

UPMA LEADER

June 2024

Come to
ORLANDO
for Empowerment, Camaraderie and Professional Growth

page 26



**2024 UPMA
National
Convention
Aug. 24-30**



SFCU WAS
FOUNDED BY SEVEN
POSTMASTERS
IN 1970 FOR
POSTMASTERS +
THEIR FAMILIES

No payments for 60* days on your new auto loan

For a limited time, when you finance your new vehicle through SFCU, you can enjoy your new set of wheels for up to **60 days** before making your first loan payment.



APPLY TODAY!

Scan this QR code with your smart phone, visit our website at SignatureFCU.org/Vehicle or call **(800) 336.0284 ext. 684** for more information and to apply.

*Interest accrues daily. Delaying your first payment will result in several months without a reduction in your principal balance. Signature Federal Credit Union reserves the right to end or modify this offer at any time. Promotion available on new and used car, truck, and motorcycle. All loans are subject to credit approval.

Signature Federal Credit Union
(800) 336.0284 ext.684
lending@signaturefcu.org
SignatureFCU.org

FOLLOW US

   /SignatureFCU



Federally Insured
by NCUA

Membership eligibility required.

Qualify for a **0.25% discount** off your approved rate when you add one of the following:

- ✓ GAP Insurance
- ✓ Auto Warranty Protection
- ✓ Set up automatic monthly payments

Not a member of SFCU?

Open your account today at
SignatureFCU.org/JoinNow

Signature
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
.....
Everywhere You Are

CONTENTS

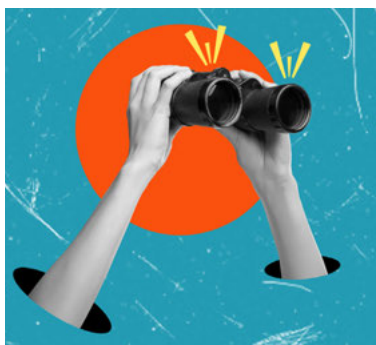


Volume 103 | Number 5 | June 2024

21

Keeping Up With PSHB

By Charley Peters



22

Repeal of WEP/GPO and USPS Service Issues Featured at Capitol Hill Hearings

By Lily Israel and Josh Taubman



26

Join Us in Magical Orlando

By Lori McDonough



COLUMNS

4 President's Purview

Facts Do Matter

7 Maximizing Our Potential

Thank You, Alex

8 Leadership for Success

Be Leaders of Integrity
New Ideas, New Processes

11 Strategies to Thrive

Chapter Conventions—the Place To Be!

12 From the Editor's Desk

Relieve Chronic Stress and Weight Gain

14 From the Field

Be Prepared for the Changes in Your Life

15 National Office News

Convention Offers Wide Range of Training

DEPARTMENTS

10 Chapter Presidents

14 Chapter Conventions

17 Committees

Adverse Action: John Sertich

Membership: C. Scott Christiansen, Peter Urbani, Katrina Frey

20 Welcome, New Members

29 2024 National Convention Golf Tournament

30 UPMA Retired

UPMA Mission Statement

United Postmasters and Managers of America exists to support our membership through communication, education and representation.



President's Purview

Edmund Carley, national president

Facts Do Matter

Not opinion, not conjecture; facts matter. I have tried working with the National Association of Postal Supervisors (NAPS) during my term as UPMA national president. It also is a fact that *Title 39* has the following language:

Section 1004(b)

“... Upon presentation of evidence satisfactory to the Postal Service that a supervisory organization represents a majority of supervisors, that an organization (other than an organization representing supervisors) represents at least 20% of postmasters, or that a managerial organization (other than an organization representing supervisors or postmasters) represents a substantial percentage of managerial employees, such organization or organizations shall be 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.”

“UPMA still will be the best choice for representation for all EAS employees in the postal sphere.”

Now, here is another fact: “... an organization (other than an organization representing supervisors)” means that NAPS (an organization representing supervisors) cannot be recognized as a Postmaster organization, legally. This is the argument UPMA was prepared to make at the circuit court level because NAPS had included in its claim to be recognized as representing all EAS employees in its lawsuit concerning the FY16-19 pay package.

UPMA filed a brief to that extent and was prepared to testify. However, the court dismissed the case. When the appeal court heard the appeal, it overturned that dismissal and decided how it

would rule if the case came back before it. However, no other arguments were heard on this specific issue.

The idea that UPMA supported the rest of the Postal Service's arguments about anything else in the lawsuit is false. UPMA settled the FY16-19 pay talk as we garnered concessions for our members (and all EAS members) that have borne more fruit in subsequent years.

At the same time, UPMA has gained members at an explosive rate. We now have as members close to 18,000 active EAS employees, over 70% of Postmaster positions and 22% of Level-17 Supervisors. Why are so many employees flocking to UPMA? That is simple: UPMA is the superior choice.

UPMA leaders all are active postal employees, in the “mud and the blood” daily with their members, not retired (sometimes for decades) as the leaders of NAPS are. Also, UPMA has term limits, avoiding the current situation in NAPS where its leaders have to play politics to garner favor. UPMA members who attend their chapter conventions elect our leaders and change our Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, not an elite few (mainly on an expense voucher) who attend the national convention.

Therefore, UPMA members can rest assured their leaders are the best qualified, not the best funded or longest tenured. Further, when you contact a UPMA leader, we get back to you (novel concept, I know) and provide the industry standard in representation at every level in the USPS.

It has come time to clear the air concerning *Title 39* and who represents whom. UPMA does not avoid any argument or battle around this, including *Title 39* reform. We welcome the debate and the inevitable outcome. UPMA still will be the



continued on page 7



To learn more go to:
www.unitedpma.org



Follow us:
[@upma15](https://twitter.com/upma15)

UPMA Leader (ISSN-0032-552X) is printed 10 times a year monthly, except for combined January/February and September/October issues by the United Postmasters and Managers of America (UPMA), 8 Herbert St., Alexandria, VA 22305-2600; 703-683-9027; www.unitedpma.org. Periodicals postage paid at Alexandria, VA, and other mailing offices.

Subscriptions All UPMA and UPMA Retired members receive the UPMA Leader as part of their membership dues. The annual subscription rate for individuals who are not eligible for UPMA membership is \$18. For address changes, contact the UPMA National Office, 703-683-9027.

Publication Content Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect the views of UPMA. The publication of any advertisement herein does not necessarily constitute UPMA endorsement of the products or services offered. Articles, photos and/or artwork may be mailed or emailed to UPMA Leader, PO Box 734, Front Royal, VA 22630; 540-636-2569, phone/fax; kbalentyoung@gmail.com.

Advertising Inquiries Please contact Balent-Young Publishing, PO Box 734, Front Royal, VA 22630; 540-636-2569, phone/fax; kbalentyoung@gmail.com.

Reprint Permission © 2024. Permission is hereby granted to UPMA members to reprint material from the UPMA Leader, provided proper credit is given. Non-members may request written reprint permission by contacting Balent-Young Publishing, Inc., kbalentyoung@gmail.com.

Postmasters: Please send all address labels clipped from undeliverable copies, along with USPS Form 3579, to UPMA Leader, 8 Herbert St., Alexandria, VA 22305-2600.

UPMA Executive Board

President

Edmund Carley, 8 Herbert St., Alexandria, VA 22305
703-683-9027; ecarley@unitedpma.org

Secretary-Treasurer

Greg Nors, Granbury, TX 76048
254-744-2241; gnors@unitedpma.org

Executive Vice President

Padric Fisher, Jefferson, OR 97352
559-740-3617; oregonupmast@gmail.com

UPMA Retired President

Charley Peters, 290 Castle St., Monticello KY 42633;
606-307-7483; crpeters0219@gmail.com

Vice Presidents

Atlantic Area

John Douds, Frankford, DE 19945;
302-436-7311; postaldouds@verizon.net

Jeff Lightner, Eldred, PA 16731
814-225-4742; jeffreylightner@gmail.com

Bernadette Puodziunas, Wildwood, NJ 08260
215-906-6131; poboxgirl@aol.com

WestPac Area

Tania Cason, Bellflower, CA 90706;
562-804-1089; tn.cason1@gmail.com

Katie Evertsen, Logan, UT 84321
435-512-3700; kateevertsen@gmail.com

Padric Fisher, Jefferson, OR 97352
559-740-6317; oregonupmast@gmail.com

Central Area

Jeff Jarrett, New Palestine, IN 46163
317-340-9979; jarrettj55@gmail.com

Mari Beth Kirkland, Employee Development
Manager, Cleveland, OH 44101; 440-821-4667;
mari_kirkland@yahoo.com

Kerry Nichols, Workforce Planning specialist, DeWitt, IA;
563-659-3712; kerrysh12@gmail.com

Southern Area

Carla Biggerstaff, Rogers, AR 72756
479-267-3787; 479-213-0060; calahe@aol.com

Sharon Janicek, Simonton, TX, 77476
979-877-5001; sharonjanicek@yahoo.com

Anthony Leonardi, Mims, FL 32754
203-376-9197; 321-289-3453; tonyupmafl@gmail.com

Executive Director

Dan Heins, 8 Herbert St. Alexandria, VA 22305
703-683-9027; dheins@unitedpma.org

Parliamentarian

John Galera, 2120 Oahu Ave., Honolulu, HI 96820
808-284-2833; mysurfshots@gmail.com

National Member Representation Committee

John Sertich, program adviser, PO Box 273,
Belleville, IL 62222; c: 618-830-6535; jmsert@hotmail.com—IL, KS, MO

Dixie Bentley, 1334 Whitetail Ave, Sumner, IA
50674-9586; c: 319-240-6289; pm61265@gmail.com—AR, CO, IA, NE, OK, SD, WY

Jackie Deter, 1232 Castlegate Ln., Santa Ana,
CA 92705; o: 562-544-5835; c: 714-914-8752;
jackiedeterupma@gmail.com—AZ, Southern CA, HI,
NM, NV, UT

George R. Finley, 178 Mountain View Dr., Plum
Branch, SC 29845; c: 512-365-0066; grf03@usa.net—
AL, LA, MS, TX

Shari Hetzler, 1003 Shady Grove Dr., Granbury, TX
76049; c: 209-419-1635; hetz51@yahoo.com—AK,
Northern CA, ID, MT, OR, WA

Richard Hui, 49 Suomi Rd., Gardner, MA 01440-
3360; c: 978-549-3360; richmeista67@gmail.com—
CT, DC, MA, MD, ME, NH, RI, VA, VT

Paul Joseph, 727 Atalan Trail, Lima, OH 45805; 419-
236-0166; repins@bright.net—KY, NC, OH, TN, WV

Anita Pfiefer, 20576 Kearney Path, Lakeville, MN
55044-6711; 507-390-1164; amp2016@yahoo.com—
IN, MI, MN, ND, WI

Roy Shaffer, 162 Poplar Way, Winder, GA 30680;
404-357-9596; roy.shaffer@gmail.com—FL, GA, PR/
VI, SC

Catherine R. Winnie, 33 Cat Trail, Williamstown,
NY 13493; 845-742-7774; cathywinnie@yahoo.com—
DE, NJ, NY, PA

Postal Area Coordinators

Atlantic Area:

Charles Narciso Jr., Barrington, RI 02806
c: 401-573-1883; cnjr21@gmail.com

Central Area:

