Wilson, Editor

- President Cindy McCracken called the meeting to order at 7:22 p.m.
- Art Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance
- Tena Ivory read of the November Meeting minutes. Rich moved, Janet seconded to accept the minutes as read.
- Anne Kush read the 2008 Year End Financial Report. Janet Doyle moved and Gene Williams seconded the acceptance of the report as read. It passed.
- Gene Williams gave the legislative report. James Poole offered to make the appointments for all the Members of Congress and Senators as Gene Williams will not be attending the LTS.
- Cindy mentioned the Executive Board will be meeting tonight to determine which members will be attending the Legislative Training Seminar.
- Mary Mitchell discussed having a brunch at Salty's on Alki on March 8. The cost is \$31.95 plus tax and gratuity. Discussion ensued on how to get the word to the membership. Rich suggested and Ron mentioned having it on March 22 instead of the 8<sup>th</sup>. Mary will lock in the 22<sup>nd</sup> tomorrow. Jay Killackey, National Secretary Treasurer will be asked to be the guest speaker. Rich suggested we overbook like the airlines to ensure we have 100 people showing up. Everyone thought it was a good idea.
- Cindy mentioned a blog called [www.postalreporter.com](http://www.postalreporter.com). There are reports on this WEB Site from the APWU, NALC, NAPS, NAPUS, and the League. Long lunches have become an issue. The USPS can force supervisors to take long lunches but not a split shift. Is 3 hours too long? Cindy thinks so!
- Cindy called for an open discussion. Cindy said the AMC is now scheduled to close in August. There is a 300 mile radius for relocation as people lose their jobs. Relocations will not be funded by the USPS. Gene Williams said many units will close or relocate before the leases expire. Art Williams said Puyallup Main Office will be split up with part going to Sumner and part going to Puyallup South Hill. Cindy mentioned Bellevue MO BMEU will be moving to the East DDC. Anne said closing post offices generate make \$1,000.00 a year is nearly impossible. Someone said this may very well change in the future. Next week is the last drop for ADVO at Bellevue MO, Cindy sad. She doesn't know what will happen to the mail or where it will be deposited. Art asked if there is talk about letting go people with less than six years. Cindy said it might happen, but doesn't know when. Tour 2 at the Seattle P&DC has been eliminated. Anne said she and Lou had a very nice conversation with Jay Killackey in Spokane last week. Jay said there is simply no talk about what is happening in the organization. He added however, the rumors going around are plentiful. Cindy said it is real scary out there. Gene Williams thinks we should hear something soon after the District Manager returns from her meeting in Kansas City. Yolanda Grayson asked if NAPS is simply waiting to hear what's going to happen. Cindy and Gene essentially said yes we are. All in attendance agreed the current situation is dire, for EAS and Craft employees alike. Ron Hanson is convinced we are in a lot of trouble. We need to look closely at our operations to see where we can improve. Mail volume is tanking. Many businesses are asking their customers to electronically divert payments away from the mail. Ron Hanson said the Postal Inspection Service is out making security audits. He said they are being somewhat gentle on office where they are auditing.
- The discussion ended at 8:20 p.m.
- Anne asked for a motion to change the names on the bank account. Janet motioned and Nick seconded the motion past.
- Nick motioned and seconded adjourning the meeting. It passed unanimously.
- Art Williams won the \$25.00 door prize.
- Nick, Art, Rich, Yolanda, Alisa, Tena, Brenda Chambliss and Cindy are interested in attending LTS.
- Ron Hanson called the EB meeting to order at 8:34 p.m. Anne covered the budget. She passed out a handout. Ron suggested having north, central and south meetings. Anne said we've tried it and it doesn't really work. Ron argued we should try it with a meal as the incentive. Anne prefers if we have a restaurant meeting we should ensure we have a separate room. Tena said 7 of the 8 people who expressed an interest in going to LTS meet the qualification criteria. Alisa removed her name removed from the list of interested people.
- Nick moved to have 5 people to LTS. Tena seconded. Nick said we should have at least two members for each team. The vote did not pass.
- Rich moved a secondary criteria, Ron seconded requiring those who attend must have contributed a newsletter article. The vote passed. Yolanda, Tena, Rich and Cindy met this qualification. Ron suggested we have an alternate. We decided we would go with the four. If one drops out we can make 3 attendees work. Each attendee was asked to complete a registration form.
- Next we dealt with the NW Area Convention criteria. The convention will be held Based on \$700 per attendee we could have 10 members attend.
- Then the Western Region training was discussed. This will be held on August 21 and 22 (Fri & Sat). We will go for 3 nights. Anne said travel is about \$400.00.
- We continued with the budget line items. The postage line was tripled due to the cost of the mailing for the brunch scheduled for March 22.
- Rich motioned to accept the budget as amended, Janet seconded. The motion passed without discussion.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

