

NAPUS  
MINNESOTA CHAPTER

# The Gopher Postmaster

Volume 61, Number 3

March 2013

District One

Wednesday, April 24th

Victory Lane Café  
Highway 75  
Stephen MN

Time: 6:00 pm

District Two

Friday, April 26th

Trapper Pete's  
1306 Minnesota 45, Scanlon MN  
(near exit 237 off Interstate 35)

Lunch off the menu at noon  
Meeting at 12:45 pm  
RSVP [postmasterdan@gmail.com](mailto:postmasterdan@gmail.com)

District Three

Tuesday, April 23rd

## Make Plans to attend a District Meeting

District Four

Thursday, April 25th evening

District Five

Wednesday, April 17th

The Oaks, Willmar MN

Registration 11:30 Lunch 12:00  
Meeting to follow at 1:00

RSVP [dostavern@hotmail.com](mailto:dostavern@hotmail.com)  
Will send out letters

District Six

Thursday, April 18th

VFW  
Monticello MN

Lunch at noon  
Meeting at 1:00 pm

District Seven

Friday, April 19th

American Legion  
12375 Princeton Ave, Savage  
1:00 pm

RSVP Greg Geheren 651-776-1116  
Or [glg1022@yahoo.com](mailto:glg1022@yahoo.com)

District Eight

Tuesday, April 16th

"The Lakes"  
Lake Crystal MN

Noon lunch on your own  
Meeting at 1 pm

RSVP by 4/7/13 to  
Kim Melson-Gohr 507-822-0910

District Nine

Wednesday, April 10th

Pizza Ranch,  
Stewartville MN

Eat at 6:15 pm  
Meeting at 6:45

## Let Us Do Together What We Cannot Do Alone



**Dan Heins, President  
Stewartville MN 55976**

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**Cell: 507-438-2676**

**Email: [postmasterdan@ymail.com](mailto:postmasterdan@ymail.com)**

## *Spring is coming!*

Greetings to each and every one of you!

Well there are a number of NAPUS events that will be happening over the next couple of months. One of them is the Leadership/Legislative Conference in Washington, DC. The other is the Spring District Meetings that will be happening in the month of April.

It is hard to know what to expect to hear at the Leadership Conference this year. With so much happening in the Postal Service and the recent testimony by the Postmaster General and our NAPUS President on Capitol Hill, we just really do not know what to expect. There are some efforts to block the change from six day to five day delivery; however, with the speed that Congress acts on anything, I doubt that there is much they can do anyway. For the most part what I am hearing from my customers is that they could care less if they get Saturday delivery, or not. If they really need that mail they will be able to get it in a Post Office Box, anyway, so their needs should be met.

As far as the Spring NAPUS District Meetings are concerned, I will be coming around the state to share as much information as I have at that time. Obviously there will be information from the Leadership Conference and if there is any action in Congress at that time, we can discuss what steps, if any, we need you to take to help move legislation forward; or, if it is something that is contrary to the position of NAPUS and/or our positions as Postmasters we will do all that we can to try to run the opinions of the Representatives and Senators who represent Minnesota to see our side of things. Also, I will be sharing information on the upcoming State Convention in Duluth in June.

As I am writing this article, we have been told that as of March 9<sup>th</sup>, there will only be six vacant offices in the Northland District that will not have had their hour's changed as a result of the POSTPlan process. The belief is that those offices will be converted by the first of April. After that time, the conversion will happen on an office by office basis when they become vacant for some reason; until we get to the final implementation date at the end of September 2014.

The Northland District is in the process of rolling out

a new Recruitment and Development program to encourage those that are interested in upward mobility or just looking at what their options might be and wanting to improve their skills a way to do that. All career Northland District employees should have received a post card and letter on the program, as well as the stand-up talk that was to be given in all offices. If you have some questions on the program and would like more information, give me a call. I have had the opportunity, along with Anita, to have been part of the group that is putting the program together. If you do not feel that you want to take this step right now, the plan is that the program will be repeating approximately every six months, or so. The benefit is that if you are accepted into the program you will be assigned a coach and you will have the chance to put together an Individual Development Plan (IDP), so that you know what areas you need to continue to work on and what resources are available to help you reach your goals. If you have craft employees that may be interested, they are certainly encouraged to apply, as well.

