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Cascade Connection

Volume 5 Issue 1

Winter 2020-2021

Washington Chapter of United Postmasters and Managers of America

Washington
Chapter
State
Meetings



National Convention
Aug 14-20, 2021

2021



loading...



Which UPMA events are on your list of
New Year's resolutions?

Washington State Chapter of United
Postmasters and Managers of America
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Yakima WA 98909-0874

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**Deadline for the next *Cascade Connection*:
February 28, 2021**

Find us:
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If you need help, reach out

**Kristin Luther
Treasurer**



It is now the holiday season, and we are still battling COVID-19. We all totally thought we would have this all behind us by now.

Our work environment is getting more intense and not letting up anytime soon. Since we started delivering seven days a week in most zip codes, the work environment has gotten harder and harder to maintain. Our staff is getting overworked, and it is harder and harder to retain noncareer employees. Our management staff is getting overworked and are expected to also work seven days a week with no added complement to help us. We have management running multiple offices and delivering mail along with all the office responsibilities and continued pressure from district staff. We have a huge staffing issue from management to craft. We have so many vacancies in our offices and, going into our busy season, it makes it so much harder on everyone's moral. Our hiring system is extremely broken. Fast track is a joke and is costing our service millions of dollars. We have to hire the top score of a personality test: who knows who actually took it at home. They have no clue what they are signing up for and have no idea what the job entails. We get to have a discussion with the employee, though they are already hired when we get to discuss the job. And they say sure, they can do the job, and accept it even though we know they will not make it. At least with the old way, we could choose who we thought was best for our operation, and we had a better chance of retention. It's just so frustrating to have to hire constantly and waste so much of the valuable time we don't have. Headquarters needs to change this fast-track hiring process and rethink the seven-day parcel delivery.

I hope you all make it through our peak season ~ although we have been living it since March. If you find yourself having a tough time, make sure you reach out and get help. Do not falsify records or commit to something unattainable, and make sure you don't curtail any mail or parcels unless you document it in CSDRS and inform your MPOO. You can only control what you can control. If you are getting behind, reach out for help. I hope our new PMG will make positive changes that actually will help us in our day to life in our units. Time will tell as we go forward.

I hope you all will have a blessed season, and I hope we will get to get together next year and return to life as we used to know.

Tomorrow is a mystery.
Today is a gift.
That is why it is called the present.
~~ Eleanor Roosevelt



UPMA Working for You: Educational Resources

- Education and information that is important for your job and your future
- Educational training and materials are provided in the UPMA Leader, at local, chapter and national events, and at www.unitedpma.org
- 3-digit educational meetings at your local level addressing local, area, and national issues affecting your job and your ability to perform effectively
- UPMA gives you opportunities to expand your knowledge, both personally and professionally
- A lifeline to assist with the many fast-paced changes in the Postal Service
- UPMA Learning Center, an online profesional training website

Issue date: December 15, 2020

The *Cascade Connection* is published four times a year in March, June, September, and December.

Authorized organization: Washington State Chapter of United Postmasters and Managers of America

Address: PO Box 9874, Yakima, WA 98909



Gordon Williams
President

Joy and Pain, Sunshine and Rain

“It takes two to make a thing go right.” Some of you may know the reference to the late 1980s hip hop song and some may not, but this year of 2020 has had some joy and pain, sunshine and rain. We have delivered through disastrous fires and hurricanes, social unrest, and an election like none I have seen or ever experienced. We have delivered and survived despite some of those we serve, diligently and faithfully, questioning our integrity and efficiency based on lies and innuendo promulgated by some of us.

I have written quite a few articles for union and management associations in my thirty-two years with USPS. This article is the most difficult one ever for me.

As in relationships, be they friendships, marriages, and as with USPS and UPMA, both parties have to act in good faith and with mutual respect. At different levels of the organization (District, Area, and HQ), both sides have to understand each other’s perspective, or things do not go right. I have experienced some joy in achieving cooperation regarding the safety of our EAS, craft, and customers during this cataclysmic pandemic that has affected every segment of our global society. We worked hard to make sure we had systems and backup systems back in March 2020, to get supplies and PPE for cleaning, and to create the safest environment that we could for our employees and customers. We met with District, Area, and HQ staff daily and then transitioned to a less aggressive but still regular schedule at all our organization levels. I was proud of USPS at the HQ, Area, and District level for the efforts they took back in the spring of 2020.

