

Message from your State President

SEASONS GREETINGS

The newsletter you are receiving is a joint project from the NAPS branches in the State of Oregon. The State officers wanted to find a way to increase communication with all NAPS members and to keep you informed as to what events and activities are going on in your area, and to allow you an opportunity to see what is going on with your fellow NAPS members across the district. We will be sending out this newsletter on a quarterly basis and you can receive it electronically if you wish. If you prefer to receive this electronically, please contact our editor at woodworker16@verizon.net and provide him your name and email address. You can also view this, and other NW Area branches newsletters at napsnw.org. This web site is provided by our NW Area VP, Ben Clapp, as a means for all the NW Area branches to provide relevant information to NAPS members and contact information for your branch officers. Take a moment to view this web site and give us some feedback. You can contact any of the officers or the web master with your suggestions and ideas.

The Oregon State Branch 940 is comprised of members at large. In addition, the branch provides oversight of the three branches in the Portland District.

The officers in this branch are the three local branch presidents, a secretary/treasurer, vice president and president. The three elected officers serve for a 2 year term and are elected at the NW Area Convention by a vote of the delegates. The current branch officers are; State President, Kathi Clapp, State Vice President, Joe Lahmann and State Secretary/Treasurer, Perry Weinberger. The three branch presidents are Robert Atkinson, Portland Branch 66, George Sieveking, Capitol Branch 275 and Robert Mann, Southern Oregon Branch 276. Our vice president, is responsible for legislative activities and leads a group of delegates for office visits with Oregon and SW Washington Senators and Congressional Staff during our yearly Legislative Training Session. He also maintains contact with our elected representatives throughout the year on legislation that affects us as postal and federal employees. As the State President, I meet with the District Manager monthly to discuss issues relevant to your work environment and job duties. I represent specific issues from each of the three branches that have been unable to be resolved locally.

As a NAPS member, I encourage all of you to get involved and attend your local branch meetings. The organization is stronger with participation and input. There is an opportunity for all members to be heard and involved. I also encourage you to invite your fellow EAS to become members. The NAPS organization is better able to represent us in pay negotiations and work environment issues with a larger membership. Remember, there is strength in numbers. You can find a sign up form "1187" on the naps.org web site. Contact your local branch officers to ask how much the dues are for your branch.

Sponsors of new members will receive a \$50 savings bond from NAPS Headquarters.

In closing, I want to wish each of you a wonderful holiday season. I hope you find the articles in this newsletter helpful and relevant. We welcome suggestions or interest in writing articles and look forward to hearing from you.

Kathi Clapp
Oregon Branch 940
President

NAPS Legislative News

Dan O'Donnell – Portland Branch 66 Executive Vice President

NAPS Branches from around the State of Oregon will send a delegation to Washington DC from March 30, 2007 thru April 2, 2007 to lobby for Postal Service on NAPS issues to the Oregon Congressional members. Most Congressional members have the opinion that after the implementation of Postal Reform Legislation things are going well for the Postal Service. It is the job of the Oregon NAPS delegation to inform our Congressional members about the current state of affairs of the Postal Service and the Legislative support needed by NAPS employees and their families.

As of this date, there are 3 Legislative Issues that NAPS endorses:

- 1. Elimination of the GPO - Government Pension Offset**
- 2. Elimination of the WEP – Windfall Elimination Provision**
- 3. Support for revision of FERS Sick Leave Rules**

NAPS National President Ted Keating presented a statement to Congress on November 19, 2007 addressing NAPS positions on Items 1 and 2.

Item 3 is described in the following excerpt from the most recent NAPS Legislative Update

FERS Sick Leave Bill Could Provide Relief

Rep. James P. Moran Jr. (D-VA) is preparing to introduce legislation to provide FERS employees with some form of credit for accumulated sick leave at retirement. A FERS sick leave bill could be introduced before Congress wraps up its current session in December. While it is too early to predict whether the measure will become law in 2008, it offers hope to NAPS members and others in the FERS system who long have favored the elimination of any difference in how the CSRS and FERS retirement systems apply credit to unused sick leave.

Employees under CSRS receive a boost to their retirement pension through credit for the sick leave balance remaining at the time of retirement. But FERS-covered employees, some of whom may rack up thousands of hours of sick leave over their careers, operate under a "use it or lose it" rule. While CSRS and FERS employees receive the same number of sick leave days each year, and may carry over an unlimited amount of unused sick leave from year to year, the difference in the two systems' treatment of sick leave appears increasingly to affect how much sick leave CSRS and FERS employees actually use during their career and especially as they close in on retirement.