Also, I am happy to report that the Northland District will once again be having Postmaster Meetings this spring. These are the meetings that are hosted by the District Manager, Tony Williams, and your MPOO. We are currently working on the format of the meetings and getting the locations secured. These meetings will also be held during the month of April, so watch for more details as they become available. The meetings will run from about 9-3 and will include some training, as well as the message on the current state of the Postal Service from Tony. These meetings offer an excellent opportunity to meet your neighboring Postmasters, as well as getting some very important information in these changing times, as well.

The Northland District PEER program is going to be continuing, as well. The way the program works will continue as it is, for the most part, the major change is that the PEER Coordinator, Chris Williams, is retiring, so some of the duties that he had been carrying on and the coordination of the program will be taken over by me and Donna Woodcock, the Postmaster from Bloomer, Wisconsin, who is the NAPUS representative on the District Committee from the State of Wisconsin. If you have issues in your offices regarding the workplace environment, I encourage you to bring them forward so that they can be dealt with.

As I close this month's article and seeing as how we will be celebrating St. Patrick's Day, it seems fitting to close with an Irish saying. I am not sure who the author of this one is, *"May you always have walls for the winds, a roof for the rain, tea beside the fire, laughter to cheer you, those you love near you, and all your heart might desire."*



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## Getting involved as members—

I spend a lot of time talking about membership numbers and recruiting non-members in my articles. This month I would like to address a different issue of equal importance to this organization and the State Chapter. That is getting involved as current members of NAPUS. This spring will bring elections for District officers in the odd number Districts 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9. The time commitment for the Director consists of scheduling two District Meetings, spring and fall, along with attending two Executive Board meetings in the winter and summer (the night before State Convention). You may find the new job rewarding while enjoying the camaraderie of fellow Postmasters.

Another benefit of membership is the opportunity to attend conventions and conferences. The NAPUS Leadership Conference in Washington DC will be March 16-20. I know it may be a last minute decision by the time you read this article, but as another member benefit, the Chapter will reimburse you for \$145 for the registration fee as long as you make three congressional visits. You can register at the event or online at <http://www.napus.org/>. Several airlines fly into Reagan National (DCA) from Minneapolis at reasonable prices and you can contact any Chapter Officer about help for lodging options. Sharing a room with fellow Postmasters can reduce costs and enhance the camaraderie.

Any article about membership wouldn't be complete without addressing recruiting new members. The dues schedule for 2013 can be found at the NAPUS website for you to use as a reference when talking to non-member offices about the monthly costs. They can be directed to <http://www.napus.org/> where they can fill out the 1187 and start enjoying the benefits for as low as \$3.50 a month for OICs, Associates, Retirees, and PMRs. That includes a subscription to the Gopher Postmaster and the Postmasters Gazette. The first year is still free for Postmasters, PMRs, and OICs.

Hope all went well for those of you who had routes opted in during the rural count. Why not start making plans to enjoy another of your member benefits, the State Convention in Duluth June 26-28 for more camaraderie!





**Anita Pfiefer**  
**Secretary/Treasurer**  
**PO Box 1051**  
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*Look Forward to the Future by Attending the Leadership Conference in Washington DC*

The 2013 NAPUS Leadership Conference and Legislative Rally is scheduled for March 16<sup>th</sup> through the 20<sup>th</sup> in our great capital of Washington DC. Greg Geheren and Todd Brandon have been busy scheduling the congressional visits with our elected officials.

The detailed agenda can be found at [www.NAPUS.org](http://www.NAPUS.org) under conferences. Sunday will be a full day of training sessions for your President, Secretary-Treasurer, Editor, Legislative Chair, Membership Chair, PAC Chair, Service Rep, and Postmaster Representatives. If you are interested in any of these positions, you are welcome to attend any of the training sessions, also. A general business session will be held all day on Monday starting at 8:00 am. Monday evening is a reception with the National President followed by a dinner and dance. Tuesday will begin the Capital Hill congressional visits with a possible political event in the morning. Wednesday is a travel day. It is a whirlwind few days of training, networking, and Hill visits – but well worth the time and effort. National President Bob Rapoza states ‘if ever there was a time to be involved and show members of Congress our strength and unity, it is at our Leadership Conference with our presence on the Hill.’