As the year dragged on, we hit some bumps in the Seattle District when they changed their focus to disciplining their way to safety and efficiency, effecting EAS and craft employees alike. As I have said multiple times, UPMA is not a union with collective bargaining rights under the National Labor Relations Board, the little-understood (by USPS Labor and members) ELM 650 Non-Bargaining Disciplinary, Grievance, and Appeal Procedures. Due process became a significant focus for me this year. One of the ideas I promoted many years ago was to have formalized management association training on ELM 650 representation at a national level. In March, and again in November, our national association supported this with outstanding training for our members. We now have a committee of certified Chapter Member Reps (CMRs) in the Washington chapter. They are Committee Chair Brian Ireland, Postmaster of Union; Wendy Fleming, Postmaster of Castle Rock; Kristen Luther, Postmaster of Mabton; and Hugo Vo, MDO – Seattle NDC. This group is always ready to represent anyone who may have issues and questions regarding representation. Also, UPMA has an incredible Adverse Action Legal Defense Plan that you can read about at unitedpma.org, or you can contact a CMR or other executive board member with questions.

For me, my old man rose-colored glasses prefer that we as an organization work WITH, not have to work AGAINST, our leaders at the District level. It’s preferred that they support us and the goals of educating, communicating, and networking within our membership so that Supervisors, Managers, and Postmasters can avoid getting into trouble. And it’s preferred that the District supports our craft employees so we ALL can support our core mission. No, NOT reports or reporting compliance, but providing the best service in a safe, efficient, and positive manner to fulfill our mission of universal service to this great country.

In the Seattle District, the inference is that if you are in a level 18 or 43B office, you don’t have enough to do; you need to help larger offices. Some with this viewpoint look at these smaller office positions from their memory of what used to be. But even without delivery, offices have more reports, more emails, and more Zooms; thus, things core to our mission get overlooked. The District dismisses our authority, while at the same time (too many times) in discipline use the line, “As a Postmaster or EAS you have a higher level of responsibility...” If one truly has the responsibility, then there is the authority to make decisions. Those who work in cubicles in Seattle or other Districts around the country work there for the most part because they cannot handle a unit’s daily stress. That is not to say they do not have the acumen and abilities to help support the field, but we need to understand that those who work within the District offices in Federal Way and Tukwila work for us in the field and not the other way around. I have tried to reach out to the Seattle District and, for some reason, the view is that we in the field do not matter until we show up on a report of some kind.

As your Washington UPMA chapter president, I, along with your executive board, have worked tirelessly to communicate up through the system. I receive more than ten calls, texts, and emails each day at work. I spend my lunch, pre-work, and post-work time trying to reply, even when there is not much I can do in some instances. I do it because I care about and understand what everyone is going through. This year, I hoped to find others—younger, more current and knowledgeable—to step up on behalf of our UPMA members. I still have to believe that those people are there. I know there are so much talent and ambition in each person who is active and reading this.



Hope for 2021 is our joy. We need to be positive leaders for USPS and for our units. We need to model safe, engaged, and honorable behaviors that I know will lead us out of the rain into more sunny days ahead. We are planning a spring conference in April or May 2021. Then hopefully, by June 2021, we can all get together with training, networking, and commiserating so we can improve our skills, make contacts, honor our magnificent retirees, and be truly united in more than just spirit or via Zoom. Music, faith, family, and friends like my UPMA brothers and sisters across the country and locally have sustained this old fart through this most universally challenging and seemingly never-ending year. The trip I recently took with a CMR to St. Louis for excellent training was inspiring, and it motivated me to continue to serve during these times of restructuring USPS at all levels.

Please think about what those with whom we disagree are dealing with daily and try to understand their perspective and approach. It is only together that we can get through this. Stay strong, be safe, show grace, and please reach out to each other and try to offer support where you can when you can.

