

The Gopher Postmaster



Volume 57, Number 3

March 2009



The **National Association of Postmasters of the United States** is a professional organization for all Postmasters, Associate members and Postmasters Retired. The mission of **NAPUS** is:

- to represent, promote and protect Postmasters;
- to foster a favorable image of public service and to assure users of the mail the best possible service;
- to be an advocate with the Congress of the United States
- to work closely with the United States Postal Service in the development of strategies for the enhancement of Postmasters and the Postal Service.

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<http://mnapus.org>**



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With March comes more snow.

I know that at times we do not like to hear the word snow, but living as we do in Minnesota it is going to snow sometime. And it always snows in March. Remember that it is tournament time, and we usually get some type of blizzard during tournament time. I wish every Postmaster, OIC or retiree who has a son, daughter, grandson or granddaughter participating in one of the tournaments the best of luck. It is a special time of the year for anyone who likes to compete or watch athletics.

I had a meeting with the Northland District Manager Tony Williams last week. We talked about the policy about no one working their non-scheduled day and no one starting early. That may be the information we have received from our POOM's but it really isn't quite accurate. I met with Tony on February 11, and he told me that the day before he approved six carriers and one clerk to work their non-scheduled day in the District. Now, granted that is about 40 people less than we use to get but the mail volume continues to decline and there just isn't the need for wholesale approval of non-scheduled overtime.

Now, how did those six carriers and that one clerk get to work their non-scheduled day? The Manager or Postmaster of that office presented to their Senior Manager a business plan that it made sense to pay non-scheduled overtime instead of penalty overtime. The managers also have proven that their offices are performing. And how do you do that you might ask?

Well, for one, your office should be making its percent to standard or have a negative customer service variance score. If your carriers are not casing better than 100% then you need to look at start times. Are they waiting for mail? Are they clocking in for work and then going to the locker room to get their jackets off? You need to make sure that they are productive throughout the office portion of their day. You have total control of what they do in the office.

Another item that has to be good is street productivity? Have your carriers expanded their street times? Most of the state does not have any snow anymore and carriers should be more proficient on the street. You need to present a business plan to your POOM on why you need to work someone on their day off.

The past two holidays I have presented a business plan to my POOM that I needed to work a clerk 8 hours of straight

time, instead of using 8 hours of additional overtime on the day after the holiday. I included how much mail we had in the same period last year, how much mail we had the past 3 to 4 Mondays and Tuesdays.

I also included what mail I thought I could curtail and or delay and I included what my projections were for my window. When I looked at everything prior to getting approval to work someone I determined that I needed more clerk hours than I had clerks available. I had projected 54 hours worth of work and only had 4 clerks available. Even if I worked them all 12 hours I would still be about six hours short.

The plan I presented included how much more money it was going to cost me if I worked my employees 12 hours on the Tuesday after the holiday. You have the ability and the information necessary to present the same type of business plan if you need to bring someone in on their day off.

For the past 6 to 8 months, the POOM's have been telling us that we need to look at the schedules of our employees. It doesn't make sense in today's environment that carriers have Saturday or Monday off. When you give them those days off, who is going to replace them? Is your clerk going to be able to sort the mail, work the box section, work the window and then carry a route? Probably not. Then move the days off to the middle of the week. There have been employees in the Postal Service that have had Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday off besides Sunday for years and they have been able to have a normal life.

In these hard times, we need to make hard decisions. Sure, your employees like to have Saturday's or Monday's off. We all do. But if you give them those days off and your only replacement is your clerk, who does that leave to carry the route? If you need help in writing a business plan, please call me or Anita. We both have been successful in getting our plans approved because they made business sense.

I looked at the article I wrote a year ago and in it I said that the Postal Service lost 300 million in quarter one of FY 08. Now, in quarter one of FY 09, we have lost 364 million dollars in what is supposed to be our most successful quarter. In these tough economic times we all must do business differently if we are going to survive.

I know you have heard that the Postal Service is projecting that they will not be able to meet payroll after September. That may be true, but the reason they won't be able to make payroll is because of the 5.5 billion dollar payment that is due the federal government to pre-fund the retiree health benefit plan. Jack Potter has asked that we reduce that payment by 2 billion this year and spread out the remaining payments for several years. Congress has not been too receptive to this yet, but with everyone contacting their Representative and Senator and letting them know how important this issue is to the survival of the Postal Service, we should be able to be successful in reducing those payments.

Remember that you hear some things from your fellow

Postmasters that may or may not be true. Go to the NAPUS website and check out our Legislative report. Bob Levy will give you the correct information so that you can be informed when you talk to your employees.

I know that some of the POOM's may have said that there is no hiring going on. That is quite true. If you have a vacancy in the clerk or carrier craft and they would like to change crafts, that is being allowed. If you have a clerk or carrier who works in another office and they would like to transfer to your office, that is also being allowed. Just remember that the losing office will not be able to hire. The Kansas City plant is excessing about 125 employees and there is no promotions of PTF's to full time positions within 700 miles of Kansas City. That means no promotions in our State of PTF's to regular positions.