Thank you to those who are giving their personal time (and annual leave) to represent our Minnesota

Chapter.

Spring District meetings are coming up in April. Please check your Gopher for the dates and locations. These meetings are an opportunity for you to spend time with your peers, hear what was discussed at the Leadership/Legislative Conference, talk with President Dan and make plans for the State Convention (in Duluth). I encourage you to ‘team up’ with a fellow Postmaster and plan on attending your District meeting.

**MINNESOTA NAPUS**  
**Financial Statement**  
 As of January 31, 2013

Regular Checking	\$ 9,077.51
Regular Savings	\$24,252.94
State Conv Savings	\$15,060.97
Legislative Savings	\$ 4,978.81
Conv 2000 Savings	\$17,035.26
<u>Cert of Deposit</u>	<u>\$11,356.72</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$81,762.21</b>

**NOTICE**

Please send installation pictures, retirements and any other news about NAPUS members to our NAPUS historian.

Monica Bjork  
 195 Benson Dr N, Lewiston MN 55952

**Postmaster Reminders!**

- Don't use someone else's login.
- Make sure your office safe is locked and your keys are with you even if you are just leaving for a minute, a break, or lunch.
- Don't use postal service stationery, copier, or phones for NAPUS business.
- Be active in NAPUS.
- Don't lie. Scan your distribution and box up scans when the job is completed. Document if there was a problem that day as to why it couldn't be completed on time.
- Don't cheat. Record your time and your employees time exactly.
- Don't steal. Postal funds are postal funds not yours.
- If there is a problem, use the proper chain of command. For Postmasters, the first person to contact would be your Post Office Operations Manager or POOM.
- Share your talents with other Postmasters and postal employees.
- Give the best possible service to your customers.
- Stay informed on Postmaster issues and other issues involving the U S Postal Service.
- Complete tasks on time.
- Don't touch your employees.
- Always conduct yourself in a professional manner.



**Gail Hustad**  
**PAC Chairman**

**Ottertail MN 56571**

**Office: 218-367-2130**

**Email: [brnidgrl\\_64@yahoo.com](mailto:brnidgrl_64@yahoo.com)**

Please support NAPUS PAC this month and every month. In your mail in the past month you have received a request for PAC donations. Please write out your check and mail it today. Our jobs depend on us.

*Thank your Representative  
When you appreciate  
what they are doing*

I just read an email I would like to share from NARFE: "The House of Representatives passed H.R. 273 (Extending the Federal Employee Pay Freeze until December 31, 2013 on Friday, February 15th. Both Collin Peterson and Rick Nolan voted against the bill. You may wish to send your Representative a Thank You. This will let them know you are watching how they vote and you appreciate what they are doing. They need to know when you like what they are doing rather than always asking them to support something. By the way, Congressman Kline (as expected) voted for the extension of the pay freeze. It is unlikely the companion bill will be passed in the Senate."

It is important that we support our Congressmen and Senators who are working for us.

**PAC Contributions**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

**Active Postmaster**  
**Retired Postmaster Associate Member**

*Make checks payable to:*  
**NAPUS PAC**

Send PAC Donations to:  
Gail Hustad  
PO Box 34  
Ottertail MN 56571-0034



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career.

NAPUS did negotiate to have the openings for Postmasters to be offered to Postmasters first. They also worked on a time line for the posting of the part-time Postmaster positions.

If you are unsure of the value of NAPUS as an organization, do a little research on what they are doing for Postmasters. Visit the national website at [napus.org](http://napus.org) to find out for yourself. Or better yet, attend a NAPUS function and you will learn a lot in just a short time. There is a lot of value in the networking and training that one can gather from attending a NAPUS event.

Take time and put it on your calendar this year to become active in NAPUS and find out all the great things that NAPUS can do for you.

Hope to see you there!

### *Why Should I Be Active in NAPUS— What Is In It For You?*

Last year we were shocked with the Postal Services new POSTPlan where they planned to replace about 16,000 Postmaster jobs. NAPUS went through the consultative process and saved over half of those jobs. Did they save yours?

