

First Class Leader

**NAPS Branch 66
Portland OR**

www.napsnw.org

February 2009

From the President's Desk

By Dee Ann DeSimini

President, Branch 66

February is just about upon us and I don't know about you, but time seems to move very fast as I get older. We rush through our lives at breakneck speed barely touching down once in a while to smell the flowers. On the bright side, February will provide us with an opportunity to sit down with our fellow supervisors and managers at the annual dinner coming up the 21st. This is an excellent time to slow down and compare notes with your peers in a relaxed non-work setting. This dinner is to honor you, the NAPS membership, and it's free to you and your guest. Check out the information below and RSVP right away. I'm really looking forward to meeting those of you I don't know personally.

At the dinner we will be raising money for the Supervisors Political Action Committee (SPAC) in a couple of different ways. First, we'll be selling raffle tickets for \$10.00 each. The raffle will be held on May 16th at the NW Area Convention in Bend and features

cash prizes of \$1,250.00, \$500.00 and \$250.00. There are only 1,000 tickets available and they are being sold by all NW NAPS Branches. As an added bonus, Branch 66 will hold a special drawing at the dinner. All raffle tickets purchases from our branch will be entered into drawings for a \$25.00 gas card and a \$25.00 restaurant gift certificate. The best part is that Branch 66 prize winners will still be eligible for the cash drawings in May.

Secondly, we'll be holding an auction at the dinner. One of the highlights will be the auctioning of unique cases of wine. Many NAPS members have already committed to bringing a bottle of wine to donate to the auction. The donated bottles will then be combined into cases and sold to the highest bidders. You can help make the auction a success by bringing your own bottle of wine to donate. Back by popular demand is Reece Steelman as the chief auctioneer and bottle washer.

It should be lots of fun and I hope to see you all there. ☺

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Upcoming Events:

Saturday, February 21, 2009
7:30 p.m.
Membership Appreciation and Installation Dinner
Milwaukie Elks Club
13121 McLoughlin Blvd
Milwaukie OR 97222-7115

R.S.V.P. Required

Tuesday, March 10, 2009
6:30 p.m.
Membership Meeting
Izzy's Pizza
Buffet dinner for just \$6.00!
1307 NE 102nd St, Portland
(Gateway Shopping Center)

Annual Membership Appreciation Dinner

You must **R.S.V.P. by MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2009** if you are planning on attending the Annual Membership Appreciation and Installation of Officers' Dinner. The dinner will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Milwaukie Elks Club, 13121 McLoughlin Boulevard, and is free to every NAPS member and one guest. Members are encouraged to donate a bottle of wine for the auction (*see page 4*).

R.S.V.P. by email to: napsnews@comcast.net or siminide@msn.com

R.S.V.P by phone to: Dee Ann DeSimini at 503-294-5716 (work) or 503-645-5249 (home)



Do You Know How to Deliver Criticism?

Reprinted from the **Western Word**

January 21, 2009 Edition

Every manager needs to lead people and give instruction. Often, there is a need to correct a process or behavior through a personal conversation. There is a wrong way to deliver criticism ... and a right way:

Do it privately: Public criticism of an employee's work is humiliating and is usually not listened to.

Do it personally: It's usually a mistake to deliver criticism by e-mail, sticky note, or some other impersonal means. A personal, one-on-one discussion encourages dialogue and can promote greater understanding and buy-in.

Get right to the point: Most

employees know when the boss isn't happy with their performance. Don't tiptoe around the problem.

Keep it in the context of positive performance: It's essential that the employee understand that you see not only the deficiencies but also the employee's contribution to the organization.

Speak in terms of I, not you: Speaking in the first person is an invaluable tool for reducing employee defensiveness. Structure your criticisms in terms of how you feel, rather than what your employee has allegedly done.

Be specific: This will bring into sharper focus the problem that the two of you need to address.

Stick to the facts: Be objective and avoid speculation. Talk about what you know to be true and what you can support with evi-

dence.

Don't twist the knife: There is no need to repeat a criticism within the same discussion. Your employee gets the idea. Avoid re-erecting old problems that have already been resolved.