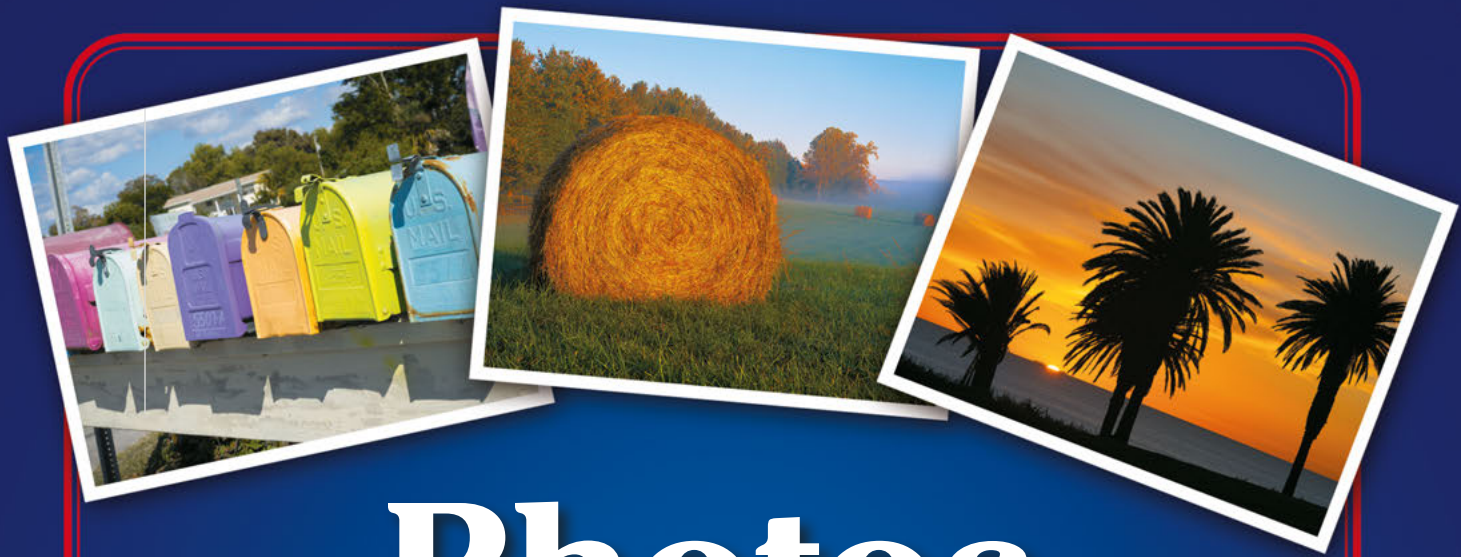
Jason Hirschvogel, Jefferson City, MO 65101
c: 573-353-2122; hv175@hotmail.com

Southern Area:

Jeremy Hanners, Richton, MS 39476
c: 239-872-5695; o: 601-788-6042; jdanners0923@gmail.com

WestPac Area:

Shana Mansfield, Morrison, CO 80465
c: 303-918-4532; o: 303-785-4450; smansfield16@gmail.com



Photos Needed for the 2025 UPMA Calendar

Attention UPMA shutterbugs: This is your opportunity to have your photo chosen for the 2025 UPMA calendar. Please note: You must be a UPMA member; no more than two entries are allowed per member.

The deadline for receipt of **high-resolution, horizontal** jpgs is June 17. Photos need to be a minimum of 300 dpi; if your file is smaller than one megabyte, your photo is low-resolution. The photos cannot be digitally manipulated; any files edited in Photoshop or other software will not be accepted.

Send your photos to kbalentyoung@gmail.com. Be sure to include your name, post office or post office from which you retired and contact information.





Maximizing Our Potential

Padric Fisher, national executive vice president

Thank You, Alex

I recently had the pleasure of attending the Colorado Chapter Convention in Golden. On Sunday morning, I made my way back to the airport and rental car return facility. After turning the car in, I headed over to the shuttle stop. I was not prepared for what I was about to experience.

The shuttle pulled up and opened its doors. The group of us standing there started shuffling in. As I handed my bag to the driver, I could tell there was something different in his demeanor. He was carrying himself with a certain upbeat to his actions.

I imagine driving a shuttle bus the two miles back and forth between the facility and the terminal all day could be considered somewhat mundane—not for this driver. The second the doors closed, the music began. He welcomed us to the “80’s party bus,” playing “Celebration” by Kool and the Gang. He was a bundle of positive energy.



As I went through the security checkpoints, then boarded the plane, I found myself inspired. I was focusing on the positives and reminiscing about the weekend I had spent sharing laughs and fun with my UPMA family. I was thinking about the lesson that Alex had taught me that morning: Bring joy to your work.

Find the positives in what you are doing; share that joy with others. Every day we can get bogged down in the routine and repetitive tasks before us, but we have a choice in our attitude. We get to choose how we interact with others. As leaders, it makes all the difference. Be the positive change you want in the world.

My challenge to you is to find what it is that makes you happy and joyful in your work. It can be something small and seemingly insignificant or it can be something large and obvious. Once you find it, hold on to the feeling, protect it and use it as fuel for you. Then, help others around you find their joy and encourage them to do the same.

And if you ever find yourself on an Avis shuttle bus in Denver with Alex, shake his hand, thank him and be inspired by his attitude of joy.

“Be the positive change you want in the world.”

I watched as we moved to a couple more songs. Even the dourest patrons were bobbing their heads, lip-syncing the lyrics and smiling. When we got to the terminal, he jumped up to retrieve the passengers’ bags. He had an infectious smile for each of them as he sent them on their way.

I hung back and when he handed me my bag, I asked his name. “Alex,” he replied. I stuck my hand out and shook his. “Alex, I want to thank you for today.” His already big smile got even broader as he headed back on the bus for the next round.

I was thanking Alex for bringing joy to his work. He made a conscious choice to be happy and have fun. I have seen many people approach their work with a sense of dread or foreboding. Alex went the other way. He brought joy and happiness. He chose to brighten people’s day with his attitude.

Facts Do Matter

(continued from page 4)

best choice for representation for all EAS employees in the postal sphere.

UPMA always will look forward, work with the Postal Service when it can and hold it accountable when UPMA has to. Numbers are facts, too; EAS employees recognize the enormous benefits of UPMA membership. Five thousand supervisors, 10,000 Postmasters and 3,000 other EAS employees can’t be wrong. “Together, we can.”



Leadership for Success

Carla Biggerstaff, Southern Area national vice president

Be Leaders of Integrity

Dwight D. Eisenhower said, “The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionable integrity. Without it, no real success is possible...” Integrity means being honest and having strong moral principles.

Postmaster, Manager or Supervisor—at one point, you raised your hand and said, “Here I am, send me.” If you are an associate member, you are preparing to tag in and join ranks. You raised your hand and took an oath; a person is only as good as their word. How good are you?

Recently, some Postmasters have had their integrity called into question; some have been found lacking. I encourage each of our members to be a leader of integrity. Weekly, I give my team a talk that’s always about character and doing what is right, even when no one is looking.

another report or their day disrupted by another telecon.

What I don’t understand is the how and why when it comes to jeopardizing who you are as a person or your career. To quote a district manager, “It’s far better to be honest and call an ugly baby an ugly baby.” If you have delayed mail for whatever reason, you report it in DCV and FDB you carried or cased mail. Record in the EAS Carry Survey you have missorted packages; spend the hours and get them connected.

Never compromise your character to avoid being on a report. You aren’t fooling anyone. They have a metric for that; someone, somewhere, knows the shortcuts you’re taking. A career built on shortcuts and falsification is a career built like a house of cards. Your team is looking to you as a leader to guide them through these everchanging times. Be the leader they deserve, the leader this organization needs and the leader the Postal Service needs to keep us relevant and be successful.

If your team says you’re cutting corners, taking long lunches, constantly showing up late and leaving early, it will destroy the culture and morale in your office faster than anything. If they see you doing the wrong thing, it gives them free range to do the wrong thing. Our customers deserve better from all of us; your team deserves better, too.

If it comes to putting your character, integrity and career on the line, it’s better to call that ugly baby an ugly baby. It’s one day of failure, but also a day to learn and grow. Wooden said, “Failure isn’t fatal, but failure to change might be.”

Be a leader of good character and integrity. Do what’s right, even when it’s ugly and painful. Don’t be afraid of failure; be afraid you lose your integrity and trust as a person and a leader. Once it’s gone, it’s almost impossible to get it back



“A person is only as good as their word. How good are you?”

Legendary basketball coach John Wooden said, “Be more concerned with your character than your reputation because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are. The true test of a man’s character is what he does when no one is watching.” Here’s the catch, though. In our current environment and with technological advances in the Postal Service, someone always is watching.

Every day, it seems as if they come up with a new report for which we need to pull an answer for a new telecon about a new metric to achieve. It can be overwhelming; some days, it can seem insurmountable. But don’t despair. You are not an island; you are not alone. Take advantage of this great network called UPMA. Reach out for assistance, to vent, to verify and to be successful.

What I don’t want you to do is jeopardize your character, integrity or your job. It happens every day: Postmasters, Managers and Supervisors hiding mail, falsifying scans. I get it no one wants

New Ideas, New Processes

Leadership does not come naturally. It's a process and developed with years of experience. There are 10 leadership principles:

1. Respect every individual.
2. Lead with humility.
3. Seek perfection.
4. Embrace scientific thinking.
5. Focus on process.
6. Assure quality at the source.
7. Flow and pull value.
8. Think systemically.
9. Create consistency of purpose.
10. Create value for the customer.

In surveying employees, importance is expressed in leading, coaching and mentoring with operational excellence. Principles help us see the positive and negative results of our actions. They enable us to make smarter decisions about what we choose to do.

treat them as such? Toxic work environments are damaging and undermine a commitment to the organization's success.



As a leader, what do you do when you experience negative behaviors? Some solutions include:

- Lead by example. Always model the behavior that you expect from others. Be fair to all.
- Communicate and encourage others to communicate. Listen to your employees. Provide open dialogue and be transparent.
- Always address bullying and conflict; address them immediately. Follow policy and make sure your employees feel safe and know they are supported.
- Thank employees and let them know you appreciate their positive behavior. Acknowledge employees who have good work ethics and positive attitudes.
- Be supportive and provide training and resources for development. Always offer training to help developing employees. Share resources.
- Support change. Be a change agent—share your knowledge and support change.
- Set clear and concise expectations and monitor progress. Hold employees accountable.
- Teach, coach, mentor and develop. All employees need support. Take time to satisfy their needs.
- Maintain and stress the importance of a work-life balance. Be flexible. Promote wellness and be realistic about workload and deadlines.
- Acknowledge problems. When toxic behaviors occur, recognize and acknowledge them immediately.
- Always establish trust. Be reliable, supportive and transparent.

“Our employees are our best asset; why do we not treat them as such?”

I would imagine most of you in your USPS career have unfortunately experienced a “boss” who does not manage with appropriate leadership. Leadership is not easy. Working in a difficult or toxic work environment can be very detrimental to success.

In today's environment, we unfortunately experience bullying, lack of communication, accountability concerns, difficulty adapting to change, unfair and disparate treatment, micromanaging, stress and a lack of recognition and communication. There is a correlation in toxic environments with retention, employee availability and performance. To succeed at leadership, you must be aware of all these toxic behaviors.