The Saint Paul plant, and the Twin City Metro Hub will also probably lose positions when the BMC expansion is completed in late 2010. I heard an unofficial estimate of 600 employees. There are no more TE City Carriers in either Minneapolis or St. Paul. Only the associate offices will be having TE employees. If you were turned down recently for a TE carrier, I would suggest you submit a hiring request to hire a TE.

In the next couple of months, there are opportunities to get some of that information presented to you. The NAPUS Leadership/Legislative Conference is scheduled for March 21 to March 25. All you need to do is send in your Registration and let Anita know you have done this. There are Postmasters going that are looking for roommates to help defer expenses. This is a wonderful conference and this year it will be jam packed full of information on the survival of the Postal Service.

Coming in late April and early May, we have the Spring District Meetings. Anita and I will be traveling around the State talking to you about what happened in Washington and what will happen at our State Convention in International Falls. This is your opportunity to talk to me directly about any problems you might be having. I am always willing to help you try and figure out a solution to the problems your office might be facing.

And finally the State Convention is just around the corner. By the time you read this it will be the first week of March and the convention is only about 105 days after the first of March. I encourage everyone to try and attend. I know you might say that you don't have any help. But how about asking that neighboring Postmaster who doesn't go to the convention? Maybe they would be willing to work so that their PMR or clerk can work in your office. Be creative in how you cover your office.

I wish everyone a very safe an uneventful month of March. Let's hope that the snow stays away so that we can get outside and play.



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Greetings fellow Postmasters !!

I had the opportunity to participate in a Northland District Focus Group on February 12th in Rochester. The format of this group meeting was to have two EAS Advisory Committee members open discussion on topics relating to workplace environment, ability to lead and communication. Then, the facilitators summarized and presented concerns or questions to District Manager Tony Williams. Those in attendance were Postmasters from level 13 to level 21, a Customer Service Supervisor and the Manger of a Station/Branch. Some of the issues brought forward were: difficulty of hiring through Shared Services, numerous emails on the same subject, District Manager DVD and time frame for certification, MPOO treatment of Postmasters, lack of supervisory staff to correctly monitor carriers, slow or non-responsive MPOOs and District staff and local purchasing issues. During the final portion, DM Tony Williams gave his explanation on the how's and why's for many of the topics. Some of the other concerns – hiring issues, for example – he indicated that he will follow up on.

On the subject of MPOO treatment of Postmasters – DM Williams shared his opinion that how 'management treats craft employees is different than how management treats management'. Management should always talk calmly and professionally to craft employees. Higher level managers, DM Williams explained, need to 'get their point across' in any manner possible. He explained how Area VP Sylvester Black talks to him, using swear words, to get him (DM Williams) to understand the importance of a situation. The DM went on to explain that Postmasters must make unpopular decisions in these economic times, they will get direct orders, and the message (language) will not be sugar coated.

Postmasters are very willing to follow instructions given to them from their immediate supervisor. The concept that, we as Postmasters, should expect to be treated 'differently' (I think that means worse) than we would treat our craft employees is a recipe for creating an abusive and hostile work environment. The problem

comes in how the message is delivered – when it is given in the context of a threat or bullying language – then the focus becomes less on the original intent and more on the delivery. During this critical time of change and chaos, we look toward our upper management for leadership and clear communication to calmly guide us – threats and intimidation will only undermine our potential success.

In January 2008, I (and all Western Area employees) received a letter from the Western Area VP Sylvester Black which states, in part, 'The Postal Service zero tolerance policy places all employees on notice that threats, assaults . . . made directly or indirectly toward any . . . employee or customer, even in jest, will not be tolerated'. As Postmasters, we have a responsibility to provide a work environment for our employees that is safe and free of threats, intimidation and bullying. We also have a responsibility to demand that same environment for ourselves. All employees, at all levels of the Postal Service, are responsible for creating a work environment that is not based on fear or intimidation.

Moving on – at this date there are ten active and retired Minnesota Postmasters registered to attend the Leadership Conference and Legislative Rally in Washington DC in March. If you are interested in attending this conference – to discuss Postal issues with your Congressmen and women – please contact me. Your MN NAPUS will pay for the registration and I can assist you with plane and hotel reservations. This is your opportunity to have your voice heard in Washington DC.

State Convention will be held at the Holiday Inn in International Falls in June. This is an opportunity for training, networking, socializing and relaxing. Please consider this as an investment of your time to improve yourself, get motivated and rejuvenated. You have convention leave to use for attending your State Convention.

Stand Tall – Do the Right Thing – Be Proud to be a Postmaster !!

New Address?

- Log on to <http://napus.org> Membership Services
- Use the number above your name on your *Postmaster's Gazette* address label and your last name and edit your record.
- You can also send a card to NAPUS Headquarters.



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sure the information that we have and the information that we are sharing with those that we work with is the most accurate that we can make it. There are enough issues facing us and we can not afford to have our lives and our judgments clouded with misinformation, or half truths, or innuendo. There is nothing more destructive than to undermine what is happening within the organization and outside of it with information that is not the most accurate we can make it.

Tough Times Call for Tough People

Greetings to each and every one of you!

I don't need to tell you that we are all facing some of the toughest times (well, I can't believe we have had to face anything this tough since I began my career 28 years ago) in our Postal lives. It seems like things just can't change any more and that we just need to have some time to take a breath.