NAPUS also negotiated for the POSTPlan process not to happen immediately but to give affected Postmasters two years to find soft landing spots or recreate your

# 2013 MN NAPUS STATE CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

**Radison Hotel Duluth Harborview  
505 W Superior St, Duluth MN  
June 26-28, 2013**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(As it will appear on your name badge)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City, State & Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Office:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(As it will appear on your name badge)

<b>Please check all that apply:</b>	<b>Received by June 1st</b>	<b>Received after June 1st</b>
_____ <b>Postmaster</b>	<b>\$55.00</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
_____ <b>OIC</b>	<b>\$55.00</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
_____ <b>Associate Member</b>	<b>\$55.00</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
_____ <b>Guest</b>		
_____ <b>Name:</b> _____	<b>\$55.00</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
_____ <b>Retiree</b>	<b>\$55.00</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>
_____ <b>Retirees Lunch only</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>	<b>\$30.00</b>

**Make checks payable to MN NAPUS CONVENTION.**

**Send registration to: Anita Pfiefer, Secretary/Treasurer  
PO Box 1051  
Owatonna MN 55060-7051**

**Hotel Reservations: Radison Hotel Duluth Harborview      Room rate: \$99.00**  
**505 W Superior St      (Ask for NAPUS room rate)**  
**Duluth MN 55802      Reservations must be received**  
**218-727-8981      by June 1st**  
**No guarantee of room availability**  
**or rate after June 1st**

MN NAPUS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION 2013  
18374 CEDAR LN, RICHMOND MN 56368

Instructions:

1. All applications must be returned to the above address and postmarked no later than MAY 1, 2013.
2. The application is limited to ONE attached sheet of paper.
3. All applications MUST include a certified copy of your High School Transcript AND the most recent college/technical school transcript if currently enrolled in a post-secondary program. No internet transcripts will be accepted.
4. Applicants understand that if selected, the scholarship is contingent to the submission of their PAID fall registration on institution stationery to the committee before DECEMBER 31, 2013.
5. Applicants age limit is 23 years old by June 1, 2013.
6. Only ONE award per person. Previous award winners are not eligible to apply in future years for additional awards.

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

I have read and agree to the above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

APPLICANT'S NAME:

\_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT EDUCATIONAL STATUS: \_\_\_\_\_ HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR \_\_\_\_\_ POST-SECONDARY

SPONSORING MINNESOTA NAPUS MEMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION OF SPONSOR: \_\_\_\_\_ ACTIVE POSTMASTER \_\_\_\_\_ RETIRED \_\_\_\_\_ ASSOCIATE MEMBER

RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT: \_\_\_\_\_ CHILD \_\_\_\_\_ GRANDCHILD

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAPUS Member Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

GRADUATION DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

\*\*Please write about what you personally have done to make a difference in your community, in your school and at your work:

NAME OF SCHOOL YOU WILL BE ATTENDING: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Any questions about the scholarship application can be directed to: 18374 Cedar Lane, Richmond MN 56368



NAPUS Executive Board Meeting  
Friday, January 18, 2013  
Country Inn and Suites St Cloud MN

Meeting called to order by President Dan Heins at 6:30 pm.

Roll Call: in attendance: Dan Heins, Greg Geheren, Anita Pfeifer, Margie Jacobson, Mel Miller, Jim Walker, Wendy Kafka, Dennis O'Neill, Ellen Stifter, Paul Johnson, Terry Neneman, Gail Hustad, Bill Bires, Renae Ingersoll.

Introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from Executive Board meeting held June 20, 2012 and June 22, 2012 were presented. Motion to approve minutes: seconded/ passed.

Approval of Financial Statements:

Treasurer's report: Anita Pfeifer presented end of 2012 Balance Sheet.

\$ 7,928.21	Regular checking
\$24,243.77	Regular savings
\$14,695.57	State Convention savings
\$ 4,861.21	Legislative savings
\$ 17,031.19	Convention 2000 savings
\$	Convention 2000 certificate of deposit
<u>\$11,348.53</u>	<u>Regular certificate of deposit</u>
\$80,10848	Total Assets.
\$ 0.00	Total Liabilities

Total income was \$65,622.03 and total expenses were \$63,655.47 for a net 'profit' of \$1966.56.