Our employees are our best asset; why do we not

continued on page 11

Chapter Presidents

Alabama

Kristie Grant
Collinsville 35961
kgrant176@hotmail.com

Alaska

Amy LaPorte
Supervisor, Anchorage
amyllynn4077@gmail.com

Arizona

Brian G. Wade
Prescott 86301
ninetoone@ymail.com

Arkansas

Carla Biggerstaff
Rogers 72756
calahe@aol.com

California

Tania Cason
Bellflower 92647
tn.cason1@gmail.com

Colorado

Shana D. Mansfield
Morrison 80465
mansfield16@gmail.com

Connecticut

Peter Urbani
Waterford 06385
purbani@aol.com

Delaware

Richard Zurowski
Laurel 19956
rczurowski@comcast.net

District of Columbia

Albert Ruiz
PO Box 44758
Washington DC 20026
alruiz214@yahoo.com

Florida

Tony Leonardi
Mims 32754
tonyupmafl@gmail.com

Georgia

Becky Manley
Cleveland 30528
rb.manley@yahoo.com

Hawaii

Sheila Apana
Kahului 96732
ssapana@msn.com

Idaho

Khrista Holman
Melba 83641
missywoowo7@gmail.com

Illinois

Earl Husbands
East Hazel Crest 60429
earlhusbands@gmail.com

Indiana

Jeff R. Jarrett
New Palestine 46163
jarrettj55@gmail.com

Iowa

Greg Snow
Clarion 50525
snowteam6@yahoo.com

Kansas

Deb Dressman
Supervisor, Council Grove 66846
dressmanfarms@hotmail.com

Kentucky

Dora Carlson
Smithland 42081
doracarson@yahoo.com

Louisiana

Glen Forbes
Livingston 70754
papere97@yahoo.com

Maine

Jarrold LeBlanc
Dover-Foxcroft 04426
jarroldleblanc@yahoo.com

Maryland

Michelle Cornish
Forest Hill 21050
hawkinscornish@msn.com

Massachusetts

Robert Leary
Whitinsville 01588
pmrleary@yahoo.com

Michigan

Beth Martin
Marshall 49068
bamartinbc@aol.com

Minnesota

Tony Terwey
Richmond 56368
mnupmapresident@gmail.com

Mississippi

Jeremy Hanners
Richton 39476
jdanners0923@gmail.com

Missouri

Jim Maher
Labor Relations
Hazlewood 63042
jmaher300@aol.com

Montana

Iris KillEagle
Malta 59538
killeagle45@yahoo.com

Nebraska

Katrina Frey
McCook 69001
katrinafreyupmane@outlook.com

Nevada

Joshua Armstrong
Kings Beach CA 96143
nevadaupma@gmail.com

New Hampshire

Elizabeth Warner
Dover 03820
lwarner77@gmail.com

New Jersey

Danny Estrick
Hoboken 07601
estrictd@gmail.com

New Mexico

Kellie Young
Raton 87740
kellieyoung2001@yahoo.com

New York

Dan Leonard
Bath 14810
nyupmadanleonard@gmail.com

North Carolina

Nancy Applewhite
Leland 28451
nacapple4@gmail.com

North Dakota

Ryan Nelson
Hettinger 58639
ryancnelsonupma@gmail.com

Ohio

Mari Beth Kirkland
Employee Development Manager
Cleveland 44101
mari_kirkland@yahoo.com

Oklahoma

Tena Robinson
Cleveland 74020
tenarobinson65@gmail.com

Oregon

Padric Fisher
Jefferson 97352
oregonupmast@gmail.com

Pennsylvania

Stephanie L. Thompson
Meadville 16335
dragonfly_11@live.com

Puerto Rico/U.S. Virgin Islands

Kendrick Comulada
Supervisor
Old San Juan Station
San Juan 00901
kcomulada@yahoo.com

Rhode Island

Charles Narciso Jr.
Barrington 02806
cnjr21@gmail.com

South Carolina

Howard Brown
Imro 29063
brownhj@bellsouth.net

South Dakota

Pamela Vinz Weber
Parkston 57366
spweber@triotel.net

Tennessee

Mark Mills
Supervisor
Church Hill 37642
jmarkmills32@gmail.com

Texas

Darwin Adams
Carrollton 75006
darwinadams@hotmail.com

Utah

Katie Evertsen
Logan 84321
kateeevertsen@gmail.com

Vermont

Michelle Lingley
Putney 05346
postedonna@icloud.com

Virginia

Morris (Morty) Bennett
Accomac 23301
unitedpma@yahoo.com

Washington

C. Scott Christiansen
Ellensburg 98926
christiansen.cs@gmail.com

West Virginia

Eric Grossa
Clarksburg 26301
samuelgrossa@gmail.com

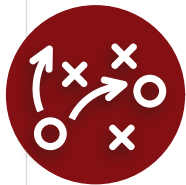
Wisconsin

Melissa A. Tarlton
Shawano 54166
melissatarlton@gmail.com

Wyoming

Susan Linko
Thermopolis 82443
lynette4366@msn.com





Chapter Conventions—the Place To Be!

In April, I was fortunate to attend two chapter conventions in South Carolina and Wisconsin. I was excited to stay in the South, but equally eager to visit up North.

In South Carolina, I experienced great spring days with cool nights. Beaufort, where the convention was held, is a city on Port Royal Island. It's known for its beautiful mansions, especially in the downtown historic district. I experienced great local attractions and southern hospitality.



artists and entrepreneurs.

Downtown Eau Claire has eclectic boutiques, cozy shops, enticing eateries; the whole area was inviting.

Both chapters hosted great conventions. They offered outstanding training and networking, with district managers present and committed to providing training and useful information. South Carolina had favorable attendance and five first-timers, but Wisconsin really blew it out of the park with great attendance and 26 first-timers.

I'm always thrilled to see first-timers come to UPMA events. Both chapters had the support of their retirees and represented UPMA well. These chapters' leadership should be commended.

If your chapter has not had its convention yet, be sure and look into attending. I think you will be glad you did; each UPMA chapter has a lot to offer.

I'm always thrilled to see first-timers come to UPMA events.

When I flew into Minneapolis, I was greeted with a beautiful, sunny day and perfect temperatures. As I traveled from Minneapolis to Eau Claire, WI, I saw lakes, rivers and beautiful countryside.

I understand this is where farm kids grow up to be

The PO Box

By Earl Musick



**"OPS wants me to cut down stationary time.
Marketing wants me to increase stationary time
so that people mail more letters."**

www.earlmusick.com

New Ideas, New Processes

(continued from page 9)

- Promote inclusion. Be sure all voices are heard and respected.
- Celebrate success. Recognize and celebrate achievements.

Remember, it takes seconds and costs us nothing to recognize an employee. It also takes seconds to lose trust and respect.

Chief Retail and Delivery Officer Dr. Josh Colin said, "We need to get to the heart and minds of our employees." Author and inspirational speaker Simon Sinek said, "Leadership is not about being in charge; it's about taking care of those in our charge."



Relieve Chronic Stress and Weight Gain

Have you ever wondered why it's so hard to lose weight? Aside from the fact our metabolism slows as we age, we also live in a world where we try to get more done than we have time for. We live in a postal world full of telecons and an ever-increasing list of responsibilities—a world where social media zaps a good portion of our free time.

This and other stressors kick our natural energy distribution out of balance. Our immune system will steal energy from other systems during this survival, fight-or-flight response that feeds our muscles, heart and breathing.

If we are stressed for long periods of time, there will be no energy left for other essential systems. That is why we feel irritable, forgetful and overwhelmed.

“ Try to see problems as opportunities and reframe the way you look at stressful situations. ”

Our fast-paced lives and often hectic workplace environments can trigger a plethora of emotions that ultimately can and assuredly will lead to stress. Chronic stress can lead to problems with our muscular, respiratory, nervous and reproductive systems. Stress also can cause cardiovascular, endocrine and gastrointestinal complications.

Stress is a natural, physical response that travels throughout our entire body. It causes our body to react as if it were in danger. Our central nervous system triggers a fight-or-flight response in our brain.

The hypothalamus starts the process by telling the adrenal glands to release the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol. This revs up our heartbeat and sends blood to the areas of our body that need

it most in an emergency, such as our muscles, heart and other important organs.

Normally, once the perceived danger is gone, the hypothalamus tells all systems to resume normal function. With chronic stress, the perceived fear never goes away; the fight-or-flight response continues.

This is what happens:

- The stress hormone cortisol increases your appetite because of the body's extra need for energy. A stressed body only can run on sugar and metabolize carbohydrates to get energy.
- Cortisol increases your blood pressure and, together with adrenaline, helps accelerate your heartbeat and breathing.
- This sends glucose to the blood to help free up enough energy for the muscles and brain.
- A fuel shortage arises, making you crave sweet foods because sugar gives you a quick energy boost.
- Consequently, you need insulin to get glucose (sugar) out of your blood and into your cells.
- The stress hormones make it difficult for your pancreas to secrete insulin. The overload of sugar you consume makes your pancreas hyperactive. Over time, this hyperactivity can disturb the cells in your pancreas so it won't be able to produce sufficient insulin.
- Stress keeps oxygen from reaching your cells, leaving you with a dependency on carbohydrates for energy. This explains the sugar cravings.

So, how can you de-stress from your hectic lifestyle and obligations?



Set limits: Make a list of those commitments overwhelming you and cut back on any that are non-essential. Ask for assistance in getting the essential tasks completed. Limit yourself from accepting any more commitments until your stress is under control. Set limits on non-essential obligations in the future and stick to the limits.

Reach out to your support system: This can be a friend or relative who will lend a listening ear and may have faced similar challenges or circumstances. A shared burden is always lighter. They may have useful ideas or advice to help you unload some stress from your life.

Make one health-related change: One small step can have a positive effect. Cut back on caffeine, start walking, eat an apple a day. Taking positive steps for your health will help you manage stress. Strengthening your health will give you the energy it takes to tackle your challenges.

Enhance your sleep quality: Do you lie awake at night due to stress? People who are chronically stressed often suffer from a lack of adequate sleep.

Set a regular bedtime to where you can get seven to eight hours of sleep per night. Refrain from watching TV or using the computer or smart phone in the bedroom. Instead, listen to calming music or read a book you enjoy. If you find yourself lying in bed with worry, write down your concerns and address them in the morning.

Strive for a positive outlook: Try to look at situations more positively. Learn to recognize negative thoughts when they start and turn them around. Try to see problems as opportunities and reframe the way you look at stressful situations. Staying positive will help minimize stress.

Seek additional help: If you continue to feel overwhelmed, consider calling the Employee Assistance Program or other counselor or therapist. They are trained and equipped to help you deal with the stresses of daily life and life-related circumstances.

Sources: www.apa.org and www.healthcoachfx.com.

SALSBURY INDUSTRIES
People Committed to Quality Since 1936

MAILBOXES

mailboxes.com
1-800-MAILBOX

Buy Mailboxes Factory Direct!
Volume Discounts • Large Inventory • Fast Shipping



Be Prepared for the Changes in Your Life

Every year, we see changes in the seasons; it is no different in our lives. Some may bring joy, sorrow or even troubles. What has proven true regarding the seasons and our lives is those who are prepared will weather the changes.

Two things to consider before we experience a change in season would be knowing what to expect or someone to help provide guidance or wisdom through the storm. Most of us probably have experienced both by providing or receiving this support.

As we continue to grow as an organization, we should strive to ensure we are providing the necessary tools, information and training to those

who are entering new positions, whether bargaining unit or non-bargaining unit. Regardless, we must remember the person they are replacing is leaving with a vast amount of knowledge and wisdom that will take some time to obtain.

That is where we as leaders or future leaders step in and bridge the gap being created more and more each day. We have a tremendous opportunity to capitalize on this through effective communication at each level in the organization. Communication, by definition, is sending and receiving information. It can be one on one or



continued on page 16

2024 UPMA Chapter Conventions

Chapter	Dates	City	Hotel
JUNE			
North Carolina	1-3	Raleigh	Hilton Crabtree Valley Raleigh
North Dakota	6	Bismarck	Quality Inn
Louisiana	6-8	Alexandria	Four Points by Sheraton Alexandria
Georgia	6-9	Helena	Little Ocmulgee State Park & Lodge
New York	6-9	Buffalo	Hyatt Regency
Virginia	7	Williamsburg	Hilton Garden Inn
Wyoming	7-8	Hulett	TBD
Kentucky	7-9	Louisville	Hilton Garden Inn Williamsburg
Hawaii	9	Honolulu	TBD
Rhode Island	8	Providence	Chelo's
Alabama	13-15	Huntsville	Huntsville Marriott
Pennsylvania	13-16	Harrisburg	Red Lion Hotel Harrisburg Hershey
Michigan	13-16	Grand Rapids	Amway Grand Plaza Hotel
Texas	20-23	Amarillo	Embassy Suites
Montana	27-29	Polson	Red Lion Inn
District of Columbia	29	Alexandria, VA	UPMA House

To be determined: Alaska

Current as of May 17, 2024



Convention Offers Wide Range of Training

Greetings, everyone! As I write this column, preparations are well on their way for our national convention in Orlando, Aug. 24-30. If you never have attended a UPMA national convention, I encourage you to go on our website and register. National conventions are a great opportunity to learn and grow in your position with the Postal Service, as well as a person.

In the first week of May, National Education Chair Kerry Nichols and I met with our representative from the Postal Service to discuss this year's convention training classes. While the majority of the Postal Service classes are not yet finalized, we do know Karla Kirby will be with us to do a number of presentations on the Postal Service Health Benefits plan and what it means for each of us heading into open season in November.