That would be a great thing if we could do it, take a breath, that is; however, things are changing so rapidly in the world that we are living and working in, that there really isn't time to just step back and reflect on what is going on. We are seeing changes in the world related to how people communicate and now we have the entire added burden of an economy that is so uncertain. That uncertainty is affecting those of us in the Postal Service because we do not know what effect all of the financial difficulties that corporations and individuals are facing may have on our mail volumes and our future. We hear more and more about the many individuals who do not know if their job is going to be there tomorrow, or not. They see layoffs in their companies and breath a sigh of relief when it is not their name that appears on the list of those that are affected, this time at least. There are even individuals within the Postal Service that are being told that their positions are being eliminated and that they will need to be looking for something else to do within our organization, and this may involve some relocation. Unlike when we have gone through reorganizations in the past, there is no assurance this time that these individuals will be given a position. It is up to them to go out and find a position, take a Voluntary Early Retirement, or an optional retirement or be covered by the provisions of a Reduction In Force (RIF). These are uncertain times and require vigilance by all of us.

Change is something that we all deal with in different ways and have many different coping mechanisms. You need to make sure that you are finding a way to deal with the changes that are coming and if you need to that you are pushing back to your bosses and trying to get the answers that you need. At these changing and in many cases trying times, it is essential that we make

We realize that the changes that we are experiencing are being experienced by all of us at all levels of the organization and that it is, in many cases, causing a great amount of stress in that individual's life. That stress, however, does not give anyone the right to treat with you anything but dignity and respect, at all times. If you feel that you are being threatened by your manager, or someone above them, be sure to bring that to the attention of your State President. We have channels that we can we can work through to deal with issues such as this.

Again, I encourage all of you to find ways to deal with

**Let Us Do
 Together
 What We
 Cannot
 Do Alone**

the changes we are facing and the stress that these changes are causing for many of us. We will once again be facing some potential backlash from our customers as we move forward with the rate changes that went into effect in January and now are coming in May. Remember it is essential that you stay positive at all times, regardless of how much these individuals may be belittling you, or the Postal Service, keep a smile on your face and a positive attitude and in most cases that will totally deflate them and they will treat you the way you deserve to be treated.

I leave you this month with this quote from Steven Covey, "I am personally convinced that one person can be a change catalyst, a 'transformer' in any situation, any organization. Such an individual is yeast that can leaven an entire loaf. It requires vision, initiative, patience, respect, persistence, courage, and faith to be a transforming leader."

Have a good month!

**Check out the
 NAPUS National
 Website
napus.org
 For more
 Information and
 Registration**

**"We're going North
 To Alaska"**





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opportunity to get connected with our congressmen and women and make our voices heard. If you can go, GO! Our future depends on our law makers. This is where your PAC money comes into play. PAC supports those congressmen and women that support our beliefs and believe me they do listen to you when you go to Capitol Hill and visit them. If we don't go, they don't know.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

It was a fantastic year for PAC and you all helped. The total for the year was \$13,443.50. And the money keeps rolling in. Keep up the good work.

We have a long way to go and every little bit helps. The Leadership Conference is coming up and unfortunately I am unable to go. This is a great

Thank you for a wonderful year. This year will be better. I know last year was rough but with your help we raised a lot of \$\$\$ for PAC. Minnesota Postmasters are awesome. Your support is awesome. Keep doing the fantastic job that you do and I look forward to seeing you at International Falls. Bring some green with you because I will have something up my sleeve.

Happy Spring to all!



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in Medicare Part D Subsidy. Medicare Part D would give the USPS a rebate, if you will, for the drug coverage that is provided by the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program, which is better than what is provided by Medicare. This is a rebate that the Postal Service is entitled to receive; however, because of decisions made at other levels of the government we are not currently able to receive. We will be asking Congress to offer some assistance to states that want to launch Vote-by-Mail opportunities for their residence. NAPUS feels that this is an important step to increase voter participation and to be a benefit to the USPS in the long run. Also, we will be seeking the passage of House Concurrent Resolution 4, authored by Representative JoAnn Emerson (R-MO), which would protect small and rural post offices from wholesale closings.

Going to the Hill

Later this month those of us that are able to attend the NAPUS Leadership and Legislative Conference in Washington, DC, will be going to our members of Congress with a number of issues relating to the Postal Service and NAPUS. As of this writing I have received a draft of the Legislative Agenda sheet that we will be using from our NAPUS Director of Government Relations, Bob Levi.

Among the issues that we will be talking about will be Universal Service and our belief, as an organization, that this must be preserved for all of the United States and for the future of the Postal Service as the vibrant and important agency that it is. There is a reason that we have been named the most trusted Governmental agency for the fifth year in a row and we need to make sure that we are able to keep doing all of the things that we are for the preservation of our vital role in the countries communication industry, as well as for the jobs and the positive effect we have on a very troubled economy.

We will also be asking Congress to pass legislation that will give the Postal Service the ability to participate

Another area that we will be focusing on are issues relating to Postmaster Retirement Equity, as well as, Leave Equity – having to do with legislation to allow FERS employees to receive some credit for the sick leave they have accrued during their careers.