The Congressional Research Service in a 2004 study and again this summer reported that that FERS employees use their sick leave more frequently – almost thirty-five percent more often -- than their CSRS counterparts do, particularly as they approach retirement. Data compiled last year by the Office of Personnel Management reached the same findings, showing that retirement-eligible FERS employees on average used more sick leave than CSRS retirement-eligible employees. FERS employees who were approaching retirement also used more sick leave than their CSRS counterparts did. These patterns and other evidence suggest that a substantial number of FERS employees may be abusing the system, treating sick leave like annual leave for brief, excused absences from work.

"[T]he differences in average usage rates between employees in the two retirement systems," CSRS observed in the 2004 report, "lends credence to a longstanding hypothesis – that FERS employees, who get no value for their unused sick leave, will use that leave rather than simply forfeiting it back to the government at retirement." Observers have point out that increased sick leave use results in costs to the government through lost productivity, dollars, and morale. To the rescue, Moran says that a one-time cash payment to retiring FERS workers may be the best way to end the CSRS-FERS sick leave disparity and provide an incentive for FERS employees to conserve their sick leave rather than use or abuse it. While details are not yet final, the foremost option under consideration is a one-time cash payment to FERS retirees, based on a formula that would take into account salary and hours of sick leave accrued.

Other options could involve the CSRS pension approach or crediting the value of some portion of unused sick leave toward retiree health or life insurance premiums. According to the Congressional Research Service, forty-five states provide some form of compensation for unused sick leave at retirement. More than half of them provide a one-time cash payment, limiting the size of the payment in some way, through either a cap on how much sick leave may be credited, or the size of the payment itself, or both.

Interestingly, some problems in government never seem to go away. Nearly a half-century ago, significant numbers of CSRS employees were retiring with almost no sick-leave credit remaining as they walked out the door. To reduce the apparent abuse of sick leave at the time, Congress in 1969 changed the rules to permit CSRS workers to receive credit for unused sick leave in the calculation of their pensions. To pay for that policy change, Congress increased the amount that employees and their agencies pay into the civil service retirement trust fund. When FERS was created in 1986, however, Congress refrained from similarly giving credit to FERS employees because of cost concerns.

Now a House lawmaker with a sizable Federal and postal employee constituency in his Congressional

district similarly wants Congress to retool the sick leave credit rule once again. We'll let you know when the bill is introduced, and its details.

National Association of Postal Supervisors Legislative Report

- **New Postage Rates to Remain Within Inflation Next Year**
- **Not Ready for Prime Time?**
- **SPAC**

New Postage Rates to Remain Within Inflation Next Year

Like a maiden whacking a bottle of champagne against the side of a launched battleship as it enters the sea, the Postal Service Board of Governors announced yesterday that the Postal Service will seek a new rate increase early next year under the new postal reform framework, which limits a postage increase to the rate of inflation. The move is the first key action by the Postal Service under the new law, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, passed by Congress late last year. The new era of postal reform truly has begun.

Congress under the new law had availed the Postal Service the opportunity to seek one final rate increase under the old rate-setting rules, rather than embark on the new system immediately. But the Postal Service ended months of speculation yesterday with its announcement that it would decline to exercise that choice and push ahead under the new, more streamlined rate-setting system.

The new rate system will be guided by a new set of regulations that were issued by the Postal Regulatory Commission on October 29 (and published in the Federal Register on November 9), eight months ahead of the original deadline set by Congress. Mailers had pushed for the Postal Service to use the new rules for the next rate case and discard the old costly and litigious system as quickly as possible.

Under the guiding principles of the new law, the Postal Service will enjoy greater business and pricing flexibility in setting rates for parcels and Priority and Express mail, in exchange for keeping rate increases in line with inflation for first-class and standard mail and periodicals. Historically, postage rates have remained within inflation, but were not as predictable.

Limiting price increases to inflation "... delivers one of the main goals of the new law for business mailers: a predictable price schedule," Postmaster General John Potter said in a statement. "We intend to use this new flexibility to grow our competitive business, offering volume discounts and contract pricing." Jim Miller, the chairman of the USPS Board of Governors, said the Board of Governors will recommend a new rate increase sometime "in the next few months."

The last postage increase came last May, when the Postal Service raised the price of a first-class letter stamp 5.1% to 41 cents from 39 cents – higher than inflation but in line with USPS costs. Rate increases were considerably higher for periodicals, up an average of 11%, and certain types of standard mail, which increased 19%. Some catalog mailers saw increases of as much as 40%, generating mailer concern and a Congressional Hearing last month on the size of the periodicals increase.