I wish you all holiday blessings, and though we are not altogether with our work, UPMA, or nuclear families, we will be together again soon. Here comes the sun, it’s alright... Be safe, be strong, stay united!



Brian Ireland
Chapter Member Representative

Don’t forget EAP is there for you

Well, peak season is here, and it really is a continuation of what we’ve already been going through due to COVID creating its own peak season starting in March. We are expecting an estimated 35% more volume this season over last year’s peak volumes.

Political season is over...no, wait...we have to continue the political surveys now until January 8th. At least the Election Extraordinary Measures survey is over.

We have new surveys, and new procedures coming down the pike at a record pace, and at times it is difficult to keep up with these changes. In Area 4, we are having 3 telecoms per week, which is difficult to be on each one; as Forrest Gump says, “stuff happens!” And now, in Area 4, level 18 Postmasters are required to do one safety observation per week. I guess in an office like mine, that hasn’t had an accident in over 2 years, I need to do twenty-six observations on each of my two PTF clerks per year, when the actual requirement is two per employee, as each of my employees has over two years of experience.

The back of a PS Form 4589 states the following:

To enforce a high standard of safe work performance, the following number of work practice observations must be completed:

- Non career: One per quarter
- Probationary (0-3 months) 30, 60, 80 day evaluations
- Employees with 4-23 months postal experience: One per quarter
- Employees with 2 years plus postal experience: Twice per year




This is per a recent telecom with area IV MPOO (A), Carter Clark, and he said that in larger facilities, the requirement is two safety observations per day.

It seems that we get pulled in so many directions, and this helps me understand why so many people are trying to get out of the customer service units, and why some people are retiring sooner than what they had planned.

With all of the stress produced in our current environment, I want to remind everyone that we do have a good benefit that costs us nothing to use, and it is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This program provides counseling, coaching, help with goal setting, and CRITICAL Incident Response. EAP4YOU.COM is a place you can find out everything that you need to know about this free benefit. You can find information about suicide prevention, resources for COVID-19, health videos, and recipes, just to name a few of the great resources that are available to anyone living in your household. The phone number for EAP is 800-EAP-4YOU, or 800-327-4968.

Above all, I hope that each of you is able to keep your sanity through this busy season. I hope that everyone can enjoy their friends and families. Let’s face it, the reason that we work is so that we can afford to live and to pursue happiness. Happiness is what makes you happy, so your happiness doesn’t have to look like someone else’s happiness. Please keep this in the forefront of your minds during these crazy, difficult times. Until next time...



UPMA PAC CONTRIBUTION CARD

United Postmasters and Managers of America Political Fund
8 Herbert Street
Alexandria VA 22305

Yes, I want to contribute. Enclosed is:

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$200 Other

Member ID:

Name:

Address:

City State Zip:

Date:

Credit Card Contributions:

Acct # CCV:

Expiration Date: /

Signature:

UPMA PAC will neither favor nor disadvantage a member based on the amount of a contribution nor will the decision not to contribute to non-partisan political action fund. ,



Teresa Goss
Vice President: Legislative/PAC

It's important to support UPMA PAC



Happy Peak, everyone. Well, for us active working Postmasters and Managers it seems like it has been peak all year. We went from peak to COVID to election back to peak. It has been a challenging year for the Postal Service. We never did see the much-needed postal reform this year, nor did we get a congressional COVID relief bill.

The contested election and the upcoming race in Georgia will be interesting to watch and see where all the pieces land. UPMA is hopeful for bi-partisan support of the Postal Service to finally get the postal reform we so desperately need. We need friends in both parties to make this happen, which brings me to my next topic.

Does everyone understand what PAC is and why it is important to support PAC with your contributions? UPMA PAC allows UMPA members to make a coordinated effort to support our allies in Congress and the candidates who will support our legislative issues. This is why it is important for UPMA members to contribute to UPMA PAC. UPMA's involvement in the political process offers us a tangible and direct role in the political process.

With COVID this year, and many states not able to have a convention, it has been harder to raise the much-needed funds that we normally raise at state and national conventions. That is why it is more important than ever to contribute now. To give to PAC, please contact me, or go to <https://www.unitedpma.org/news/upma-pac-forms-and-documents>, or find a contribution form on Page 4 of this newspaper. Even a little makes a big difference if everyone contributes.