Income was less \$1712.97 to budgeted amount but expenses were less by \$3679.53 to budgeted amount.

Income reductions - NAPUS had 100 members retire and beginning in October both the Special Assessment and Active members deposits were reduced. The misc income of \$1700 was the amount taken out of savings to balance the budget last year - and there were 2 transfers from savings this year for State Convention and Legislative expenses.

Expense reductions - Legislative conference and National Convention had less expense than budgeted mostly due to fewer Postmasters in attendance. LWOP amount was reduced since Dan did not use all the days allotted and that reduced the payroll taxes.

Motion to approve Treasurers report: seconded / passed.

Audit Committee Report: Bill Bires reported: Audited the financial reports from June 1, 2012 thru December 31, 2012. Reported the financial papers are in order with no discrepancies found. Thanks to Wendy Kafka and Terry Neneman for their assistance.

Presidential appointments -

Voting members of the board:

Gopher Editor - Margie Jacobson, Janesville

Legislative Chair - Todd Brandon, Roseau  
Motion to approve the above appointments, seconded / passed.

Other appointments by President Dan Heins:

Postmaster Representative - Renae Ingersoll, Moorhead and Postmaster Representative - Bill Bires, Spring Valley

PAC Chair - Gail Hustad, Ottertail; Service Officer - Sheila Bodell-Hoerner, Warren;

Historian - Monica Bjork, Kellogg

State Convention 2013 report: Dan reported:

Dan met with the Radisson in October when he did the Fall District 2 meeting (9 in attendance at the District 2 meeting). The Radisson is excited to have us there and will be having their own Rolle Bolle team - we have to play indoors and have to come up with a bumper system.

Wed, June 26<sup>th</sup> starts with golf, then the Executive Board meeting with a DJ on Wed night. Thursday - business session, silent auction during the day, live auction during lunch, after the business session there will be Rolle Bolle. Discussion on if we should schedule a boat ride on Lake Superior or a train ride up the North Shore. Friday - business session ending about noon with a box lunch. Meals are similar in cost to Detroit Lakes. \$99 per room - up to 4 people in room and the \$99 rate is extended to Friday.

Reports:

Editor report: Margie Jacobson reported;

Schedule for 2013 articles handed out; handed out spreadsheet on Gopher expenses - some chapters have reduced publications to 3 - 4 per year - Margie does not recommend that severe of reduction but does recommend reducing the January issue - further discussion when discussing 2013 budget.

Membership report: Greg Geheren reported: Membership is down from mid 70% to 56% for Minnesota. 48% at the National level. Retirees now outnumber the active members; send any names of potential new members to Greg.

Postmasters Retired report: Mel Miller reported:

Retired postmasters have not been signing up - only \$3.50 per month - no longer cash dues option - must be payroll deduction.

Postmaster Representative report: Bill Bires reported: Bill reported on the issues that he has dealt with.

Renae reported that she has only received a few phone calls.

PAC report: Gail Hustad reported: Last year PAC contributions were \$10,548 and in 2011 they were \$12,100; majority of the contributions come in at State Convention and district meetings.

Legislative report: Greg Geheren reported for Todd

Brandon: Compact all Capital Hill visits on Tuesday -

Greg will start making contacts this next week; Banquet

will be on Monday night; National Executive Board will have strategic planning on Thursday with regular board meeting on Friday.

Service Officer: No report

Leadership / Legislative Conference: Anita Pfiefer reported: Registration form is online at [napus.org](http://napus.org) – registration cost is \$145 this year and MN NAPUS will pay that amount. Not sure if there is a change in registration costs but I would advise you to register by Feb 1<sup>st</sup> for that rate. NAPUS members must sign up and pay for their own registration, hotel and airfare. Submit for reimbursement following conference.