In other action, the USPS also announced that it had completed the fiscal year on September 30 with a smaller loss than expected. The Postal Service ended the year with a loss of \$5.1 billion, about \$300 million less than projected. The loss was attributed to a required payment to set up the postal retiree retirement health benefits fund, mandated by the new law. Without that requirement USPS would have ended the year with a \$1.6 billion surplus. Volume was down for all categories of mail, with the sole exception of Standard Mail, which rose at a lesser rate than in previous years. PMG Potter also indicated that downward national economic trends potentially foreshadowing a recession were not encouraging, and could affect the magnitude of mail during the holiday season and the balance of the fiscal year.

Not Ready for Prime Time?

Some NAPS members have asked for the text of the Postal Regulatory Commission's recent decision questioning the Postal Service's judgment in approving a negotiated service agreement with the Bank of America. In the PRC's decision, it declared that the NSA could cost the Postal Service "anywhere from \$25 million to \$45.8 million." The Legislative Update appearing on page 21 of the November Issue of *The Postal Supervisor* reported on the PRC decision.

SPAC

While those of us that have been around for a while we know that SPAC stands for Supervisor Political Action Committee, we have a lot of new members to our state this year. A lot of what we do for the SPAC fund lets our politicians know what we expect and that we will support them if they support us. This year we have a new project to put Oregon and teh Northwest Area on teh map for our efforts. Be sure to get with your presidents to find what teh action will be as with this program you have teh opportunity to not only help, but win in return. Sound interesting? Ask you local officers for details and I am certain that you will hear more.

I am here to serve you

Joe Lahmann

State Vice President - Legislative Chair



First Class Leader

Portland District Branch # 66

WWW.NAPS66.ORG

National Organization Webpage - WWW.NAPS.ORG

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SUPERVISORS POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

With the influence Congress has over the future of the Postal Service, and on the benefits of working and retired NAPS members, it has become increasingly important that NAPS members do everything possible to help elect or re-elect members to both the House and Senate who are supportive of members interests. But with the cost of political campaigns increasing, how can an individual member have any real impact on a political campaign? Political action committees, or PACs, were created for just this purpose.

PACs collect contributions from individuals in the same business or industry and combine them for maximum impact. The PAC then can make a more substantial contribution to their legislator's campaign in the name of their organization. In the case of NAPS members, they contribute to SPAC — the Supervisors Political Action Committee.

SPAC is a bipartisan contributor, with most funds going to campaigns of postal oversight committee members—both Democrats and Republicans. Donations are only allowed from members (including retired members) and their families. They may be collected at branch meetings, legislative meetings, and state and national conventions.



USPS Western Area Finance Manager
Speaks at the NAPS 2007 Western Region
Training Seminar

NAPS and Auxiliary members contributing at least \$100 in a calendar year receive special recognition—a lapel pin showing their membership in the NAPS President's Club for that year. Those contributing at least \$200 in a calendar receive their own unique pin designating them members of the President's Roundtable. Members of both groups receive special opportunities and information throughout the year. If NAPS members value their benefits, those received now and those received after retirement, members must work to protect them. You can go online to www.naps.org to contribute or see your local branch officer.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

Interesting Dates & Fun Postal Facts

- 1775 - Benjamin Franklin appointed first Postmaster General by the Continental Congress
- 1847 - U. S. postage stamps issued
- 1855 - Prepayment of postage required
- 1860 - Pony Express began
- 1863 - Free city delivery began
- 1873 - U.S. Postal cards issued
- 1874 - General Postal Union (now Universal Postal Union) established
- 1893 - First commemorative stamps issued
- 1896 - Rural free delivery begins
- 1913 - Parcel Post® began
- 1918 - Scheduled airmail service began
- 1950 - Residential deliveries reduced to one a day
- 1957 - Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee established
- 1963 - ZIP Code inaugurated
- 1970 - Experimental Express Mail® service began
- 1971 - United States Postal Service® began operations
- 1971 - Labor contract negotiated through collective bargaining, a federal government "first"
- 1974 - Self-adhesive stamps introduced
- 1982 - Last year Postal Service accepted public service subsidy
- 1983 - ZIP+4® Code began
- 1993 - National Postal Museum opened
- 1997 - Postal Service™ launched public internet site
- 1998 - First U.S. semi-postal issued
- 2002 - President's Commission on the U.S. Postal Service® established

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All U.S. postage stamps and other postage items that were released before 1978 are in the public domain. The postal service holds copyright to such materials released after 1978 under Title 17 of the United States Code. Written permission is required for use of copyrighted postage stamp images

Oregon State NAPS Branch

Oregon has a state NAPS branch (# 940). As the Portland branch is the largest single branch in Oregon (2nd largest in the Northwest after Seattle) your dues contribute nearly \$4,000.00 a year to the state branch operating budget.