I hope all of you had a blessed Thanksgiving.
 Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



Put integrity on the top of your list this holiday season and in the new year!



Wendy Fleming
Secretary

Happy Holidays to all my fellow Washington UPMA members! Hopefully, you have finished with all your Christmas shopping and have the tree up because you will not have time to do it now! I think this season is going to be the busiest any of our careers has ever seen because most of us have been experiencing Christmas volumes since COVID-19 hit and shut our "normal" down earlier this year. What is our new normal looking like? Face masks, Plexiglas, social distancing, and disinfectant!

Are you tired of the requirements and daily certifications to make sure you are doing what is required? I know I am. Unfortunately, the certifications have been set up because some out there have said they have completed a task when indeed they were not done. Now we all have the chore of showing our boss, the District, and now Area, that tasks are complete by submitting all the many glorious certifications we must do every day and by a certain time of day. All this can seem like an impossible task especially when we are trying to get our carriers onto the street and sweeping the retail window line. Our time is so overbooked these days we may be tempted to certify something just to checkmark it as done. I am telling you now, do not certify anything as "complete" unless you are 100% sure it was done.

Nobody likes seeing their office on a non-compliant certification list, but it is a far better choice than sitting in an investigative interview for falsification of the certification. Always report accurate information. If you have curtailed or even delayed mail, make sure it is reported, with specific details, in CSDRS. Always make sure you keep your MPOO in the loop. Are you rolling mail to get the carriers back by dark or 20:00? Make sure you report it. If you have supervisors who are responsible for doing the reports in your office, then you should be following up with making sure the details of the office are being reported correctly. If the reports are not accurate, then show them how it should be done. This goes for any reports in your office; make sure you look at them because when the district calls with questions, they will be asking you, not the person who did the report. It does not matter what level of EAS you are, be honest and take responsibility for reporting accurately in your office. Do not just click a box to stay off a list. I have talked about this before, but I am hearing of EAS being pulled out of their positions for delay of mail. Correctly reporting the delay in CSDRS would have avoided this potential removal. Put integrity on the top of your list this holiday season and new year! I am remaining hopeful that 2021 will bring healing for our country, and that COVID-19 will be something that we talk about in the past tense.

I look forward to the spring, and I hope to see you at our next convention or training when some of the restrictions on gatherings have eased up a bit. I pray you all have a safe and blessed holiday season.

All USPS employees are welcome to join UPMA

Guidance for Handling Workplace Violence Emergencies

Assaults or Threats:

USPIS Hotline: 1-877-876-2455

Is the situation under control?

NO-

- Instruct party to leave on Emergency Placement (ART 16.7 or 16.5)
- Call 911, if the person is a danger and/ or not following your instructions to leave
- Call USPIS hotline when safe to do so

YES-

- Notify facility head
- If an assault occurred- Call USPIS Hotline
- If a CREDIBLE threat occurred- Call USPIS Hotline and file a Threat Assessment Report
- For a NON-credible threat- file a Threat Assessment Report on the Seattle District Page under “Threats/ Conflicts Report”. Inspectors will weigh in on whether they will conduct an investigation or have management conduct their own investigation. Please wait for a response from Inspectors.

Was the situation with a customer?

- Call 911 if necessary and tell employee to get in a safe location until they arrive
- Call USPIS hotline if local PD was called. If situation is under control, file a Threat Assessment Report <http://western1.fws.usps.gov/sites/seattle/HR/Threat%20Assesment/default.aspx>

Suicide or Suicidal Employee:

USPIS Hotline: 1-877-876-2455

Is the situation under control?