Jointly craft a solution: After talking about the problem, try to involve your employee in solving it. Pinpoint the problem and then discuss some mutually-agreeable goals as a baseline against which to evaluate future performance.

Offer feedback regularly: So when you see an employee doing something wrong (or right), let him or her know about it immediately to correct (or reinforce) that behavior. ☐

Adapted from *Management by Proverbs*, Michael Zigarelli, Moody Press, 1999

Legislative/Regulatory Update 1/29/09

By Bruce Moyer

NAPS Legislative Counsel

Postmaster General Jack Potter announced at a Capitol Hill hearing on Wednesday that the Postal Service must consider the reduction of mail delivery from six days a week to five. Rapidly declining mail volume, aggravated by worsening economic conditions and the diversion of mail to the internet, prompts the cost-cutting move, Potter said.

The Postal Service is in an "acute financial crisis," Potter told the Senate Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management. Potter said the Service lost nearly \$3 billion last year and is on a path toward an even greater loss this year. Mail volume fell by 9.5 billion pieces last year, and could drop by another 15 billion pieces this year. Potter could not

predict when the bottom of the volume decline would be reached, nor how long it would take for mail volume to return.

The Postal Regulatory Commission, in a report on the Postal Service's universal service obligation last month, predicted that USPS could save almost \$2 billion a year by moving to a five-day delivery schedule.

Potter said he regarded five-day delivery as a "temporary suspension" of mail service on light mail volume days, particularly during the summer months, not a permanent reduction in mail service. He cited Saturdays or Tuesdays as non-delivery days that might be targeted.

Although Potter did not indicate how soon five-day delivery might begin, he said that it first would require the approval of the Postal Service Board of Governors,

as well as Congress. Postal Regulatory Commission Chairman Dan Blair told the Subcommittee that an advisory opinion from the PRC also would be required. Congress has insisted upon the maintenance of six-day delivery since 1983, inserting a provision requiring six-day delivery each year into an annual government funding bill.

Potter said that commercial mailers had indicated that they would work with the Postal Service to "reduce their expectations to permit us to change our delivery schedule." But Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) expressed deep reservations about the move to five-day delivery, worrying that it would degrade mail service, prompting mail volume to decline further, creating more problems. "I'm very disappointed to hear

(Continued on page 4)



Question of the Month ... Why did we receive our PFP increases late this year?

By Ranae Wittenburg

Editor, Branch 66

The short answer is, we didn't receive it late. The effective date was established in the EAS pay package that was mutually agreed upon on August 30, 2007. In the past, PFP increases were effective at the beginning of pay period two (PP-02). For 2009, PFP increases went into effect at the beginning of PP-03 which is one full pay period later than previous years. In 2010 and 2011, the PFP effective dates will also be the first day of PP-03.

Under the provisions of 39 USC 1004, management organizations are entitled to participate directly in the planning and development of pay policies and schedules, fringe benefit programs, and other programs relating to supervisory and other managerial employees. At one time, each of the management organizations negotiated

separately. However, for the purpose of giving better representation to management employees, NAPS, NAPUS, and the League formed an alliance. This alliance has enabled the organizations to open a direct line of communication to the Deputy Postmaster General and Postal Service's Chief Operating Officer. The organizations meet on a monthly basis to discuss issues and concerns with a Postal Service representative who has the authority to respond immediately. It is important to note that the monthly meetings are a consultative process and are not the same as the binding agreements negotiated by the craft unions.

On August 30, 2007 after 10 months of consultation, NAPS, NAPUS, and the League announced that they had come to an agreement with the Postal Service on a pay package for calendar years 2007 through 2010. Under the

terms of the pay agreement, the effective dates for PFP increases are January 5, 2008, January 17, 2009, January 16, 2010, and January 15, 2011.

The pay package also included one other important change to PFP that became effective on October 1, 2007 (FY 2008). Individual core requirement rating options now encompass the full range of the 1-15 point rating matrix! During previous years, only ratings of 0, 6, 11, and 14 could be given.

Other items in the pay package included changes to the minimum and maximum salary ranges for each pay grade; health benefit contributions; bone marrow, stem cell, blood platelet and organ donation administrative leave; and bereavement leave. Want more detailed information? Request a copy of the EAS Pay Package by sending an email to napsnews@comast.net.