In between training sessions a much deserved refreshment break

Employment

The USPS employs more people than any company in the United States except Wal-Mart. It employed 790,000 personnel in 2003, divided into offices, processing centers, and actual post offices.

The Postal Service "Creed"

The United States Postal Service **has no official creed or motto**. Often falsely cited as such, "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds" is merely an inscription on the James Farley Post Office, derived from a quote from Herodotus' *Histories* (8.98), referring to the ancient courier service of the Persian Empire:

It is said that as many days as there are in the whole journey, so many are the men and horses that stand along the road, each horse and man at the interval of a day's journey; and these are stayed neither by snow nor rain nor heat nor darkness from accomplishing their appointed course with all speed. (trans. A.D. Godley 1924)

The "creed" is quoted in the lyrics of the 1981 Laurie Anderson single, "O Superman".

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

FERS Sick Leave Relief May Be In Sight

Rep. James P. Moran Jr.(D-VA) is preparing to introduce legislation to provide FERS employees with some form of credit for accumulated sick leave at retirement. Indeed, a FERS sick leave bill could be introduced before Congress wraps up its current session in December. While it is too early to predict whether the measure will become law in 2008, it offers hope to NAPS and its members who long have favored the elimination of any difference in how the CSRS and FERS retirement systems apply credit to unused sick leave.

Employees under CSRS receive a boost to their retirement pension through credit for the sick leave balance remaining at the time of retirement. But FERS-covered employees, some of whom may rack up thousands of hours of sick leave over their careers, operate under a “use it or lose it” rule.

CSRS and FERS employees receive the same number of sick leave days each year and may carry over an unlimited amount of unused sick leave from year to year. The difference, however, in the two systems’ treatment of sick leave appears increasingly to affect how much sick leave CSRS and FERS employees actually use during their careers, especially as they close in on retirement.

In a 2004 study and again this summer, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) reported that FERS employees use their sick leave more frequently— almost 35 percent more often—than their CSRS counterparts, particularly as they approach retirement. Data compiled last year by the Office of Personnel Management reached the same findings, showing that retirement-eligible FERS employees used, on average, more sick leave than CSRS retirement-eligible employees.

FERS employees who were approaching retirement also used more sick leave than their CSRS counterparts. These patterns suggest a substantial number of FERS employees may be abusing the system—treating sick leave like annual leave for brief, excused absences from work. The differences in average usage rates between employees in the two retirement systems,” CSRS observed in the 2004 report, “lends credence to a longstanding hypothesis that FERS employees, who get no value for their unused sick leave, will use that

leave rather than simply forfeiting it back to the government at retirement.” Observers have pointed out increased sick leave use results in costs to the government through lost productivity, dollars and morale.

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Other options could involve the CSRS pension approach or crediting the value of some portion of unused sick leave toward retiree health or life insurance premiums. According to the CRS, 45 states provide some form of compensation for unused sick leave at retirement. More than half of them provide a one-time cash payment, limiting the size of the payment in some way, through either a cap on how much sick leave may be credited or the size of the payment itself, or both.

Interestingly, some problems in government never seem to go away. Nearly a half-century ago, significant numbers of CSRS employees were retiring with almost no sick-leave credit remaining as they walked out the door. To reduce the apparent abuse of sick leave at the time, Congress in 1969 changed the rules to permit CSRS workers to receive credit for unused sick leave in the calculation of their pensions.

To pay for that policy change, Congress increased the amount that employees and their agencies pay into the Civil Service Retirement Trust Fund. When FERS was created in 1986, however, Congress refrained from similarly giving credit to FERS employees because of cost concerns.

Now, a House lawmaker with sizable federal and postal employee constituencies similarly wants Congress to retool the sick leave credit rule once again. Check the NAPS website www.naps.org —for updates on the introduction of the bill and its progress.

Bruce Moyer

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

NAPS Northwest Delegation to the 2007 WRTS



Do You Know.....

Political activity by Federal employees is not prohibited in all cases. The Hatch Act governs what is permissible with respect to your involvement.

NAPS Members **may** engage in the following activity:

May assist in voter registration drives.

May contribute money to the Supervisors Political Action Committee and political organizations.

May attend political fundraising functions

May Campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections

NAPS Members may **NOT** engage in the following activity:

May not engage in political activity while on duty

May not engage in any political activity in any government office.

May not wear political button on duty.

May not engage in political activity while using a government vehicle

For a complete list please see you local NAPS officer or consult with the USPS Law department .