When we return from DC, I will have Margie run a copy of the agenda in the Gopher, so that you all have the information should you wish to educate your fellow employees on the issues, as well as being ready to go and talk with your Congressional representatives, should you have the opportunity.

Remember, staying involved is vital not only to our current reality, but to our future and our future retirement, as well.

Remember NEVER use Postal stationary, telephone, fax or computer for NAPUS or personal use.

2008 PAC Contributions

\$25.00 - \$49.99

Avery, Deborah
 Anderson, David
 Arnold, Patricia
 Athmann, Edmund
 Babcock, Mary
 Barrett, Barbara
 Beck, Bradley
 Bedore, Patty
 Bergren, Gerald
 Blume, Darlene
 Bock, Thomas
 Booth, Helen
 Bretzman, Joyce
 Buelt, Leonard
 Buelt, Virginia
 Burt, Phyllis
 Carney, Joseph
 Cleary, Marcia
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 Degreeff, John
 Donahue, Robert
 Drahos, Stanley
 Dreesel, Doreen
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 Harrigan, Donavon
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 Henrickson, Shirley
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 Miller, Becky
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 Nelson, Donald
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 Ohmann, Charlene
 O'Reilly, Gerald
 Ozment, Gayle
 Paradis, Eldora
 Pattinson, William
 Pederson, Robert
 Peterson, Diane
 Peterson, Sheldon
 Price, Gary
 Reno, Michele
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 Rybakowski, Matthew
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 Schmitz, Peggy
 Schnyders, D.C.
 Schuch, Gayle
 Schuch, John
 Schuster, Donald
 Schweinfus, Janice
 Seburia, Wayne
 Shogren, Rodney
 Slabik, Peter
 Stanaway, Robert
 Steffenson, Patricia
 Stensgard, Ruth
 Sterling, Mary
 Stoeckmann, Malinda
 Strandlund, Bert
 Stuewe, Wendell
 Swanson, Ernest
 Swanson, Richard
 Swenson, Roberta
 Tesch, Shirlee
 Thorsland, Kermit
 Tjepkes, Deborah
 Trelstad, Carol
 Ulrich, Lois
 Vance, Julianne
 Vanderplaats, Janet
 Vipond, Lester
 Walker, Teresa
 Walter, Karen
 Walton, Lavon

Wamhoff, Barbara
 Warner, Louise
 Washburn, Cynthia
 Weinzieri, Andrew
 Weiss, Donald
 Wiese, Lavon
 Wilson, Janet
 Wink, Carol
 Winkler, Louise
 Wittwer, Kevin
 Wood, Dean
 Wotrang, Michael

\$50.00 - \$99.99

Ainasoja, Dorothy
 Albercht, Yvonne
 Ambroz-Swanson, Josephine
 Billings, Scott
 Brown, Betty
 Carlsen, Sandra
 Derouin, Daniel
 Dilly, Violet
 Drill, Janice
 Engenes, David
 Felber, Darlene
 Feltmann, Diane
 Flom, Louise
 Frank, Barbara
 Gorres, James
 Graff, Catherine
 Grandstrand, Alvin
 Hartman, Patricia
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 Hemmes, Lorna
 Hilliard, Beatrice
 Hohenstein, Dawn
 Holien, Jeanne
 Hutchinson, Susan
 Jasper, Judith
 Jensen, Timothy
 Johnson, Rosemary
 Joos, Ann
 Koehler, Marvin
 Lange, Audrey
 Leaf, Lauren
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 Lundquist, Jolienne
 Meyer, Lucille
 Mittag, E.
 Myer, Mary Jo
 Ogg, Linda
 Olson, Doretta
 Olson, Mary Jo
 Paulsrud, Sandra
 Pedersen, Diane
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 Pfeifer, Annette
 Phelps, Coral
 Phelps, Maxine
 Phillips-Kunze, Denise

Porter, Yvonne
 Randall, Geoffrey
 Rau, Connie
 Schabel, Beverly
 Schmiegl, Marcia
 Smallbrock, B.A.
 Steinle, Robert
 Stifer, Ellen
 Strand, Cheryl
 Stroman, Donald
 Tabbert, Curtis
 Trnka, Mary
 Viergutz, Judy
 Walker, Kathy

\$100.00 - \$199.99

Bennett, Ann
 Boller, Franklin
 Curtis, Carmen
 Duerkson, Janelle
 Foster, Kathleen
 Fredin, Martha
 Gagner, Clarence
 Hanson, Ronald
 Johnson, Paul
 Kerkow, Harry
 Leonard, Mary
 Lewer, Randy
 Magunson, Linda
 Mittag, Judy
 Nybakke, Aleta
 Olsem, Jane
 Oneill, Dennis
 Rahn, Judith
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 Stalcup, Sharon
 Stoel, Brenda
 Wels, Mary

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 Jacobson, Margaret
 Riess, Robert
 Vos Marlene

\$300.00 - \$399.99

Geheren, Greg
 Lennox, Jean
 Miller, Melvin

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Pfeifer, Anita

\$500.00 - \$599.00

Peters, Bruce

\$700.00 - \$799.99

Heins, Daniel

**2009 MN NAPUS STATE CONVENTION
REGISTRATION FORM**



**Holiday Inn
International Falls MN
June 15th-18th**

Name: _____
(As it will appear on your name badge)

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Office: _____
(As it will appear on your name badge)

Please check all that apply:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> NAPUS Member \$45 | <input type="checkbox"/> Guest \$45 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retired Postmaster \$45 | <input type="checkbox"/> Single day registration \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retirees Luncheon Only \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> First Timer —Free |

Make checks payable to MN NAPUS CONVENTION.