NO-

- Call 911, if the person is a danger or having thoughts of self-harm at that moment

YES-

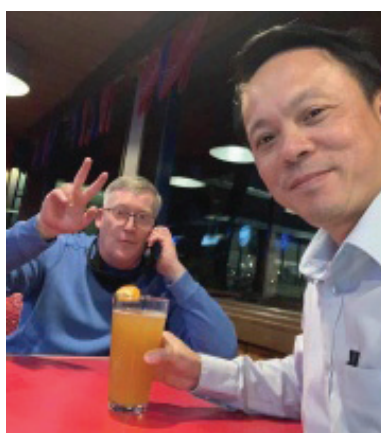
- Notify facility head
 - Call USPIS hotline - Inspectors can do welfare checks if needed and assist in getting further resources for our employees
 - Call EAP for employee if they are receptive to it
- EAP Hotline: 1-800-EAP-4YOU or 1-800-327-4968

File a Threat Assessment Report for all of these instances.

Chapter Member Representative Training St Louis, MO



National President Dan Heins and
Gordon Williams



Gordon Williams and Hugo Vo



National President Dan Heins and
Hugo Vo



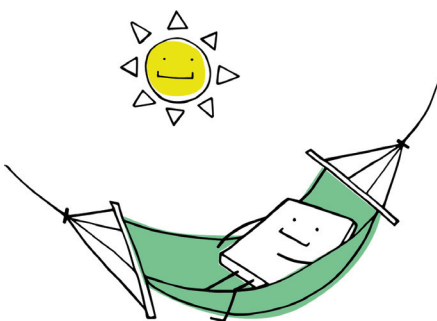
Randy Bristlin
Postmaster Retired Longview

Jim Espenson
Postmaster Retired Silverdale

Larry Corvari Sr. -
Postmaster Retired Copalis Beach



The Retirees' Corner



What a year we have had. The virus is still with us and will be for a while longer. Just protect yourselves and wear masks. Don't go anywhere unless it's absolutely necessary; it just isn't worth the risk. Something else – give your cloth mask a good washing. It won't hurt a thing, and you should be safer.

I said it before, and I'll say it again: come to convention. When I was the NAPUS state president, I represented several Postmasters who got in trouble. The violations they were accused of had been presented several times in classes. If they had gone to convention, they would have known better and would still be working for the USPS. Don't make that mistake. Come to convention not only to learn but to avoid trouble. If you are confronted with a problem, stop the interview and request a representative to be there. Also, don't sign anything at that time.

In closing, I want to wish you all Happy Holidays.



Mel Williams
President - Retirees

Retiree Officers

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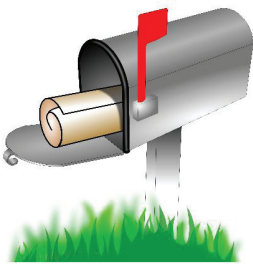
Mission: To aid postal employees and retirees whose homes are completely destroyed or left uninhabitable as a result of a major natural disaster or house fire. When disaster strikes and all is lost, PERF is committed to helping postal families rebuild their lives.

No state has been exempt.
We are all potential victims.