Spring District Meeting Dates: Dan reported - Tentative dates:

District 1 - Wednesday, April 24

District 2 - Friday, April 26

District 3 - Tuesday, April 23

District 4 - Thursday, April 25

District 5 - Wednesday, April 17

District 6 - Thursday, April 18

District 7 - Friday, April 19

District 8 - Tuesday, April 16

District 9 - Thursday, April 11 - evening

Elections in the odd-numbered districts this spring

Please email Dan, Anita and Margie details of your district meeting. Dan will send letter to District 2 members telling about date and place of meeting. Expectations is that each district will send postcards or letters for notification of meeting.

Proposed Budget for 2013: Anita Pfiefer reported: Preliminary budget was presented with a total of \$59,705.00 for income and \$62,437.00 for expenses. Reviewed line items for income and expenses. After discussion final budget was reached and balanced at \$61,712.00. Motion of approve the budget with updates discussed; seconded / discussion / passed.

Motion to approve reducing mileage rate of 25 cents per mile; seconded; passed.

Time and Place for 2015 State Convention: Greg Geheren reported: SW quadrant; not soliciting bids but look at which cities that would have hotels and venues in those area; with less attending, some smaller cities might have accommodations that would be able to host the convention.

Old Business: none

New Business: National President endorsement: will be electing for 2014-2016 at the National Convention in Bellevue WA – candidates are Anthony Leonardi and John Sertich. Motion to endorse Anthony Leonardi for the position of National President; seconded; passed.

Anita Pfiefer announced that she is running for Vice President for Area 14 for the years 2014 – 2015 representing the great states of Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Dan reported that the Iowa Hawkeye had a survey of

their membership and Missouri also conducted a survey; he will bring that information to the district meetings and at the June Board meeting.

Northland District manager Tony Williams will hold Postmaster meetings this spring from mid March through mid May. Dan is on the planning committee and expects the focus to be on APO and RMPO concerns; the District will provide a lunch at the meetings

The Board of Governors announced they directed the PMG to accelerate cost cutting measures; heard that plant closing is accelerated and 5 day delivery will be strongly pushed; DUO has been suspended due to lack of savings.

6 hours offices are hiring 818 PSE's and they can work the window

Constitutional proposals – none presented

Motion to adjourn, seconded / passed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.



William Roger (Bill) Wotczak  
4/16/44–2/8/13  
Former Postmaster of Duluth MN

William Roger (Bill) Wotczak, 68, Las Vegas NV and Prior Lake MN passed away 2/8/13 after a gallant 11 month fight with cancer.

He was a U.S. Army (Vietnam Conflict) Veteran. Bill retired in 2000 from the USPS with 34 years of dedicated service. His career began in Duluth as a clerk. He served in many positions in seven states. He served as Officer in Charge in Rosemount MN, Rochester MN, Duluth MN and Wichita KS. He became the Postmaster of Duluth MN on 9/24/88.

Sign up new Postmasters, OICs and Retirees  
Complete an 1187 or 1187R  
Submit online at [napus.org](http://napus.org) or send to  
Greg Geheren,  
Hugo MN 55038



**Michelle Feldhacker**  
**Area 14 National Vice President**  
**PO Box 1401**  
**Aberdeen SD 57402**  
**605-660-1032**  
**Email: [mcfeld@iw.net](mailto:mcfeld@iw.net)**

plans. Imparting greatness requires a continuum of effort and attention, not just an initial brain-fueled flurry to get exemplary ideas on paper.”

Oh, how true these items really are; especially when we are dealing with change. The people working hands on with the processes might just have some great ideas. They have learned how to modify their skills and duties to deal with the every day processes. Hey, they probably know a little bit more about the volumes or processes you are attempting to change. Why not ask them?

During part of the resetting of the workroom floor, I heard that maintenance employees were getting static about some of the changes. Finally, some of them referred the “complainer” to management. During the conversation, they were asked to provide a drawing... I saw the drawing – and thought “Brilliant!!! Exactly what I would LOVE to see happen”. So I measured and things were moved that day. It used a long limited space on the floor, and freed up a space that was desperately needed for another operation. Believe me; they were quite surprised to see it put into place so quickly.

What do you have to offer? I just found out the other day... a clerk that I know, was a teacher and professor before coming to work for the Post Office. Isn't it amazing what others have done in their life “prior” to the Post Office. Are we utilizing that knowledge, or do we just think – there is a mail handler or a clerk. They don't know anything. Don't care to know what they do or “know” - just get the mail processed. How many of our Postmasters have hidden talents? How many have hobbies that include flying planes or racing cars? I know I couldn't do either... So many of our employees and co-workers have a hidden talent; have you taken the time to find out what those are?