**Send registration to: Jean Henning
PO Box 492
Northhome MN 56661-0492**

**For room reservations call: Holiday Inn—International Falls MN
218/283-8000 or 800-331-4443**

Please ask for the NAPUS or Postmaster room block rate of \$60.00.

MN NAPUS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION 2009
18734 CEDAR LN, RICHMOND MN 56368

Instructions:

1. All applications must be returned to the above address and postmarked no later than **MAY 1, 2009**.
2. The application is limited to **ONE** attached sheet of paper.
3. All applications **MUST** include a certified copy of your High School Transcript **AND** the most recent college/technical school transcript if currently enrolled in a post-secondary program. **No internet transcripts will be accepted.**
4. Applicants understand that if selected, the scholarship is contingent to the submission of their **PAID** fall registration on institution stationery to the committee before **DECEMBER 31, 2009**.
5. Applicants age limit is 23 years old by June 1, 2009.
6. Only **ONE** award per person. Previous award winners are not eligible to apply in future years for additional awards.

INFORMATION RELEASE; Waiver for release of any educational information needed to process this scholarship application, and allow the publication of your name, if you are a successful scholarship winner I have read and agree to the above.

Applicant's Signature

Date

APPLICANT'S NAME:

MAILING ADDRESS:

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ **PHONE NUMBER:** _____

PRESENT EDUCATIONAL STATUS: _____ **HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR** _____ **POST-SECONDARY**

SPONSORING MINNESOTA NAPUS MEMBER: _____

POSITION OF SPONSOR: _____ **ACTIVE POSTMASTER** _____ **RETIRED** _____ **ASSOCIATE MEMBER**

RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT: _____ **CHILD** _____ **GRANDCHILD**

NAPUS Member Printed Name

Signature

Date

The above signature certifies that you are presently a Minnesota NAPUS member and the applicant is your child or grandchild.

NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL: _____

SCHOOL ADDRESS: _____

GRADUATION DATE: _____

POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL: _____

SCHOOL ADDRESS: _____

****Please write about your school and community accomplishments, awards, degrees and activities:**

****Please write about your educational and/or vocational goals:**

****Please write about your community involvement and work experience:**

NAME OF SCHOOL YOU WILL BE ATTENDING: _____

SCHOOL ADDRESS: _____

Any questions about the scholarship application can be directed to: 18734 Cedar Lane, Richmond MN 56368



Margie Jacobson
Editor
 Morrystown MN 55052
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 Cell: 507-649-1034
 Email: margiepm@yahoo.com

***Make Your Plans Now For
 This Years Activities!!***

We are now over half way through rural count and it won't be long to the finish. Looking over the actual count numbers and comparing them to last year's figures is a stark look at the declining volume we are experiencing. We as Postmasters need to be searching out every new avenue for revenue in our offices. Increasing revenue is the vital link to keeping the Postal Service solvent.

I **encourage** each of you to visit our new Minnesota NAPUS website (<http://mnnapus.org>). *The Gopher* will also be posted on the website and one advantage to seeing it there is that it is in color. If you have any comments or ideas for the website or *The Gopher*, please let us know.

Also, I would encourage you to visit our National NAPUS website (<http://napus.org>). There is a wealth of information on the site and also links to other pertinent sites. Each time I visit the site I find more information that I can use in my office.

It is time to make your plans for this years activities. It is not too late to join us in Washington. This is a very important conference and affords us the opportunity to go to the Hill to meet with our Members of Congress in person. There is a lot to do and see in Washington. This conference also is your chance to meet with our National NAPUS staff.

Spring District meetings are just around the corner. There are a number of new OICs and Postmasters in each of our areas. Please try to invite them to attend

All views expressed in *The Gopher Postmaster* are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect official NAPUS opinion. Articles, editorials, and other submissions are welcome but must be signed. Name can be withheld upon request.

Email your items for publication to *The Gopher* Editor at margiepm@yahoo.com or mail to: *The Gopher* Editor at PO Box 3, Morrystown MN 55052.

with you and get active with NAPUS. We are going to be experiencing a large turnover of Postmasters not only in our State but nationwide and we are the advocates for NAPUS.

It is also time to get ready for this years State Convention in International Falls. Make sure you have your office covered and your leave slip signed. There is a registration form on page 8 of this *Gopher*. Please fill it out completely and submit it as soon as possible. There are so many changes happening in our jobs and there are still a lot of changes coming that now more than ever before we need to stay active in NAPUS and be well informed. The State Convention is an excellent opportunity for you to do that. As our motto states, "Let us do together what we cannot do alone." If you are looking to share expenses for the convention, let one of the Officers or members of the Executive Board know. We are always willing to help.