Donate any time of year
postalrelief.com

Since you get more joy out of giving joy to others, you should put a good deal of thought into the happiness you are able to give.

~~~~~Eleanor Roosevelt



Do all retirees know that **included with your** dues payment is your subscription to In The Mailbox?

It is the retirees' very own publication. You may even send the editor articles or information for inclusion. Just notify Eva Finley, UPMA National Editor - Retirees, of your name and mailing address: Eva Finley, inthemailboxeditor@usa.net. Or write to her at P.O. Box 500, Graford TX 76449-0500. It's a great publication just for us and a way to get to know who's who before you see them at national convention.



Registration Form

UPMA 2021 Legislative Summit

Feb. 21-24

Hyatt Regency Crystal City

You also may register online at [www.unitedpma.org](http://www.unitedpma.org)

Please note: one attendee per registration form.

Name (or it should appear on your badge):

First Name

Last Name

Title (please check one that applies):

- ☐ Supervisor   ☐ Manager   ☐ EAS Professional   ☐ PAFR   ☐ Postmaster   ☐ UPMA Retired   ☐ Associate Member   ☐ Guest

Post Office You Represent:

City

State

Name of your congressman or congresswoman (not senator):

Your Mailing Address:

City

State

ZIP

Daytime phone:

Email:

Registration Fee: (please circle fee that applies)

- On or before Jan. 15, 2021   \$40  
After Jan. 15, 2021   \$60

Registration

Hotel Information

Reserve rooms at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City, 2799 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA 22202, 1-800-233-1234. Use group code PST1 when making your reservation. The room rate of \$174 will be booked until Jan. 15, 2021, or until the room block is sold out, whichever comes first.

All reservations must be accompanied by the first night's room deposit. After Jan. 15, all first-night room deposits will be non-refundable. You may hold all three rooms in one name or individually.

Payment (Payment in full, using one of the following payment options, must accompany this form; payment is non-refundable):

- ☐ Check payable to UPMA  
☐ Visa/MasterCard only

Card Number

Expiration Date / Card Security Code

Signature

Please mail completed forms, with payment in full, to:

UPMA Legislative Summit Registration  
8 Herbert St.  
Alexandria, VA 22305-2600



Kalahari Resort Sandusky, Ohio



5th UPMA National Convention

Aug. 14-20, 2021

Official Registration Form

Registration also available at [www.unitedpma.org](http://www.unitedpma.org)

Please complete one form per registrant. Photocopy the form for additional registrations.

First Name:

Last Name:

First Name (for your badge):

Post Office You Represent:

City:

State:

Your Mailing Address:

City:

State:

ZIP+4

Call Phone:

E-mail:

- ☐ Postmaster/DC  
☐ Supervisor  
☐ Manager  
☐ EAS Professional  
☐ Associate  
☐ UPMA Retired  
☐ Spouse  
☐ Guest

- Active First-Timer?  
☐ Yes ☐ No  
UPMA Retired First-Timer?  
☐ Yes ☐ No

Convention Registration (only one person per form):

Please circle the appropriate fee:

8/15/20-2/28/21

3/1/21-6/15/21

After 6/15/21

Postmaster/Manager/Supervisor/Associate/DC/EAS Professional \$195 \$245 \$270

Daily registration is available at \$65/day until June 15; \$75/day after that date. Check all that apply.

- ☐ Sat ☐ Sun ☐ Mon ☐ Wed ☐ Thurs

First-Timer\*—Active and Retired \$95 \$95 \$95

UPMA Retired or Guest\* \$171.25 \$208.75 \$227.50

(UPMA Retired Luncheon included)

Auxiliary/Spouse/Postmaster/Guest \$142.50 \$180 198.75

(Does NOT include UPMA Retired Luncheon)

Children (17 and under) \$80; includes child's meal at the Grand Banquet.

\*First-timers must pay their registration fee in advance using this form; online registration not available. After attending the convention, they must submit a form to the National Office to be reimbursed.

UPMA Retired member may have one guest (not an active member) register for the same price.

Grand Banquet: Aug. 19, 2021

Payment Information

Convention Fee:

\$

Additional tickets for UPMA Retired Luncheon @ \$75 each

\$

☐ Check payable to UPMA

Total Payment: \$

☐ Visa/MasterCard

Card number

Card security code:

Expiration date:

(3 or 4 digit code imprinted on card)

Signature:

Mail with full payment to UPMA National Convention Registration, 8 Herbert St., Alexandria, VA 22305-2600.

Hotel Reservation

UPMA has a special rate at the convention hotel beginning Sept. 15, 2020. You must call the hotel directly to make a reservation. The National Office will not handle room reservations. To make a reservation, you must make a deposit to the hotel in the amount of your first night's lodging; this deposit is non-refundable after July 8, 2021. All room cancellations must be made directly with the hotel. To secure the special UPMA rate, you must identify yourself as part of the UPMA convention. The rate is available only until July 8, 2021, or all rooms in the block are sold, whichever comes first. The group rate is available five days pre- and post-convention based on availability.

Kalahari Resorts & Conventions  
1-877-525-2427  
\$164—single/double/triple/quadruple  
Be sure to request the UPMA group rate.

Registration Cancellation Refund Policy

Requests for cancellation refunds must be made in writing to the UPMA National Office. Requests must be postmarked by June 1, 2021; no refunds after that date. All refunds are subject to a \$30 handling fee.

Registrations are non-transferable.

Questions?

Call 703-683-9027