An Invitation To Brunch

Your branch officers would like to invite you to brunch on January 6th, 2008, 11a.m. at the Monarch Hotel located at 12566 SE 93rd Ave, Clackamas OR. We will have invited guests from USPS and NAPS attending. Please send your RSVP to Nancy McVicker (email Nancy@naps66.org) by January 2nd as the hotel needs to be able to prepare for all those attending. See you there!

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL SUPERVISORS

Annual Scholarship Awards

The Portland NAPS Branch 66 annual scholarship is now accepting applications through December 31, 2007.

ELIGIBILITY: All NAPS Branch 66 members, spouses, children or grandchildren of Branch 66 members currently attending a college, technical school, trade school or university. The NAPS Branch 66 member must have attended at least one branch meeting in the previous twelve months for the member or their family, as specified above to be eligible.

Please Send in the following Information

NAPS BRANCH 66 ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIPS

MEMBER NAME: _____

APPLICANT NAME: _____

RELATIONSHIP TO BRANCH 66 MEMBER: _____

SCHOOL CURRENTLY ATTENDING: _____

SEND APPLICATIONS TO: NAPS BRANCH 66

NAPS 66 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION
PO BOX 3511
PORTLAND, OREGON 97208-3511

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POSTAL
SUPERVISORS
PORTLAND BRANCH # 66

P.O. Box 3511
Portland, OR 97208-3511

Return Service Requested



Portland Branch # 66

We're on the Web!
WWW.NAPS66.ORG



Closing Thoughts

From Your President—Robert Atkinson

Having had an opportunity to reflect on being your President for the last several month's I've asked myself am I representing the membership's needs.

When I started, some members expressed the opinion that representation during discipline was the only reason that they stayed members. While that function is an important part of what we offer members, there is more to our organization. We are not a social club who's sole function is to throw parties., we are diverse in our activities on behalf of members.

Certainly this issue of the newsletter has focused increased attention on why NAPS stays engaged with Postal Legislation. Legislation affects our immediate work environment and our retirement.

Communication with you has been a priority of mine since becoming an officer of the branch. I created

a website for members to use as a reference for timely information (www.naps66.org) and I regularly communicate via email time sensitive information.

If you feel this increased communication via the website and emails contacts is beneficial, please let your branch officers know. We are constantly looking for ways to improve how we represent you the members.

Am I a good fit for Portland as your President? That is a complicated question that only time will tell. There are those that feel threatened by change "It's not the way we did this in the past". My efforts do not discount contributions by your past presidents, I feel they address current needs. I follow a single mandate—"Are the needs of the members being addressed". Be vocal, make your executive board hear your thoughts. Send us an email, come to a meeting or call us on the phone. We want to hear from you.



NAPS Branch 275

Branch Meeting Dates

Branch 275 Meeting
Salem Plant

January 17, 2008
6:30 PM



**NAPS Branch 275 President
George R. Sieveking**

Happy holidays from your NAPS Branch President!

First let me take the time to introduce myself to you. My name is George Sieveking and I currently am the Supervisor of Customer Services in Sweet Home, Oregon. It gives me great pleasure to serve you again as the NAPS Capital City Branch 275 President for 2008. It also gives me great pleasure to

introduce your newly elected 2008 officers for Branch 275 as well. Serving you as the Branch Vice President will be Penny Colliva. Serving you as the Branch Secretary Treasurer is Richard Ainsworth. Please let us know if there are any questions or issues that need to be addressed. We are here for you.

It only takes one meeting to get involved in your Branch

The winter season is upon us here at the U.S. Postal Service and we know what that means to all of us who work for the Postal Service. Busy. Busy. During this time of year we have so much going on in our life not only with USPS but there is the family life as well.

During this holiday season don't forget to take a little time to yourself and with your family as well. Enjoy the holidays with your family and friends.

After all the rush, rush of the holidays is gone and you have had time to reflect on the job well done. Take time to think about your job and what NAPS stands for and how you can be more involved with our NAPS Branch.

I look forward to be seeing more of our Branch members attend one of our quarterly meetings that are held at the

Salem Plant. Without you attending those meetings it makes it hard to run our NAPS Branch with great success. Please look at attending the next Branch Meeting in January 2008.

We have a few upcoming events this year that include: NAPS National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, NAPS 5-State Convention in Boise, Idaho, and the NAPS Legislative in Washington DC.

Our Branch will also be co-sponsoring the 2009 NAPS 5-State Convention with the Southern Oregon NAPS Branch that will be held in Bend, Oregon. We are looking for a few volunteers to help organize this event.

One meeting that's all it takes to get involved and make a difference in your NAPS Branch. Happy Holidays.