In addition, we have requested presentations on PFP/NPA, rural delivery, the new 150 and SWCs

Another area of focus members have requested in recent years is training and information on dealing with mental health issues—in the workplace and the world in general. To help meet that need, Donald Roussel, a licensed, independent clinical social worker will be with us.

Don will focus on warning signs Postmasters, Managers and Supervisors should be aware of in those with whom we work on a daily basis. He then will share information on what types of intervention we may want to look at, depending on the situation.

UPMA National Parliamentarian John Galera will be doing a session on parliamentary procedure and how to run an effective meeting. Our friends from FESA will be doing a session on retirement planning and what steps to take to prepare to make that life change and join UPMA Retired.

So, some of the sessions have been confirmed, while many others still are waiting for USPS Headquarters approval. I am optimistic we will be able to secure presenters for most of these sessions. Again this year, we will offer one training session on Monday afternoon after the Postal Area Coordinator breakout sessions and two more training sessions on Wednesday afternoon. As I have more information, I will share that with you.

On Thursday afternoon, 1:30-3:30, Jill Groves from the Florida Chapter will be offering a glass fusion class. Many of you may remember she offered a similar class a few years ago at our convention in Ohio. For a nominal fee, you will be able to make a sun catcher. Jill will take your creation home, fire it in her kiln, then mail it to you. Watch for the registration form; Jill will handle all the logistics.



“National conventions are a great opportunity to learn and grow in your position with the Postal Service, as well as a person.”

programs and how they can help determine the level of your office. Due to requests from members, we also have requested a session on advanced leadership and managing in a higher-level office with, perhaps, multiple locations and a number of Supervisors. We also have requested a representative be with us to help UPMA members deal with labor relations issues that may come up in our offices.

We have confirmed that Arvella Collins again will be with us to do presentations on the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) and planning for retirement. Her sessions always are popular and well done.

As a reminder to our chapter members and leaders, we again will announce the Star Chapter Award winners. These awards are given to chapters that submit the application along with supporting documentation that exemplifies how they have engaged their membership and what they have done in the areas of recognition, membership, communication/training, legislative/PAC involvement and chapter administration.

The information on the Star Chapter program

can be found on our website in the resources dropdown, then click on “Chapter Documents and Forms.” All submissions must be sent to the National Office by July 1.

This month, I leave you with this quote from Theodore Roosevelt: “The most important, single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.”

Have a great month!

Be Prepared for the Changes in Your Life *(continued from page 14)*

between groups of people, face to face or through communication devices.

Communication requires a sender, the person who initiates communication, to transfer their thoughts or encode a message. Each one of us is responsible for communicating effectively, whether you are sending or receiving; feedback can help measure effectiveness.

Those who know me well know my favorite quote: “Learn something new each day and teach someone something new each day.” Some days I am both the teacher and the student, but, nevertheless, continuing to learn.

In this short period of time as an area coordinator, I have learned so much and shared so much with those with whom I have communicated regarding inquiries made directly to me. In my chapter this year, we have focused on providing

more opportunities for training and communication to members through 3-digit meetings and district-approved training provided at the chapter convention.

Make sure you know whom to contact in your chapter. You can find that information at unitedpma.org—Chapter Officer Contact.

I am looking forward to seeing you in Orlando in August at the national convention. If you never have had a chance to attend a national convention, you are missing out. The convention is yet another opportunity to tap into some great training for your position and the organization.

Why not start today and prepare for the inevitable changing season? You will be more prepared by being more knowledgeable and ready to provide important guidance and support to someone in need.



PICTURES FROM THE PAST

Anthony Iezzi, deltiologist

Written on the back of this postcard is “This is the Baldheaded PM ...” Elmer G. Erwin, Postmaster of Haven, Kansas, from Feb. 2, 1903, to Oct. 24, 1907, is standing in the middle of this image with whom I assume are his wife and son.

The card is postmarked “Haven, Kansas, Jun 3 1907.” Haven was laid out in 1886 and incorporated as a city in 1901. The first post office was established in 1873.

Tony Iezzi is a postcard collector, a photographer and the retired Postmaster of Oley, PA; iezzipho@gmail.com.



Again, I Say, Knowledge Is Power



John Sertich, Membership Representation Committee chair

After finishing reading the April issue of the *UPMA Leader*—something I do with every issue on receipt—I found it to be of great educational value. Everyone who submitted columns and articles provided first-rate information from which all members can benefit.

As I considered the facts and figures in each column, I began to wonder how many of us read all, if any, of the material in the *Leader*? I don't want to sound like a pessimist, but I doubt if more than 25% of us read any of it, let alone all of it. Probably more than half of us do not read any of it.

To which, I ask you to consider: If a hungry person sits down at the table and food is placed in front of them, does it do any good if they don't eat it? Think about how many times you have shared a table with a young person who, on seeing a plate of food in front of them, said: "I don't like this and I'm not going to eat it!" Which usually prompted the adult to respond: "You have to eat it; it's good for you!" Then the next response: "I don't care. I don't like it and I won't eat it." I could go on, but you get the picture.

The contributors of the material in the April issue had the members' best interests in mind when they created these compositions. I wish we could encourage more members to take advantage of this valuable collection of wisdom imparted to us. Okay, I get it, you don't have time, it's not applicable to you. Or, sadder still, you think you're not and never will be in the situation they described.

You don't have time? How much time do you spend doing your job? Let alone prepping for it and driving to and from it? Is it worth 30-45 minutes of your time 10 times a year to become better informed about the issues that directly affect you and your career?

Maybe it is not applicable to you, but it might be to someone you know. We talk a great deal about reaching out to help others. Perhaps this may be a perfect opportunity to call another member who is in such a situation. Or, better still, a non-member you can encourage to join.

You might just be performing an invaluable service to them, for which they will be eternally grateful. On the other hand, they may cite your initial opinion. In that case, a few months down the road, you always can say: "I told you so!"

And finally, you're not and never will be in the situation described. How can you possibly be 100% certain of that? Are you 100% certain you will have the same boss in six to 12 months? Certain you always will be 100% staffed? When won't there be a line of people who applied to work in your office? Cer-

National Committee Chairs/Executive Board Advisers

Articles and Bylaws

Drew Martin, 828-434-0612, dbmartin@skybest.com; **Mary Beth Kirkland**, adviser, 440-821-4667; mari_kirkland@yahoo.com

Member Representation Committee

John Sertich, 618-830-6535; jmsert@hotmail.com; **Sharon Janicek**, adviser, 979-877-5001; sharonjanicek@yahoo.com

Diversity and Inclusion

Jeff Lightner, 814-225-4742, jeffreylightner@gmail.com

EAS Professionals

Albert Ruiz, 214-535-1346, alruiz214@yahoo.com; **Jim Dunlap**, adviser, 970-988-9614, jtdpostal@hotmail.com

Education

Kerry Nichols, 563-659-3712, kerrysh12@gmail.com

Legislation

Padric Fisher, 559-740-6317, oregonupmast@com

Membership

Tony Leonardi, 321-267-5122, tonyupmafl@gmail.com; **Katie Everts**, adviser, 435-512-3700, kateeverts@gmail.com

PAC

John Douds, 302-436-7311, postaldouds@verizon.net

VIP

Clarence Gagner, 218-686-5702, jcrgagner@hotmail.com

tain that everything you're doing each and every day is 100% correct?

I leave you with this bit of information—hopefully you made it to the end of my column. Do you understand the various benefits offered to you as a career USPS employee? If you consider annual leave, sick leave, health and life insurances, your benefits are up to 30% to 40% of your salary package. Now, let me provide some information on FEGLI (Federal Employee Group Life Insurance):

Until the age of 35, option B costs only .043 cents per month per \$1,000 dollars of coverage. In other words, \$500,000 of coverage costs \$21 per month. Not a bad deal. Now consider the following increases as you get older (percentages and monthly premiums listed are approximate):

- At 35, premiums go up 50% to \$32 per month
- At 40, premiums go up 33% to \$43 per month
- At 45, premiums go up 75% to \$76 per month
- At 50, premiums go up 57% to \$119 per month

- At 55, premiums go up 82% to \$216 per month
- At 60, premiums go up 120% to \$476 per month
- At 65, premiums go up 23% to \$585 per month
- At 70, premiums go up 78% to \$1,040 per month

Suffice to say, if you continue option B from age 34 to age 70, your premiums will have increased nearly 5,000%. If you don't believe these figures, type <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-center/calculators/fegli-calculator/option-b-additional/> into your search engine and see for yourself.

After seeing these figures, wouldn't it be prudent for you to shop around with private companies for the same coverage at a better, perhaps constant, rate? When you are discussing this with friends and colleagues who may not yet know about this, please tell them where you got the information.

Until next time, I leave you with this quote from Kojak (Telly Savalas): "Who loves you, baby?"

Membership

COMMITTEES

Invest in Our Members

C. Scott Christiansen, Washington Chapter president and National Membership Team



Esteemed colleagues and postal professionals, salutations! As you all are aware, membership is the literal lifeblood of any organization; UPMA is no exception. We do all things in this organization on behalf of the "member-

ship," for the "membership" and at the will of the "membership."

Do you notice a theme? It's all about membership—myself, yourself, them and us, together—the "membership." As of May 1, UPMA has welcomed 1,256 new EAS employees and 279 new associates to the fastest growing organization, year to date. As you should be aware, our beliefs are based in the investment of our members to create a better Postal Service.

This continued growth is a testament to our ef-

forts in building the bench of tomorrow's leaders today. I applaud your individual and collective achievements in driving membership so we can continue pushing the "envelope" with Postal Service Headquarters, Congress and various other stakeholders in advancing our agenda for a better USPS and stronger UPMA in the future.

I'd like to share something that's been on my mind for some time. While it's true that it's all about the "membership," simply handing a new Supervisor, aspiring craft employee or newly installed Postmaster an 1187 to join UPMA is simply not enough. It is, however, a great first step in the journey on which our careers will take us.

We need to emphasize code RED—recruit, engage and develop. Engaging with our new members is the second step in ensuring they feel like a welcomed part of the team. Each member has

continued on page 25

Warm Calling

Peter Urbani, Connecticut Chapter president and National Membership Team



It can be nerve-wracking to call someone out of the blue and ask them to join UPMA. It can be like talking in public, which is one of the hardest things to do. If this sounds like you, have you ever tried warm calling?

You either can write your own letter or go to the UPMA website and click on “Resources,” then “Materials,” for an example. You can tailor the letter any way you would like, then print it out and mail it to potential members. You also should include an 1187, your business card and a couple rail cards. Everyone’s extremely busy, so don’t send out too many at one time because you should be following up with each contact in a week or so.

Because the prospective members already will have the information you sent, it will be much easier to chat with them about membership in UPMA. Even if they signed as a member from the packet you sent, still call and welcome them to UPMA. See! That wasn’t too hard.

Chapter convention season is a great time to be recruiting members and getting them to our conventions and seeing what a great organization UPMA is. Many chapters offer free registration for first-timers, which is a great recruiting tool to add to the many great offers we provide.

I hope your recruiting efforts are successful. Don’t hesitate to reach out to me at any time if you need help with membership or other concerns.

We Need Each Other

Katrina Frey, Nebraska Chapter president and National Membership Team



Nebraska just finished its chapter convention in late April, but it wasn’t just Nebraska. It was a tri-state convention with our district team chapter brothers and sisters—Iowa and South Dakota. We started this vision of combining our conventions after last year’s individual conventions ended and we made it happen.

It was amazing! We had a joint district day of training and got to know more members, creating a bond among us. Was it perfect? Of course not! As in life, we always should be looking at ways to improve and we will!

We all agreed the contact we had with first-timers was also amazing. Better yet, they loved their experience! They didn’t care what chapter we were from as they mingled with us. Isn’t that what it’s all about?

If you are a member and never have attended your chapter convention, you are missing out. There is

no price for camaraderie with like-minded people. Networking is vital in our everchanging business; we need each other. You never know when you meet someone if one day they will become a wonderful resource, as well as a friend along the way.