Last but not least, it is time to make plans to attend the National NAPUS Convention in Anchorage Alaska. This convention is coming up soon and the rooms in Alaska are filling up. You will need to make your reservations now. The registration form for Alaska is on the National NAPUS website. This is an excellent opportunity to visit our great State of Alaska and attend our National Convention.

See you in DC.

I leave you with this thought "*The problems that exist in the world cannot be solved by the level of thinking that created them!*" ...Albert Einstein

PAC Contributions

Name: _____

Emp. ID Number: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Active Postmaster

Retired Postmaster Associate Member

Make checks payable to
NAPUS PAC.

Send PAC Donations to:
Modesty Montemayor
15895 Flute Way
Apple Valley MN 55124-6011



Dan Heins,
Northland District Diversity
Committee Member
Austin MN 55912
Office: 507-434-4748
Home: 507-437-6948
Cell: 507-438-2676
Email: postmasterdan@ymail.com

In addition, beginning at the end of March and continuing into April, we will once again be offering everyone the opportunity to attend a Postal Fair in their area of the District. Please see the dates in your area listed below. These Fairs offer ALL employees the opportunity to gain valuable information on different areas within the Postal Service, including Retail, Safety, Health and Wellness, Shared Services, and information from the Diversity Committee. In addition, once again our District Manager, Tony Williams, has made the commitment to hold another Town Hall Meeting, at each of the locations. This offers everyone the ability to get answers to questions that you may, or may not, feel are being answered at the present time and it gives you a time in which you can get information on the state of the organization and the many challenges that we are facing in the Postal Service.

If you ever have any issues that you would like me to bring to the Diversity Committee, please feel free to contact me at any time. My phone numbers are 507-434-4748, at work; and my cell number is 507-438-2676.

Diversity Committee Looks to Broaden Your Horizons

As most of you are aware, I have the opportunity to be the NAPUS representative on the Northland District Diversity Committee. While the committee has a number of initiatives we are working on, there are two that will be directly affecting every office and possibly, every employee in the Northland District over the next couple of months.

The month of March brings us National Women's History Month. A month that is set aside to honor the many and varied contributions that women have had in the history of our country and more specifically in the United States Postal Service. This packet of information will be sent via email to every office in the District. We are asking that each and every one of you take the opportunity to share the information with the employees in your work unit. This may include doing a stand up talk and posting the information; or, if you choose you may want to make copies for the employees to take home and share with their friends and family the tremendous contributions that women have had on the history of the Postal Service.

Postal Fairs/Town Halls Begin Again in March

Postal Fairs/Town Hall Meetings

Date	Location	Time	Town Hall
March 24	Minneapolis P&DC	5:30-8:30 p.m.	6:30-7:30 p.m.
March 26	St. Cloud P&DF	5:30-8:30 p.m.	6-7 p.m.
March 31	St. Paul P&DC	5:30-8:30 p.m.	6:30-7:30 p.m.
April 2	Duluth MPO	5:30-8:30 p.m.	6-7 p.m.
April 7	Eau Claire P&DF	5:30-8:30 p.m.	6-7 p.m.
April 9	Rochester P&DF	5:30-8:30 p.m.	6:15-7:15 p.m.
April 14	Mankato P&DF	5:30-8:30 p.m.	6-7 p.m.
April 16	La Crosse MPO	5:30-8:30 p.m.	6:30-7:30 p.m.

NAPUS CONTACT INFO

NAPUS National Office
 8 Herbert Street
 Alexandria VA 22305-2600
 Phone: 703-683-9027
 Fax: 703-683-6820
 Email: napusinfo@napus.org
 Home Page: www.napus.org

NAPUS Federal Credit Union
 1-800-336-0284

Hertz Rent A Car
 IS #46480-NAPUS
 1-800-654-3131 (Domestic)
 1-800-654-3001 (International)

NAPUS Auto, Home and

Renters Insurance
 1-800-524-9400

**NAPUS PMR Limited-Medical
 Insurance Indemnity Policy**
 1-800-606-1071

NAPUS Pinnacle Motor Club
 1-800-366-1165

NAPUS Supplemental Insurance
 1-800-221-3083

NAPUS Postmaster Gazette
 540-349-9991



**Denice Phillips-Kunze
Membership Chair**

Park Rapids MN 56470

Office:218-732-4477

Home:218-346-3157(c)218-234-7138

Email: denicephillips@hotmail.com

In addition to the business meeting we will have, make sure the prospective members aren't left out to sit by themselves. Have members assigned to greet them and introduce them to others. Be sure and invite them to sit at your table.

We need to continue to promote NAPUS to all Postmasters and OIC's.

RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS

Wow, I can't believe how many Postmasters have retired or are getting close to retiring! Our numbers will be declining fast as active members in NAPUS. We need to begin recruiting immediately and I have some ideas to help you get started.

The Area District Meetings will be held this spring in your areas. Why not invite some of the new OIC's in your surrounding area. Make sure and give your Director some ideas to help make an exciting program for them. If we can get the OIC's to the meeting, they will be able to see us networking and helping each other. They will be able to see we are more than just neighboring Postmasters, we are friends and we care about each other.