LTS Update

By Ranae Wittenburg

Editor, Branch 66


A new Administration, a new Congress, and difficult economic challenges are the setting for the 2009 Legislative Training Session (LTS) in Washington D.C. A tentative agenda was recently announced and the focus for this year's session will be on financial relief for the Postal Service, Voting by Mail, locality pay, FERS sick leave reform, and Social Security fairness (GPO and WEP).

The three day session takes place March 29th through March 31st. Attendees will receive training Sunday and Monday morning. The training sessions will concen-

trate on the basics: a) giving NAPS delegates a thorough understanding of the issues and b) building the confidence of the delegates to enable them to speak informatively with Capitol Hill lawmakers. Monday afternoon and Tuesday will be devoted to visiting House Members, Senators, and Congressional staff to address the key issues.

Dan O'Donnell, Legislative Vice President, and Aleks Navarro, Vice President Plant Operations, have been chosen to represent

Branch 66. They already have plans to put their training to good use.

In April, Congressman Kurt Schrader will be hosting a local town hall meeting that Dan and Aleks will be attending. Town hall meetings provide an excellent opportunity to discuss issues and trade thoughts in a more intimate atmosphere. Now more than ever, we need to make our voices heard. So please plan on joining them as they meet locally with Oregon's newest Congressman. 

SAMPLE

NW AREA SPAC RAFFLE

First Prize: \$1250.00
Second Prize: - \$500.00
Third Prize: - \$250.00

Total of 1000 tickets sold - Drawing to be held on May 16th, 2009
Each Ticket \$10.00 Need not be present to win



Legislative/Regulatory Update ... continued

you come before us today to advocate the elimination of six-day delivery," Collins told Potter. Collins said that she already was receiving complaints in her home state from newspaper publishers, upset with USPS changes in drop-shipment arrangements. Potter defended the five-day delivery move, saying, "Two years ago, no one envisioned a 23 billion drop in volume in 2 years. That is the kind of loss we anticipated over a decade."

Potter said the greatest cost savings -- as much as \$25 billion over eight years -- could be achieved through another option: reducing the Postal Service's retiree health benefits payments, from 2009 through 2016. But Subcommittee Chairman Tom Carper (D-DE) and Sen. Collins expressed resistance, favoring at most a two-year realignment of the Postal Service's payment schedule. The General Accountability Office agreed, suggesting in its testimony that an eight-year realignment of the Postal Service's contributions toward future retiree health benefits would cause its

unfunded liability to grow by \$32 billion (including interest charges), creating "the risk that USPS would have difficulty making future payments, particularly considering mail volume trends and the impact of payments on postal rates if mail volume declines continue."

Differences and questions didn't end there. The greatest amount of uncertainty surrounded how the Postal Service can embrace an entirely new business model, relying less on hard-copy mail and transforming its role in an increasingly wired world. Despite repeated questioning of the witnesses, none offered any ground-breaking vision for the Postal Service of the future. Chairman Carper indicated that he intended to hold another hearing in a month to pursue further inquiry along these lines.

Sen. Tom Coburn (R-OK) summed up his feelings when he told Potter, "You have a failed business model. Until you provide a new business model, everything you are asking for won't cut it." ☰

All Wine, No Cheese!

To kick our SPAC fundraising to the next level, we're holding our **FIRST** ever "Build-A-Case" wine auction at the Installation Dinner in February. Members are encouraged to donate a bottle of their favorite wine which will be used to build custom cases that will be auctioned after dinner. Each custom case will be available for preview prior to the auction. Consumption of the auctioned cases will be at your own time and place. This is sure to be a fun event so please join us! ☰

www.napsnw.org

Your Branch 66 Officers

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The NAPS Newsletter

"First Class Leader" is the official publication of NAPS Branch 66, Post Office Box 3511, Portland, Oregon, 97208-3511. It is published monthly and is intended to inform, educate, and entertain members of Branch 66. All members in good standing receive this publication as part of their membership dues.

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

If your address changes, please notify the Newsletter Editor. Address changes and articles may be submitted via regular mail or email to:

napsnews@comcast.net