I am thankful and blessed beyond measure for the love and support I get daily from friends all across the United States I have met through UPMA. I encourage you from my toes—go to your chapter convention. If it’s already over, go to our national convention in August.

You never will regret the investment you make for you and your career. Even better, bring a friend. The convention is in Orlando; forget it’s in August. Florida has air conditioning and beautiful beaches, not to mention the pools at the Caribe Royale Orlando.

We are on this earth for a purpose. Maybe one of yours is to be a light for someone else. When was the last time you did something for the first time? Be the amazing self you are and, please, look for me in Florida. I’ll be there and can’t wait to meet you and share my story.

Welcome, New Members

These new members joined in April:

Alabama

Skyler Craig Bennett, Kelli Culver, Antoine Echols, Natasha Flowers, Heather Gore, Kedric Murry

Arizona

Jennifer L. Bennett, Connor Joseph Dakin, Jennifer Parkes, Jonathan E. Tso

Arkansas

Kenya Bonner, Timothy Braslavsky, Mandy Janiece Chatman, Clinton Combs, Caleb Cranford, Jacqueline Gills, Heather Lowe, Sharee Ridley, Kristi Sneed, Mark Tackett, Alexandros Wiggington

California

Johanne Cabading, Jesse Cao, Allen Castaneda, Raul Caudillo, Alona del Rosario, Rachel Gholston, Emily R. Heffley, Krystal Hernandez, Charolette Jauregui, Candace L. Miller, Luis S. Orozco, Perla Padilla, Tracy Petty, Mary Rhodes, Marco Antonio Salazar, Jessie Samano, Danielle Schwab, Jasmine Aquita Sheree Swanson, Pamela Tolentino, Wayne P. Truong, Christy Varela, John J. Wong, Lily Wong-Lim, Anli Zhao

Colorado

Darlene Faye Atwood, Brenda Baldwin, Jodi Brady, Stephanie Carreno, Michael Crites, Faith Marie Davisson, Kindra Patrice Henderson, Kathryn M. Jaramillo, Valeriu Hencot, Amy Anne Nelms, Jeremy C Romero, John J. Scott, Melodee Trombley, Rhonda Kay White

Connecticut

David L. Cox, Kevin Heritage, Tracy Ann Madore, Gina D. Milanese, Rafael Ramos Jr.

Delaware

Sean J. Cunningham, Royall Daniels, Koran Laws

Florida

Andrew Acevedo, Marianela Acevedo, Cynthia Arena, Georgiana M. Aubain, Kristin Beaver, Lee R. Becquart, Faith C. Boyke, Aurelio Bravo, Jorge Cardona, Aaron D Cooper, Lourdes Coronado, Charles Cowell, Jan C. Crespo, Deanna Curry, James R. Daniels, Perry Darrell, Nicole L. Davis-Vargas, Christian K. Evans, Collins Fields, Brian Fleming, Shalonda M. Foster, Donald Franco, Dorian Frank, Marquise Gainous, Camille Gasper, Kristian Hernandez, George W. Hill, Adrianna Irizarry, Starkelia Johnson, Kevin Kerle, Judy B. Kirtan, Lesli Knight, Angela Y. Laity, Stephen Henry Lanasa Jr., Crystal LeDue, Frank A. Mariano, Steven I. Marichal, Candice L. Miller, Jenny Miller, Yolysabel Montalvo, Luis Montero Negrori, Shelly Niedenthal, Yodorcias Nunez, Mary Adebayo Olawunmi, Joel Oneill, Jasaline Orman, Samuel Eli Perez, Amanda M Perrotta, Fedner Petit-Homme, Michael Prather, Amanda Reed, Michael C. Rinard, Emma L. Rivera, Kwan Robinson, Elizabeth Robinson, Terrence L. Sampson, Yomara Santiago, Lourdes Santiago, Scott Scheaffer, Dustie Steffens, Kristina Thomas, Chase W. Thompson, Yisu Tibaneer, Edwin Torres, Robert F. Totten, Christina Marie Turner, Derrick J. Walker, Garfield Wallace, Christy L. Williams, Jessie James Williams, Cinnamon S. Young

Georgia

Edward D. Butler, Deanna V. Chambers, LaToya Colston, Whitney Crawford, Chelsea Griffin, Brandon Jackson, Wayne Jones, Dareon L. Keetch Jr., Barrington A. Pottinger, Tiffany M. Price, Dawn J. Saunders, Iesha

Session, Teri E. Smith, Papy Tendi Makola

Idaho

Edwin James Cahill Jr., Donald Callaway, Shaina Rhodehouse

Illinois

Shannon Abendroth, Kristin Alexander, LaKeith Alford, Tyler Allen, Sean Barnes, John Blythe, Chataara Brimmer, Brian Burns, Auyana Conley, Jolene Davina Cosper, Beth A. Daehler, Victoria R. DeWaele, Shelmeka Eiland, Juwanne Elery, Sade R. Vaughn Eubanks, Troy Gavin, Craig Graves, Kenneth Halton, Deandra Harris, Carolyn Helse, Brady Horn, Christina J. Hoskins, Monica L. Hunter, Ebonnie Jarrett, Zachary B. Jenkins, Donna Johnson, Allison Jones, Stanley Jones Jr., Sandy Jordan, Ebony Junglanecht, Allison Klutz, Tara Landstrom, Reginald Lee, Darnita Lewis, Gerald Lockridge Jr., Dawn Love, Patty McDonald, Jenna McLeod, Rochelle Rosalind Medcalf, Clarissa Mitchell, Moniece Mosley, Byron Murff, Ericka Myers, Tangy M. Nocht, Arleen O'Neal, Joseph Payton, Lawon D. Rochelle Sr., Dayna Rogers, Davonte Sanders-Funches, Carolyn Short, LaShawndra Smith, Pamela Smith-Perkins, Dorian Tiffith, Elnora Underwood, Janita Walton, BreAnn Watenpaugh, Adrienne White, Timothy Whittler, Raquel Williams, Climmie Williams, Sandra Lee Woods, Khardae Young

Indiana

Brandy Mae Behrens, Wendy A. Carlisle, Lisa Dalton, Cody A. Duke, Laveda Ferguson, Jessica Hann, Alan J. Head, Ayesha Jones, Shannon M Konuch, Andrew C. Kruzan, Marilyn Schmett, Kara Sloop, Timothy Toland, Kristal Walls, Paul M. Wiles, Jordan Williams, Toccara Woods, Melissa N. Wright

Iowa

Ronald D. Alspach, Rachel A. Jay, Brandon L. Jones, Jacqueline Nohava, Jerrod C. Olson, Tammy J. Olson, Nathan J. Ongalibang, Sara Ramer

Kansas

Stacy S. Tuttle, Elizabeth Wagner, Jennifer Walton

Kentucky

Terry L. Ramsey, Derrick Vaught, Tonya Watts, Abbra Young

Louisiana

Jasmine Alfred, Colby Dowden, Delwin Fant Sr., Michael Glenn Jr., Demond Johnson, Angela Smith, Kristy Tice, Sherhonda Wallace, Harrison Ward III, Rashad L. Wells, Brittany Williams

Maine

Andre Flores, John Murray

Maryland

Melanie Anderson, Robin R. Anderson, Shawnae A. Arnick, Cho O. Cottrell, Latrice P. Durham, Danielle Edwards, William Green, Gideon J. Lawson, Jatrina L. Linnen, Grace Lyons, James Maishak, Kimberly D. Mason, Nicola Miller, Jacqueline M. Peay, Christopher A. Ramirez, LaTossha Evette Sinkler, Bridgette R. Watson,

Massachusetts

William Veiga, Jr.

Michigan

Tashina Moses, Jeff Neal

Minnesota

Marty Cobenais, Lisa A. Hauge, Stephanie H. McAleer, Todd M. Westpahl

Mississippi

Leslie Aldord, Tameka Rochelle Battle, Brian Bennett, Michael Anthony Bertucci, Brandy Carney, Stephanie Clark, Monica Fairley, Novi Grandberry, Raven T. Johnson, Breosha Lanier, Todd Ramos, Teneicea Roebuck, Keeara Rossell, Ricky Smith, Celena Smith, Sterling Tucker, Annette B. Turner, Ashley Williams

Missouri

Diane Crouthers, LaBeth R. Dubbert, Windell W. Hebert, Elvis Howard, Sonya McCaslin-Brown, Kathy Morris, Ryan A. Paszkiewicz, Lara Pridemore, Jamesa Spann, April R. Thatcher, Charity Unke

Montana

Makenna Mays

Nebraska

Montana Jones

Nevada

Morgan Brethauer, Michael Henry Bull Chief, Jason Kroner, Jennifer Long, Patrick McCloud

New Jersey

Roy Ammons, Darrell Lamar Darby, Charlene F. Diggs, Julia A. Diggs, Kathleen Elentrio, William Foltz, Lloyd Craig Harrison, Scott Herron, Tanisha M. Hodge, Catherine Homere, LaQuetta Ashlee Hulse, Tammy Myrick, Peter W. Nashed, Asia Nelms, Crystal Phillips, Kenneth Rogers, Ellen A. Schwarz, Juan C. Uriarte, Shanice Williams, Al-Nesia Williams, Trinitius E. Williams

New Mexico

William Bruce Bryant

New York

Brandon Beasley, Jenna Burns, Shanell Cordero, Linda Darnell, Bernadette C. Davis, Lakisha Duncan, Kenneth Jamison, Brenda May, Darren P. Peeples, Forest Phillips, Michael Romaszko, Matthew Ryan, Patrick Scott, Christopher A. Whitmore

North Carolina

Kelly G. Adams, Chris Alexander, Hope S. Anderson, Melvin Bettina, Douglas W. Blackwell IV, Kierra N. Boney, David D. Brewster, William E. Burroughs, Trecia V. Caleb, Carmencita M. Duncan, Candace L. Goff, Jessica Brooke Green, Whitney C. Hambeis, Taylor M. Hotaling, Sterling Alexander Jackson, Tammy James, Christopher L. Kinl, Arthur L. McAllister, Travis C. Murrain, Kendall Pardue, Monique L. Pendleton, Kim Lorraine Pough-Bridgers, Gill B. Rodnetta, Anita G. Romain-Kennedy, Jagroop Singh, Camila L. Wade, Christopher D. Watson, Angela D. Wilson, Scott A. Woodling

North Dakota

Heidi Jo Tougas

Ohio

Kristi Bowen, Brad George Daugherty, Patrick Holt, Jill Stahl

Oklahoma

Myra Burke, KaRhonda Hunt, Coralie Pickelsimer

Oregon

Linda L. Bryan, Melody Foster, Jayden Hayes,

Samantha A. Jamison, Danielle Jungwirth, Edmund J. Rice II, Ipson Taylor

Pennsylvania

James Binder, Lee S. Blake, Victoria Hoefler, Nieasha Jenkins, Frank Edward Johnson, Jahaira Paris, Jenn Parrish, Antonio Pollard, Gregg Retkowski, Kristi A. Rosini, Brooke Siliano, Greta Sweeney, Erin Wagner

Puerto Rico

Jennifer Harris, Jaime Luis Martinez Sr., Edgardo Negron, Jorge A. Roman, Pedro Rosario, Jan Carlos Torres

Rhode Island

Shaun V. Branch

South Carolina

Steven T. Alston, Euginie Banks, Liza M. Carpenter, Kanisha C. Irons, Debra L. Welsh-Fowler, Emmanuel Y. Bamba

South Dakota

Lyle LaCroix

Texas

Teslim Ajibola, Barbara Andrews, Rick Baker, Ami Bauer, Robert Bazan, Lantisha I. Blizzard, Rivin V. Chirayath, Susan O. Clarkston, Angelica Cortez, Marvas T. Crowder, Brett Davidson, Eric Delgado, Earnest E. Drake, Ileana Fred, Steven D. Fuhr, Kae Breelle Garcia, Niels Garcia-Diaz, Patrick Greer, Alona D. Griffin, Siobhan Isaac, Rashidul Islam, Darinda Jackson, Patricia Laughlin, Paul Lindsley, Michael A. Mallet, Rebekah M. Miller, Mickey M. Oberlender, Patti Ralph, Kiara A. Robertson, Latisha Robinson, Janice Rogers, Angelia Ellen Rojas, Taylor A. Rolls, Kelly Roloff, Victoria D. Slate, Amanda Spears, Natalie Ryann Stevens, Christina Thompson, Miguel Torres-Rodriguez, Kerry Ulm, Elizabeth A. Vinecourt, Steven West Jr., Braydon S. Wilson

Utah

Tanner Gittins, Kristian Hicks, Steve Wood, Jordan Young

Vermont

Tracey Brust, Jason P. Eaton

Virginia

Tia M. Littlefield

Washington

Joe Atwood, Quincy Broussard, Kaleigh Burrus, Jennifer Christensen, Richard S. Christiansen, Wayne Crowder, Guillermo Alex Delgadillo, Braxton Edwards, Vanessa Elliott, Victor Marrero, Robert Nelson, Margaret N. Oliver, Carlos Padron, Katie Petersen, Rafael Ramos, Kawaljit Singh, Carleena Taylor, Brett Templeton, Alphonso Thomas, Christian J. Waits, Kari Wiegardt, Justin L. Williams

West Virginia

Candice Keasler

Wisconsin

Teresa Blair, Jennifer Boisvert, Donna Cox, David Alan Harman, Jessica Hitz, Angelic L. Liljenberg, Allison Lindquist, Debra A. Mason, Steve Sain, Heather Thorp, Sherry A. Vinke

Wyoming

Scott Mitchell Hoffman II, Nate R. Owens

Welcome!