Another opportunity with the retirement wave sweeping all around us, are the Postmaster positions that will eventually be opening. This will create opportunities for you to move up the career ladder. By attending the spring NAPUS meeting and the State Convention, you will be building your network contacts with your fellow NAPUS members.

Thanks for all the information you keep sending me on new OIC's and Postmasters. Without your help I can not get the information on joining NAPUS out to the prospective members. Take care of yourselves and enjoy the mail count.

You Might Be a Postmaster IF . . .

- The concept of free time scares you.
- Stopping by the office on Sunday afternoons for a "few" hours work no longer seems weird.
- You appreciate the fact that you get to choose which 15 hours of the day you have to work.
- You have difficulty reading anything that does not come in email format.
- You consider caffeine to be a major food group.
- You've ever brought a "little" work with you on vacation and actually completed it.
- Your POOM is late for a meeting and you begin the agenda anyway.
- You feel guilty about giving Supervisors discipline (you'll get over it).
- You can drive, discuss Function Four, answer a page, explain why your overtime exceed 4% and actually know what street you're on.
- Unlike many of your generation, YOU know that POT has nothing to do with hallucinogenics.
- The number of meetings you attend in a week exceeds the number of days in a week.
- Your eyes glaze over as you try to enthusiastically respond to your POOM, "Sure I'll be on the dock at the plant tonight."
- You answer a congressional (sent by a serious

- mind consumer affairs employee) on why Mr. Ebenezer Scrooge XX's mailbox cannot be delivered at the beginning of the route.
 - You seriously argue with your children on why snow does not make a Winter Wonderland.
 - You are no longer surprised when ALL of your Supervisors are scheduled for training on the same day at the same time for some vital topic called "R2D2".
 - You mentally compose Step 2 denial letters at 3 am.
 - You give your family and friends Stamp Art as birthday and Christmas gifts to increase your revenue.
 - You took annual leave to have an appendectomy.
 - Your normal Friday night entertainment consists of catching up on Postal videos.
 - You can't really enjoy Christmas day until you know all the Express Mail has been delivered.
 - Your family calls the office at 8:30 pm to find out if you have forgotten about your life outside the Post Office!
- (Reprinted from *The New Jersey Postmaster*—an article submitted by Wayne Orshak)



JudyAnn Barnard
Postmasters Retired
Area 9 Rep
judyann@venturecomm.net
605-596-4281

the Retiree pages in the March Gazette. Your Postmasters Retired National Officers endeavor to keep us well informed on issues affecting us. One article addresses the fact that it has been more than 20 years Postmasters have been working to eliminate GPO and WEP, which so adversely affects many postal Retirees. There is always hope that this Congress will understand the need to have these eliminated—which, as Frank says, would be an excellent stimulus package for Retirees.

Retirees Need to Stay Informed!

Where does the time go? March has arrived, hopefully bringing warmer weather. March is also the time for baseball's spring training!! I can't wait for the baseball season to begin!

March also finds the MN NAPUS Chapter Officers in Washington, DC, March 21-25, for the Leadership/Legislative Conference. The March *Postmasters Gazette* has the Conference agenda, which tells us what issues will be addressed on the Hill. Please read the information and contact your Senators and Representatives urging them to support the appropriate bills before Congress. Or come to DC with us, and visit their offices in person to discuss your concerns.

The Gazette also has registration forms for the DC Conference and for the National Convention in Alaska. You may also register online. NAPUS events always promise information, fellowship, lots of "postal talk", and renewing friendships!

The way time flies it will soon be time for the MN State Convention June 16-18 in International Falls. Your Officers would welcome a **large** turnout of Retirees. It is always good to gather with our Retired Postmaster friends, to reminisce about our postal careers, and to say thankfully "we love retirement"!!!

I do look forward to seeing all of you somewhere along the way in 2009! Enjoy Spring!

As Retirees, we must be sure to read the articles on

Letter to Editor
Small Office Closing Information
 Keva Richardson, Postmaster Retired,
 Iowa Chapter NAPUS
 NAPUS Midwest Area Chair
mwa8sts_06@yahoo.com

list
 Click on Lease Information
 Your current lease information will come up
 Click on Properties and you get a drop down list
 Click on Documents/Images and you can look at copies of your current & future leases that have been signed.

It is so very important that every Postmaster and OIC know who has the lease on his/her respective post office and when that lease expires. Below are the steps each PM/OIC needs to take to get this information and keep it on hand:

Could it possibly be the USPS would fail to contact your building owner at the appropriate time to begin the renewal process of your lease? I urge you to read the article by John Gregg on page 40 of the February 2009 issue of our "Postmasters Gazette". It will give you each some insight as to why your lease is so very important.

- First - Blue Page Click - Inside USPS
- Click - Field
- Click - Headquarters
- Under Operations Click Facilities
- Under Program Links Click Facilities Portal (eFMS)
- Click Enter Application
- Logon by clicking Guest
- Under Search Click Properties
- Scroll down and enter your zip code to the right of Zip Code
- Where it says 'Area', there is a drop down box where you click on your Area
- Click Find
- Your office will come up.
- Click on the Property ID number and you get a drop down



Raymond C. Wilkins
Postmaster of Glencoe MN 55336
Postmaster September 1962 to December 1987

Raymond was born on 2/5/26 and passed away on 1/31/09 at Glencoe Regional Health Services. Mr. Wilkins served in the US Navy for three years during World War II and two years in the Air Force during the Korean War. He began his postal career as Glencoe's first letter carrier. He also served as State President and Secretary/Treasurer of MN NAPUS and served on the National Executive Committee.