Have you “written” people off, who have tried to share their thoughts or ideas? As the manager, have you “bullied” the group or individuals into doing it your way, without even considering there could be a better way? At times, as the manager, you MUST make the decisions to make certain changes, or it seems they never get done. Sometimes, you might know of a better way... BUT, is your way the only way? Everyone has something to contribute, have you listened? Who knows what the person you are working with can provide as valuable input, unless you ask them.



## *Looking for Valuable Input in all the Right Places.*

Every month, when it comes time to write an article, I ask friends what I should write about. I also decide to really look back a few weeks, and what is it that I have been dealing with, or what's the new flavor of the week/month. Well, I would have to say—I have been heavily involved in 2 AMPS, getting the plant that I'm currently working in ready to take on 43 offices from 574 and another 42 offices from 575. By the time you read this article, we will have been processing this mail for a couple of weeks—Something a little different than my Postmaster position in Aberdeen. (Further expanding my personal knowledge.)

Anyways... I was reading an article by David D Salvo, a contributor writer for Forbes. The article was entitled “10 Smart Things I've Learned from People Who Never Went to College”. It is quite an interesting article. To quote part of the article – which I believe really, applies to situations we are in...”

- 1 You can learn something useful from anyone.  
Whenever we find ourselves ignoring someone because we've already determined that they aren't “smart” enough to say something meaningful, we've made a big mistake. Besides being presumptuous and arrogant, this mindset blocks out every useful thing the other person might pass along. Instead of just listening and mining the conversation for nuggets of wisdom, we allow our pre-existing bias to brand everything as “not smart enough for me.” Incredibly bad idea. I've yet to meet someone who couldn't teach me something.
- 2 If quality slips, it really doesn't matter how good your ideas were.  
This one I learned from a couple of my uncles who worked as quality control specialists on assembly lines. The most ingenious design plans, no matter how many brains contributed to them, can fatally falter in the execution phase if quality slips. This is equally true for intangible

## Article Deadlines

For the April Issue  
Of *The Gopher Postmaster* is

**March 24th, 2013**

## Periodicals

### Dates to Remember

#### State Conventions

Radison at Duluth  
June 26-28, 2013  
Holiday Inn Northwest  
Elk River  
June 10-12, 2014

#### National Conventions

August 16-21, 2013 Bellevue WA  
September 13-18, 2014  
Atlantic City, New Jersey  
2015—Mobile, AL

#### Leadership Conference

Washington DC  
March 16-20, 2013  
March 15-20, 2014  
March 14-19, 2015



Rambling Thoughts from  
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Please bear with me while I ramble about some thoughts that have come to my mind concerning NAPUS and the US Postal Service. I read the February Gopher cover to cover. It was very interesting, thanks to Editor Margie. President Dan devoted his message to CHANGE. I am sure he had good advice for Postmasters to help with their USPS operations and also their participation in Minnesota NAPUS.

As one in his 21st year of retirement, I admit that most of the acronyms had no meaning to the ANTIQUE Postmasters. GOD Bless Anita. She has done an outstanding job with the Chapter finances and is facing a real challenge with our declining membership. In addition, I am sure she will make an excellent National VP.

I give to PAC. I must admit that over the years I have become discouraged. We give money to the Politicians, we visit them at the Leadership Conference and they promise to co-sponsor our bills, but they never get to the floor to be voted upon before the end of the session. The following year we have a new congress and we have to start all over again. I will continue to give to PAC—you should also. Money is like manure, it is no good unless you spread it around.

A casual observation—Our Area 14 VP's article contained about 28 question marks.

In closing, I am of the belief that the deterioration of our nation's mail service started under the watch of my generation. The Postmaster General was a member of the Presidents Cabinet. It was the U. S. Post Office Department. PMG Lawrence O'Brien formed the USPS - a government corporation. In my opinion, things went down hill from there...



Wear your green on St. Patrick's Day! "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling etc...."