Keeping Up With PSHB



Charley Peters, UPMA Retired National President

As a member of the USPS Headquarters PSHB Task-force appointed by UPMA National President Edmund Carley, I have attempted to keep everyone updated on PSHB as new information is made available. There are a lot of questions among our members regarding the new Postal Service Health Benefits plan that is effective Jan. 1, 2025. Let's look at some current updates.

Open season will run Nov. 11 through Dec. 9, 2024. *All* Postal Service employees and annuitants who are covered by a FEHB plan will be required to select a PSHB plan. The PSHB plans still will be part of FEHB, but only are for Postal Service employees, annuitants and their eligible family members. Training videos for active employees were released mid to late May.

The Medicare Part B Special Enrollment Period (SEP) is April 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024, for USPS annuitants who did not enroll in Medicare Part B when they first were eligible for Medicare. Eligibility letters for the one-time PSHB SEP were mailed to annuitants and eligible family members in March.

For those who opt for Medicare Part B during the SEP, the Postal Service will pay the late enrollment penalty. The Medicare Part B premium will begin Jan. 1, 2025. More than 6,000 Medicare Part B enrollments have been received so far.

If you choose Medicare Part B during the SEP and change your

mind, you can cancel your enrollment no later than Dec. 31, 2024, by contacting Social Security. After Jan. 1, 2025, annuitants enrolled in Medicare Part B must stay enrolled to keep PSHB coverage.

The one-time PSHB SEP is *not* for annuitants already enrolled in Medicare Part B. The SEP does not cover any late enrollment penalties already assessed for existing Part B enrollees.

A PSHB booklet hit the mail stream mid- to late May to coincide with the launch of the mandatory employee education. The booklet also will be made available online.

A PSHB enrollment system for health benefits enrollment will be introduced before the 2024 open season. Information on how to log in and enroll for PSHB health benefits will be provided. Alternate methods of enrollment for the PSHB Program also will be provided.

What if you don't select a PSHB health care plan during open season? If you are enrolled in a FEHB plan and do not select a new plan under PSHB, OPM will automatically enroll you in a PSHB plan most comparable to the FEHB plan in which you are enrolled at the time of implementation.

If you already are enrolled in Medicare parts A and B, your enrollment will continue with your choice of a PSHB plan during open season. If you are enrolled in Part B as of Jan. 1, 2025, you must stay enrolled to keep your PSHB coverage.

The new Medicare Decision tool has been launched on KeepingPosted.org. Select "Health Benefits Tab," then, under "Selecting the right plan," there are two links—"Checkbook guide to health plans" and "Medicare comparison tool."

To learn more about the following seminars, go to KeepingPosted.org, "Useful Resources," then "PSHB Activities and Calendar:"

- Monthly Consumers' Checkbook Seminars on Medicare. Employees and annuitants can learn about Medicare parts A, B, C and D and how to use this resource tool.
- PSHB Watch Parties. The USPS Benefits and Wellness team will hold monthly watch parties through Nov. 8 for annuitants to learn more about PSHB.
- PSHB Lunch and Learn Seminars will continue through Dec. 5, 2024.

You can receive information and updates by signing up for text message notifications by texting "PSHBP" to 39369. With this, you will receive a text notice on training seminars. Additional resources:

- Annuitants—www.keepingposted.org
- Employees—myhr.usps.gov; PSHB Navigator Help Line, 833-712-7742
- refer to the May *UPMA Leader*, pages 25-26, for employee and annuitant PSHB fact sheets.



Repeal of WEP/GPO and USPS Service Issues Featured at Capitol Hill Hearings

By **Lily Israel** and **Josh Taubman**

On April 16, Congress held two hearings to discuss major legislation and issues pertaining to the USPS. The House Ways and Means Social Security Subcommittee held a hearing, “The Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset,” to discuss different opinions and ways to reform the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO).

Subcommittee Chairman Drew Ferguson (R-GA) began the hearing by outlining how WEP and GPO have strayed far from their original intents. He said both were aimed at making Social Security fairer, but have fallen short for millions of Americans. WEP and GPO were put in place decades ago to address an unfairness in the benefit system that unintentionally gave too generous benefits to certain people with earnings that were exempt from Social Security’s payroll tax.

Under the normal rules, individuals and couples who spent their careers paying into Social Security would not get the normal benefits. Ferguson said WEP and GPO are flawed because they can’t factor in earnings from outside of Social Security. The provisions rely on adjustments that, in some cases, unfairly reduce ben-

efits. In other cases, the provisions still provide those with non-covered earnings with an unintended advantage over those who spent their entire careers in jobs covered by Social Security. He concluded that WEP and GPO are flawed, but removing them entirely would result in the same unfairness they were intended to address.

Subcommittee Ranking Member John Larson (D-CT) outlined his ideas for WEP and GPO reform in his opening statement. He said the current bills proposed are not the right bills. However, he was glad they discussed Social Security because the benefits haven’t been enhanced in more than 50 years. He commended Rep. Garret Graves (R-LA) and Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) for leading H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act of 2023, and all other members who have signed onto the bill.

This bill repeals provisions that reduce Social Security benefits for individuals who receive other benefits and eliminates WEP and GPO. Larson said it’s shameful they haven’t enhanced Social Security in so long; he urged a vote on the issue. He supports repealing both WEP and GPO, but believes it should be paid for so Social Security solvency

can be extended, as well as address other issues.

Four witnesses testified during the hearing regarding their policy ideas on WEP and GPO. Dr. Jason Fichtner, chief economist at the Bipartisan Policy Center, explained how the current WEP law is overly complex and unfair. He also discussed how reforming the Social Security benefit formula would improve the simplicity and fairness of the WEP while maintaining its original public policy purpose.

Fichtner said the GPO has similar issues that should be addressed in tandem. The original public policy intent of WEP and GPO was to ensure fair treatment between workers whose only earnings are covered by Social Security and workers with earnings not covered by Social Security. Fully repealing the WEP and GPO, he offered, would violate the principles of fairness and equity these provisions are intended to protect.

Fichtner said the provisions create an overly complex structure with perverse incentives that result in higher replacement rates; making the benefit formula proportionate or prorated would be a good reform. One of his suggestions is that Con-

gress mandate each state provide the Social Security Administration (SSA) with a file of pension receipts and the portion a person's pension is based on non-covered work. He emphasized that Social Security is an insurance program and was never meant to be a full retirement program.

Rachel Greszler, a visiting fellow in workforce at the Economic Policy Innovation Center, focused her testimony on GPO reform. She said a spousal benefit is less beneficial now than in the past because more women now are employed. Eliminating the GPO would contradict Social Security's intent. According to the SSA, individuals affected by the GPO receive non-Social Security pensions of about \$30,000—64% higher than the average Social Security benefit of about \$18,500.

Greszler affirmed that eliminating the WEP and GPO would not materially affect the poverty rate because most of the increases would go to the highest earners. Elimination also would cause Social Security to become insolvent more than one year earlier.

She suggested policymakers should implement a fair and accurate fix basing spousal benefits on an imputed individual benefit that considers a person's earnings inside and outside of Social Security. Greszler said the Social Security 2100 Act is a dishonest gimmick that doesn't have proportional benefits with tax increases.

Nancy Altman, president of Social Security Works, said Congress should repeal WEP and GPO as one of the many ways to expand Social Security. She supports the Social Security 2100 Act, the Strengthening Social Security Act and the Social Security Expansion Act, stressing that millionaires and billionaires

should have to pay their fair share in taxes rather than cutting the benefits of public servants. Altman said Congress should not pass the Equal Treatment of Public Servants Act because it would cut the benefits of millions of public servants.

Dr. Charles Blahous, a senior research strategist at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, said as long as Social Security has its current basic benefit design, it needs WEP and GPO to maintain parity between different participants. Without GPO, the benefits formula will mistake a couple with one covered and one non-covered worker as a couple with one non-working person and give them higher benefits. Without WEP, it would not work properly for people working in a Social Security-covered job and under a pension because it would give much higher benefits than to someone who worked the whole time under Social Security.

Blahous affirmed that ideal benefits create a parity. He said WEP and GPO are necessary features, but their current forms fail to achieve their goals. Appropriate reforms would result in greater parity and potentially increase benefits for certain households.

During the member question-and-answer portion of the hearing, committee members peppered the witnesses with questions. Many members focused their questioning on making sure public servants are treated fairly and the same as their counterparts in the private sector. Ferguson emphasized the ultimate goal is to treat every American fairly; he asked if there was a better way to achieve this. Blahous suggested a new benefit formula that is more like a pension formula is needed. The next best thing is to treat people equally as a function of their

covered and non-covered earnings, which would require the SSA to have access to the non-covered earnings data.

Rep. Mike Carey (R-OH) emphasized the need to treat public and private workers the same. He asked how the WEP could unfairly penalize public servants with non-covered earnings. Fichtner said there is an average lifetime earning that is adjusted based on different bend points that can reduce the benefits.

Rep. Ron Estes (R-KS) said WEP and GPO were put in place to correct an unfair advantage for a small number of public servants. Instead, Congress over-corrected and created an unfair disadvantage for workers and spouses who dedicate time to public service. He said simply undoing WEP and GPO would return the system back to where 96% of the population is funding an unfair advantage for 4% of the population. Ultimately, the 4% who would benefit from a repeal would lose in the long run.

Estes affirmed repealing WEP and GPO without providing a better policy would speed up solvency by one year. He asked for ways to improve the policies. Blahous and Fichtner said a WEP is needed that can accurately be projected upfront.

Rep. Randy Feenstra (R-IA) said WEP and GPO were enacted to prevent non-covered workers from receiving too large a benefit intended for low-income workers to replicate dual enrollment. Greszler and Blahous explained why spousal benefits were created and how people now are receiving these on top of government pensions.

Rep. Greg Steube (R-FL) said neither the WEP nor GPO adjusts benefits based on a worker's actual earnings. Blahous pointed out when people don't understand their WEP and

GPO benefits and adjustments, they are left unprepared for retirement. Fitchner added that the language in the WEP and GPO policies is complicated and makes the policies and formula difficult to administer.

Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), who supports the Social Security Fairness Act that would completely repeal WEP and GPO, asked Fichtner how a complete repeal of WEP and GPO would impact federal retirees such as postal workers versus the impact on retired state and local public-sector employees, such as teachers and firefighters. Fichtner said a full repeal would put unfair and unequal treatment back into the law. Fitzpatrick next asked how a complete repeal of WEP and GPO would impact spousal benefits. Fichtner said those under non-covered work would get the benefit from the spouse, as well as the additional pension they would not get under the current rules.