*Return Service Requested*

***FIRST-CLASS MAIL***

<p>NAPS Seattle Branch 61 Financial Statement January 2009</p>	<p><b>Seven Ways to Avoid Financial Trouble</b> Provided by Eugenia Vasquez, Seattle District EAP Consultant</p>
<p><b>Opening Balance</b> \$ 30,875.53</p> <p><b>Income</b></p> <p>Member Dues \$ 3,677.50</p> <p>Interest 7.02</p> <p><b>Total Income</b> \$ 3,684.52</p> <p><b>Expenses</b></p> <p>Legal Retainer (3 months) \$ 927.00</p> <p>Door Prize (Nov &amp; Jan) 50.00</p> <p>Advocate Mileage 325.40</p> <p>National Convention (2008) 400.00</p> <p>President's Meeting 116.16</p> <p><b>Total Expenses</b> \$ 1,819.06</p> <p><b>Income over (Expenses)</b> 1,865.46</p> <p><b>Ending Balance</b> \$ 32,740.99</p> <p>Respectfully submitted by: Anne Kush Branch 61 Treasurer</p>	<p>Anyone who has had financial concerns knows that they can be stressful and time consuming. Excessively worrying about your financial needs is not good for your health. Try to avoid financial troubles all together or at least address them early on. The longer you wait to address your financial woes, the harder it is to get out of debt. The following suggestions may help to keep your finances "in the black."</p> <p><b>Budget</b> Create a realistic budget and stick to it. This means periodically checking it and readjusting your figures and spending habits.</p> <p><b>Avoid Impulse Buying</b> When you see something you hadn't planned to buy, don't purchase it on the spot. Go home and think it over. It's less likely you'll return to the store and buy it.</p> <p><b>Avoid Sales</b> An item really isn't on sale if you had no intention of buying it in the first place. A \$500 item on sale for \$400 isn't a \$100 savings if you didn't need the item to begin with. It's spending \$400 unnecessarily.</p> <p><b>Get Medical Insurance</b> You can't avoid medical emergencies but living without medical insurance is an invitation to financial ruin. Even a stopgap policy with a large deductible can help if a medical crisis comes up. One of the best ways to avoid financial trouble is to be prepared for any type of emergency.</p> <p><b>Don't Charge for Items that You Can't Pay for Now</b> If you don't currently have the cash, don't charge based on future income. Sometimes future income doesn't materialize. It's best to put your credit cards in a drawer and commit to living without credit for a while.</p> <p><b>Avoid Large Rent or Mortgages</b> Obligate yourself only for what you can now afford and increase your mortgage payments only as your income increases. Consider refinancing your house if your payments are unwieldy.</p> <p><b>Find Alternatives to Spending Money</b> An old saying is that "the best things in life are free" and truly they are! For a friend's birthday, try a picnic rather than an expensive restaurant. When someone suggests that you meet for lunch, propose meeting at the museum on its free day or going for a walk in the park. Instead of buying books, CDs, and renting videos, borrow them for free at a library. You may be surprised at the many free resources available.</p>