Ann Bennett

**Retired Postmaster
Birchdale MN 56629**

There came to be over the years a special group of friends I call my "NAPUS Sisters". These dear friends are Aleta, Linda Magnuson, Judy Mittag, Darlene Felber, Barb Barrett, Mary Jo Myer and Yvonne Albrecht. We are all retired now. We still travel to NAPUS functions supporting NAPUS and renewing friendships with "old" friends and meeting new friends. My "NAPUS Sisters" support each other in good and bad. We visit each other every chance we get and our friendships continue to grow. A special thanks to them for the support they have given me.

NAPUS Is A Family!

We hear the term "NAPUS Is A Family" often. Some of you may not understand why it is repeated so often and how that works. I thought I would share some of my experiences in NAPUS. I was appointed Postmaster in the small town of Birchdale MN in 1971. I attended my first NAPUS meeting in International Falls. It was a County meeting and we would spend the day discussing postal problems, studying postal regulations books and becoming friends.

I met Aleta Nybakke at one of these meetings. I also met some other great friends. Aleta was the first of my "NAPUS Sisters". We've been friends for almost 40 years. We travelled to the different NAPUS functions including County, District Management Conferences, State and National Conventions and Legislative Conferences. We became friends with many Postmasters and they remain good friends today.



This is just one "NAPUS family" story. There are many more. Attending NAPUS functions not only provides information and instructions concerning the Postal Service but thru these meetings we find sisters, brothers, special friends, and above all—"A family".

Congratulations to our new Retirees! You will love retirement! Don't forget to continue your involvement with NAPUS. Join the NAPUS Retired and continue



Barb Barrett

**Retired Postmaster
Eyota MN 55934**

stopped at a station. The pump wanted my zip code/ to the card...did that...and it came up not authorized, but I always have trouble with those pumps that ask for zip....So inside I went and gal said card was not authorizing...She would swipe it and then Warren could fill it and I'd pay...He filled it, and still wouldn't work!!! So I go get debit card etc....and take care of it.



Another Privilege of NAPUS FCU

Just thought you'd find this interesting....and maybe learn from it too!! I had something happen with my NAPUS credit card that you may find interesting..... Knowing some of you NEVER buy on the internet...well I do/have and may again! BUT my last purchase of \$4.99 about a week prior to Texas...I had placed that order...and I know it wasn't 4 seconds...and the phone rang...It was NAPUS Credit Card automated...asking if I had just made that purchase and another one...which I had done both...But I was thinking what a good service that was!

Later that day I asked a kind person...to just try the card again...saying it may not work! Sure enough it didn't!!! So I get home a week later...and get through to NAPUS...and asked why that card wasn't working! Well lo and behold.....probably from the Internet transaction I had....I had charges of \$3213.89 and \$1868.44!!!! In South Africa!! So the crooks never sleep!!

NAPUS was superb in handling this....They knew I'd not charged these items probably...and sent paper work to have charges removed from my bill....I do believe I will have to write an article for Gopher and let our members know how good our Credit Union is!! So now I'll beware too!! ha

So we are in Texas and I had used this card whole trip...up until a Wednesday when we needed gas...so

<p>District One</p> <p>Wednesday, May 6th</p> <p>Bagley, MN</p>	<p>District Two</p> <p>Thursday, May 7th</p> <p>Duluth area</p>	<p>District Three</p> <p>Tuesday, May 5th</p> <p>Park Rapids, MN</p>
<p>District Four</p> <p>Friday, May 8th</p> <p>Brainerd area</p> 	<p>District Five</p> <p>Tuesday, April 28</p> <p>Willmar area</p>	<p>District Six</p> <p>Thursday, April 30th</p> <p>Queen Bee Bar & Grill Paynesville MN</p> <p>Lunch at 12:00 Noon Meeting at 1:00 PM</p>
<p>District Seven</p> <p>Thursday, April 23rd</p> <p>Willingers Golf Course Northfield MN</p>	<p>District Eight</p> <p>Wednesday, April 29th</p> <p>Pizza Ranch New Ulm MN</p> <p>Lunch at 12:00 on your own- buffet</p> <p>Meeting to follow at 1:00 PM</p>	<p>District Nine</p> <p>Tuesday, April 21st</p> <p>Holiday Inn South Rochester MN</p> <p>Lunch at Noon Meeting at 1:00 PM</p> 

Dates to Remember

State Conventions

June 15-18, 2009—International Falls
2010—Treasure Island
Red Wing

National Conventions

Sept 12-17, 2009—Anchorage AK
Sept 11-16, 2010—Grand Rapids MI
TBD, 2011—Puerto Rico

Leadership Conference

Washington DC
March 21-26, 2009
March 20-25, 2010

Article Deadlines

For the April Issue
Of *The Gopher Postmaster* is

March 30, 2009

Periodicals