Later in the day on the other side of Capitol Hill, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee held a hearing on oversight of the Postal Service. The committee heard from Postmaster General Louis DeJoy on his “Delivering For America” (DFA) plan and his vision to overhaul and modernize the Postal Service.

The senators had questions about the DFA plan, given that its rollout has led to increased costs and delays in on-time deliveries. There also were concerns about the DFA’s local transportation optimization initiative, which has consolidated local mail centers into larger regional sites. This has led to massive slowdowns in mail delivery in Virginia and Georgia and caused rural residents to experience major delays.

DeJoy assured the committee that the DFA would improve the USPS’

long-term viability and, although they were experiencing some issues in the short term, those would get worked out. The committee questioned the implementation of the plan, expressing the opinion the USPS needed to be more transparent about costs and timeline.

Chairman Gary Peters (D-MI) discussed his work to pass the Postal Service Reform Act (PSRA) in 2022, which eliminated unfair financial burdens on the agency. He said the USPS took on other changes on its own, such as consolidating the number of mail facilities into larger, more centralized hubs and reducing the number of times mail is collected at these hubs. Peters is concerned about these changes because there is no evidence it will improve services in the long run.

Committee Ranking Member Rand Paul (R-KY) discussed the Postal Service bailout in 2020 and criticized the agency’s spending. He said the USPS hasn’t improved and continues to lose money. He urged Congress to stop providing the USPS payouts and emphasized it needs structural reform, particularly with its hiring and retention policies.

Four witnesses testified before the committee. DeJoy commended the committee for passing the PSRA, but said it did not solve operations problems or ensure the agency’s financial survival. He made the committee aware of the progress he has made with the DFA plan while acknowledging there is still work to do.

Roman Martinez IV, chairman of the Postal Service Board of Governors, discussed implantation of the DFA plan. He said the board recognizes the changes will incur some service disruptions, but it is part of the long-term plan to overhaul the USPS. Also, he asserted finan-

cial losses are not the correct way to judge the DFA plan. Martinez detailed some of the USPS’s pension contributions and investments, suggesting if the USPS adopted practices used by the private sector, it could save over \$300 million annually.

Michael Kubayanda, chairman of the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), told the committee the commission has reported alarming findings in its research. These included service quality declining in several states and mail not meeting the two-day delivery standard. He said national service is subpar and trending in the wrong direction; costs have not been reduced. He is especially concerned about late deliveries of medications, unrealistic projections of cost savings and a lack of communication with stakeholders.

Tammy Hull, Postal Service inspector general, said better local execution and coordination could prevent some disruptions in the DFA plan. She reported there are significant problems, including staffing shortages and a lack of proper transportation planning to account for the increased mail volume. Hull assured the committee her inspection teams will continue to conduct audits of postal centers to observe operations and flag problems.

During the question-and-answer period, committee members asked the witnesses various questions about the efficiency of the USPS and the future of its reforms. Peters said that in Virginia and Georgia, where changes have been implemented, service has declined while delays and costs have increased. He asked if the USPS still was planning to roll out these reforms on a national scale.

DeJoy responded they recognize service has deteriorated, but these changes need to be made to ensure

long-term survival. He said the agency is transitioning its management style to operate like FedEx and UPS. Since they have changed their tactics, things are improving, but there are growing pains. He was adamant the DFA plan will succeed over time. Peters asked DeJoy to provide more transparency and data around the DFA.

Paul asked about the decision to hire more employees. DeJoy said the Postal Service has converted 150,000 people to full-time employees to bring more stability. Few people are being hired during peak season while being able to deliver more packages. Paul criticized the decision to hire more people, claiming it is a leading factor for increased costs.

Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI) also asked about operation costs. DeJoy said the Postal Service has \$9 billion worth of mail that costs \$65 billion to deliver. Costs are being driven down; he is hopeful they can bring in revenue over time. DeJoy reiterated there was no strategy to fix the

USPS before the DFA plan.

Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE) also discussed the shifting sources of mail revenue because First-Class Mail volume has dropped significantly. He asked what the strategy is to diversify revenue streams and adapt to modern consumer needs. DeJoy said the DFA plan helps the USPS resemble the UPS and FedEx delivery networks. He affirmed they are seeing growth and delivering more packages, while attempting to reach a streamlined, affordable process for last-mile delivery.

Sens. Roger Marshall (R-KS), Josh Hawley (R-MO), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Jacky Rosen (D-NV) and Jon Ossoff (D-GA) all asked about Postal Service issues in their respective states.

Sen. James Langford (R-OK) asked when the anticipated turnaround would be for service to eventually increase. DeJoy said he expected operations to stabilize; there are other aspects coming together to improve operations. He pointed out they are putting money into local facilities,

as well, and emphasized they are trying to consolidate the collection of outgoing mail and modernizing facilities to meet current needs.

Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) advocated for his legislation, the Postal Police Reform Act of 2023, to clarify authority for postal police officers to address mail theft. DeJoy said the USPS is limited in addressing postal crime given how few officers they have.

Sen. Laphonza Butler (D-CA) asked what voters can expect from the Postal Service during the upcoming election. DeJoy said they could expect quality service, as the agency has delivered in the past. He said they have mailed out around 98% of ballots within two to three days and will take measures during election season to run extra trips and have more employees on-site.

Lily Israel and Josh Taubman are legislative analysts for GrayRobinson, UPMA's lobbying firm.

Invest in Our Members *(continued from page 18)*

a unique perspective—one that always is worth exploring.

Then there is development. Every member from the highest echelon of the USPS to the future leader who only just submitted their application to the agency will benefit from additional development and refinement. We need to do a far better job developing and refining the next generation of postal leaders.

We all need to be well rooted in servant leadership principles. It's all about them—not us—just as it is with membership. Our organization prides itself on mentoring, training and developing the next generation of postal leaders. Do you actively adhere to these ideals, as well?

When you inspire a new EAS or aspiring craft employee to join, be sure you also provide the help they need to achieve “success.” Let's all take this at least one step further by reaching out and investing in finding out with what they could use help before they even have to ask—providing them the contacts to call and the tools to fill their proverbial toolboxes.

In 2024, give the gift of membership and support this new member—career-long and beyond. As always, feel free to contact me, any member of your chapter Executive Board or the National Membership Team should you have any questions or concerns about recruitment or the value of membership.



Join Us in Magical Orlando

Lori McDonough, 2024 National Convention chair

Greetings from the sunshine state of Florida! Our chapter is truly excited to be hosting the 2024 UPMA National Convention. In this article, you should find nearly everything you need to know to register to attend and book your room. Also

included is the tentative agenda.

To register, scan the QR code or go to unitedpma.org. Under the Events tab, click on "National

Events," then "UPMA 8th National Convention." If you are an active first-timer, you must pay your registration fee in advance. After the

convention, first-timers will need to submit a form to the National Office for reimbursement. Here are the registration deadlines:

REGISTRATION RATES

	April 1 - June 30	After June 30
Postmasters/Managers/ Supervisors/EAS Professionals/Associates/OICs	\$208	\$260
UPMA Retired or Guest	\$191	\$230
Guest/Spouse	\$156	\$195
Children 17 and under	\$80	\$80

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Caribe Royale Orlando:

800-823-8300

Group Code:

UPMA National Convention

Room rate:

\$159/night for single or double occupancy. Additional adults are \$15 per night. *UPMA rates are available until July 22* or until the room block is sold out, whichever comes first. Maximum occupancy is five guests/suite and six guests/villa.

Hotel resort fee:

\$15/night plus tax fee is not included in the room rate. There will be a separate charge added to your room folio. Resort amenities include:

- Seven restaurants and bars, including a new, two-story sports bar
- The Island Spa offering massage, nail and skin care and more
- Two-story, 3,500-square-foot fitness center

- 1.5 mile walking and running trail
- Bicycle rentals and catch-and-release fishing
- Outdoor swimming pool with 75-foot waterslide plus a kiddie pool
- Gift shop
- Arcade
- Guest room Wi-Fi
- Private cabanas with complimentary Wi-Fi



- Weekend poolside movie nights
- Private pool and hot tub for villa guests
- Scheduled transportation to Disney theme parks and Disney Springs

Parking:

Overnight self-parking rates will apply and are payable directly to the hotel when guests check in: \$20 plus tax/self-parking; \$40 plus tax/valet parking.

Cancellation policy:

Five days prior to arrival date.

Check-in/out times:

Check-in is 4 p.m.; check out is 11 a.m.

Free shuttle service:

Included in your stay is free shuttle service to the Disney theme parks and Disney Springs. When checking in, ask for a schedule of arrival and departure times.

Resort information:

The Caribe Royale offers spacious, modern, one-bedroom suites with a separate living room and bedroom and a spacious bathroom with a convenient, separate vanity.

Bedrooms feature king or queen beds, 55-inch wall-mounted, high-definition TV, USB charging stations, safe, iron/ironing board and ample storage space.

Living rooms feature a sofa with queen-size sofa bed, 55-inch wall-mounted, high-definition TV, Keurig® coffee maker, mini cooler, microwave, ergonomic workstations and USB charging stations.

Additional information:

Vendors and sponsors: Due to space constraints, UPMA will not have a vendor area. We are pleased to have

sponsors support our convention in different ways. For more information about sponsorship opportunities, contact upma@crisevents.me.

Shopping:

Walmart Supercenter, Orlando Vineland Premium Outlets, Disney Springs, Disney Boardwalk, Celebration Factory Outlet, Lake Buena Vista Outlet and more are less than four miles from the Caribe Royale.

Orlando Discounts link:

Follow the “Discounted Tickets” link at unitedpma.org on the convention page to find discounted tickets for convention attendees to visit Walt Disney World, Universal Studios, SeaWorld and Aquatica. You also can “Show Your Badge” during the convention to select business members to take advantage of some great offers.

Entertainment Theme Nights:

Saturday Night Welcome Dance—The SOC (Southern Officers’ Conference) is graciously sponsoring the “SOC Hop” featuring music from the ’50s and ’60s. So, get out the saddle shoes, poodle skirts and muscle shirts; slick back that hair! Those of you who prefer just to watch, come on in and be entertained—it’s “greased lightning!”

Sunday Welcome Reception Dinner—The reception is a semi-formal event with a red-carpet feel. So, ladies and gentlemen, let’s see how you are at “Puttin’ on the Ritz” in a semi-formal fashion. A dance will immediately follow dinner.

Monday Chapter (States) Night—We will have some Florida fun by having members dress up as their favorite Disney or Universal characters. You will be surprised how much fun it really can be!

Tuesday Free Night—Explore Orlando’s entertainment or relax at the Caribe Royale.

Wednesday “Surfs Up—Let’s Dance” Night—UPMA Retired is sponsoring this special dance with a variety of music for all to enjoy. Everyone is welcome; it’s not just for our retirees. UPMA Retired kindly sponsors this evening of entertainment; attire is casual, but no swimsuits, crop tops or halter tops, please.

Thursday Caribbean Beach Party—We are planning some special entertainment this evening, so come prepared to enjoy a Caribbean-themed party with a Jimmy Buffett tribute. Wear your vacation Caribbean shirt with shorts, skorts, skirts or slacks. I would like to tell you more, but it’s a secret!

You don’t want to miss out on all this fun! Save the dates, register and reserve today. If you have any questions concerning the UPMA National Convention, please contact UPMA@crisevents.me.



AGENDA

This agenda is tentative as of May 17.

Friday, Aug. 23

8 a.m.-5 p.m. UPMA Executive Board Meeting

Saturday, Aug. 24

noon-5 p.m. Registration open

8 a.m.-5 p.m.

UPMA Executive Board Meeting

4-6 p.m. UPMA Retired Executive Board Meeting

4-10 p.m. UPMA Hospitality Suite open

6-7 p.m. Church Choir Practice

7-10:30 p.m. Dance sponsored by the Southern Officers' Conference

Sunday, Aug. 25

8 a.m.-5 p.m. Registration open

8:30-10 a.m. Church Service

10:30-11:30 a.m. Auxiliary Board Meeting

10:30-noon All Hands UPMA Membership Meeting

1-3 p.m. Auxiliary BRATS

1:30-4:30 p.m. National Member Representation Committee Meeting
UPMA Retired Meeting

BREAKOUT MEETINGS
(refer to convention program for times and locations)

Presidents

Secretary-Treasurers

Editors

Legislative/PAC

Membership Chairs

Education Chairs

4-6 p.m. Hospitality Suite open

4:30-5 p.m. Area Coordinators Meeting

5-6 p.m. Active First-Timers' Orientation

6-7 p.m. Welcome Reception

7-8:30 p.m. Welcome Dinner

8-11:30 p.m. Dance

8:30-10 p.m. Hospitality Suite open

Monday, Aug. 26

7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Registration open

7:45 a.m. Door Prize Drawings

8 a.m.-noon General Business Session



UPMA^{8th}
NATIONAL CONVENTION
AUGUST 24-30, 2024
CARIBE ROYALE ORLANDO

9-10 a.m. Auxiliary BRATS Informational Meeting

10 a.m.-2 p.m. BRATS Activity and Lunch

1:30-3 p.m. Area Coordinator Meetings:
Atlantic, Central, Southern and WestPac

noon-2 p.m. UPMA Retired Voting Precinct

2-5 p.m. UPMA Retired Business Meeting

3:30-5 p.m. Training Seminars (refer to convention program for times and locations)

4-6:30 p.m. Hospitality Suite open

7-9 p.m. Chapters' Night

7:30-11:30 p.m. Dance

Tuesday, Aug. 27

Free Day

Wednesday, Aug. 28

7:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Registration open

7:45 a.m. Door Prize Drawings

8 a.m.-noon General Business Session

9-11 a.m. Auxiliary BRATS Business Meeting

11 a.m.-1 p.m. Auxiliary BRATS Community Service Project

12:30-3:30 p.m. UPMA Retired Luncheon

1:30-3 p.m. and 3:30-5 p.m. Training Seminars (refer to convention program for times and locations)

4-10 p.m. Hospitality Suite open

7-10:30 p.m. Dance Sponsored by UPMA Retired

Thursday, Aug. 29

8-11 a.m. Registration open

7:45 a.m. Door Prize Drawings

8 a.m.-noon General Business Session

noon-1 p.m. New Auxiliary Board Meeting

12:15-3 p.m. New and Outgoing UPMA Executive Board Lunch and Meeting

2-5:30 p.m. Hospitality Suite open

6-6:30 p.m. Reception

6:30-7:30 p.m. Grand Banquet

7:30-11:30 p.m. Dance

2024 UPMA National Convention

Golf Tournament

Aug. 27 at 8:30 a.m.

Join your fellow UPMA golfers at Panther Lake—Orange County National Golf Center and Lodge. The course offers some of the best examples of natural beauty that Orlando-area golf courses have to offer. You likely will encounter many native species of birds and wildlife during your round, which will be enjoyed in the most tranquil of settings.

Every hole on Panther Lake is unique and requires something different from your shot-making repertoire. This is another feature that makes this Central Florida golf course so special. When you finish your



round, you likely will be able to vividly recall each hole as they all are different in appearance, as well as appealing in design to the eye.

There are no boring holes at Panther Lake; each is as distinct and memorable as the last. The only characteristic the holes share is

that each shot demands good thinking and precise execution.

The tournament will be a four-person scramble with a shot-gun start at 8:30 a.m. The fee is \$85, which includes 18 holes of golf, a cart, range balls, lunch, prizes and an awards reception. Club rentals are \$59.

Please note: The tournament is open only to 2024 UPMA National Convention registrants.

2024 UPMA Golf Tournament Registration

Deadline: Aug. 10

Golf at Panther Lake

of players ____ x \$85= ____

Rental Clubs

of sets ____ x \$59= ____

Total ____

Player name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Cell phone _____

Email address _____

If you have a team of four, please list their names:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

If you have questions, contact:
Rick Pasek at rpasek1@att.net or John Newbold at johnnewboldpm@gmail.com; 407-491-1568.

Send registration, with check or money order payable to **Florida UPMA Golf**, to:

Florida UPMA Golf
PO Box 111
Plymouth FL 32768-0111

UPMA *Retired*

Let's Make 2024 a Banner Year

Steve Auffarber, National Scholarship Foundation chair

It's that time of the year when our UPMA Scholarship Foundation will be on many of our members' minds. We had a very successful 2023 fundraising year. Donations raised at the national convention increased over 50% from the previous year. This was due to your generosity and support of the program. We awarded 16 scholarships; with our increase in fundraising, we hope to award more scholarships this year.

I already have received a few completed applications. I encourage all our members to remind their children or grandchildren to submit their applications. Make sure to remind them to complete the application entirely and follow the instructions for additional documentation required to be submitted. Incomplete application packages will not be considered or reviewed.

All applications must be **received no later than July 15, 2024**. You can find the application on our UPMA website under the UPMA Retired tab.

Most of our fundraising focus has been on national conventions. If we are to grow our program, it will have to be a year-round effort. Members can make donations at any time throughout the year for a variety of reasons. Donations can be made in memory of those we have lost, promotions for an active member, retirement of a member, birth of a child or grandchild or one of many other events.

We also encourage our chapters to get involved with fundraising at their state level. We had many chapters that donated directly to the program last year and hope that trend continues to grow each year.

Eileen Jenkins, retired Wyoming Postmaster, has again graciously agreed to donate a quilt for the raffle at the national convention. The UPMA Retired Executive Board has donated two nights' hotel and registration at the 2025 National Convention. If you know of anyone who would like to donate items, please reach out to me. Items that represent your state would be great.

We continued the Scholarship Foundation Patron Recognition program last year. The purpose was to honor and acknowledge our appreciation to individuals and chapters that contribute to the UPMA National Scholarship Foundation at certain levels. Those who achieve these levels are recognized at the national convention, in our publications and on the website. Donor levels are Benefactor, \$600 and up; Fellow, \$400-\$599; and Friend, \$200-\$399.

I am open to any other ideas you may have to increase our fundraising for 2024. You can email me at saauff23@yahoo.com or call me at 281-450-4072. Thank you to everyone for their support of the scholarship program. We hope 2024 will be a banner year.

Reconnect With Friends, Old and New

Mary Jo Amb, Area 9 rep

I attended the Wisconsin Chapter Convention in late April as the area representative. Everyone was welcoming and inclusive; Wisconsin puts on a great convention! What a terrific group of people, but that's no surprise, is it?

There's no better group—or one more fun—than our beloved Postmasters, Supervisors and Managers, active and retired. They made me feel so welcome. I can't wait to see them again at our national convention in Orlando.

A record number of people attended this convention, with 26 first-timers. I talked with some who were so excited about being there; they definitely plan to come back next year. One common refrain toward the end as members were preparing to leave was they never want to miss another chapter convention. How awesome is that?

This has motivated me to get on the phone and contact North Dakota Postmasters, Supervisors and Managers to personally invite them to our convention in June. Those who never have been to a convention don't know what they are missing! They need to come and find out.

The featured speaker at the Wisconsin convention was Karla Kirby, USPS executive manager of the new Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) program; she explained the program in depth. After listening to her, I realized there is much to learn. She was extremely knowledgeable and very thorough in answering questions posed to her.

For those retirees who have conventions coming up, don't hesitate—register and attend. This is information you need; many don't know how much they don't know!

Besides, what better way to get the information than in a setting such as this? You are together with your UPMA family, including your retiree friends—folks you may not have seen in a long time.

Get back in touch. You won't regret it!

Origin of the T2T Foundation

Eva Finley, editor

After sending letters and emails about our 2024 Veterans Project, several members have asked about the origin of the Tunnel to Towers (T2T) Foundation. Frank Siller, chairman and CEO, founded T2T to honor the final footsteps of his brother, Stephen Siller.

Stephen was a New York City firefighter assigned to Brooklyn Squad 1. He had finished his shift and was on his way to play golf with his three brothers when he got word that a plane had hit the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center. He called his wife and asked her to get in touch with his brothers and tell them he would catch up with them later.

Stephen returned to get his gear, but when he reached the entrance of the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel, it had been closed. Determined to carry out his duty, he strapped 60 pounds of gear to his back and raced on foot through the tunnel. His wife and five children never saw him again.

Frank created the foundation to honor Stephen's final footsteps, as well as America's greatest heroes and their families with young children.

Every home T2T builds is unique and designed to accommodate the most catastrophically injured veterans and first responders. Your contributions help ensure their individual needs are met. Author and family friend Jay Price wrote: "Every momentous event, even a tragedy, has its symbolic figures. September 11th was no different. It just had a few more of them. Father Mychal Judge, the four guys on United Flight 93, a hundred more, a thousand. None bigger than Stephen Siller, whose stature only grows with time, as New Yorkers and people from around the world follow his footsteps."

UPMA can play a part in honoring and remembering

our American heroes by a contribution, however small. Please, share in remembrance of these great men and women who have shaped our country.

There are several ways to donate to the T2T Foundation:

1. Use the UPMA campaign page at <http://dogood.t2t.org/UPMAVeteransProject24> or use the QR code.
2. Call 718-987-1931 and make a contribution over the phone.
3. Make a check payable to Tunnel to Towers, and mail to Louise Nix, Treasurer, UPMA Retired, 88 Rodney Nix Rd., Cleveland, GA 30528.



If you contribute by another means, you need to let Louise know by email at louisenix@yahoo.com.

Looking Forward to Orlando

Jimmy Brewer, Area 13 rep

I attended the Tennessee Chapter convention in late April in Pigeon Forge. The mountains of East Tennessee were beautiful. On April 26, we had our general session. Sharon Janicek, UMPA Southern Area national vice president, talked about what is going on with the Postal Service Reform Act (PSRA). The Postal Service must ensure that PMG Louis DeJoy's "Delivering for America" plan succeeds.

UPMA recognizes the full benefits of the PSRA only can be realized with thorough and effective execution. We must help ensure the Postal Service can continue to effectively serve the nation while maintaining its financial health.

Cathy Winnie, National Member Representation Committee member representing Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, gave an introductory Chapter Member Representative training class. Several vendors were present and provided good information. Blue Cross Blue Shield gave us information on the Postal Service Health Benefits plan and premiums.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in Orlando!

WIN YOUR DREAM RIDE!

Up to **\$35,000** Auto Loan Payoff!



Auto Loan Payoff¹ Sweepstakes²

Get a new auto loan or refinance your loan from another financial institution with APCU/Center Parc by **June 30, 2024** and we will enter you for a chance to win our drawing for up to **\$35,000 auto loan** payoff

Get ancillary auto loan products like GAP coverage for additional entries to win!

For a limited time, our auto loans also come with even more to dream about:

- Competitive rates as low as **5.99% APR³**
- Terms up to 84 months for low, low monthly payments
- Plus, you could qualify for up to **0.50% in auto loan rate discounts**



The Official Rules

Apply for your auto loan at
apcu.com or centerparc.org now!



¹Not all applicants will qualify. Credit Union membership and credit qualifications apply. If you are not a member of APCU or Center Parc you must apply for a savings (share) account. APCU/Center Parc will deposit the par share value of \$1.00 to the required savings (share) account upon opening.

²NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO WIN. Get ancillary auto loan products like GAP/Extended Warranty insurance coverage for up to two additional entries to win! Insurance and warranty products are not products of the Credit Union, and are not obligations of, or guaranteed by, the Credit Union. Insurance and/or warranties may be purchased from an agent or an insurance company of the member's choice. The Credit Union makes no representations as to the services of any provider.

³APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Rates as low as 5.99% APR. Rates will vary depending on each individual's credit history and underwriting factors. Effective April 1, 2024. Terms up to 84 months. Estimated monthly payment of \$15 per \$1,000 borrowed at 5.99% APR for 84 months. Programs, rates, terms, and conditions are subject to change without notice.