

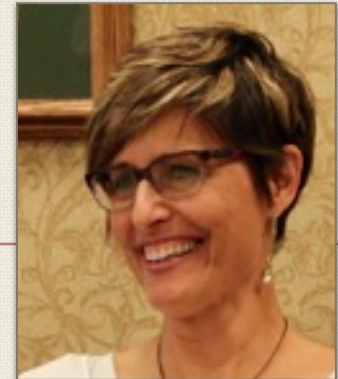


# TREASURE STATE POSTMASTER



## New Board ready for UPMA

Getting ready to merge with the National League of Postmasters to become United Postmasters and Managers on 1 November, 2016



## UNLOCK YOUR STRENGTH

Clarajeon Merrill  
President NAPUS Montana, Postmaster, Hobson, MT

**BREAKING NEWS.....JUST CONFIRMED!!!!** Now that I have your attention, I am happy to report some important news! The final NAPUS Montana chapter State Convention will be held in Lewistown, Montana June 9-11. Please save those dates and plan on attending for a fun and educational packed weekend. We are planning some great activities. Please watch for upcoming information as we finalize our plans. Enclosed is the Registration form. Please submit it as soon as possible so we can be sure how many are planning to attend.

I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season. Winter is officially here. Stay safe, warm and dry. The Christmas rush is over and we are left to pick up the pieces ... lost packages, returns, damaged goods, etc. But never mind about that, one of the most important topics this year is of course the merging of League and NAPUS organizations to form UPMA (United Postmasters and Managers of America) on November 1, 2016. Members from both organizations feel this merge is in the best interest of all postmasters and managers. Our leaders both in League and NAPUS have worked hard for us in the PostPlan years. Now is the time for us to step up and become involved as this new organization is being formed. We need to join together and give of our time and talents to make this new organization work. The title of this article is "Unlock Your Strength" for this very reason. Every day, everywhere we do incredible things! Too often we feel uncertain, apologize too much, try too hard to be liked. Now is the time to give yourself a confidence makeover. You are amazing! It's time to let it show.

The quickest way to confidence is telling yourself, I can do this. Sure, it sounds cheesy, but repeating positive phrases can give you the upper hand in stressful situations, according to a recent study published in the Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin. It works because "you're distracting yourself from negative thoughts that usually mess with your confidence," says lead researcher Sonia Kang, PH.D.

How does this apply to us as postmasters and managers? We all face stressful situations every day. It could

continues on page 2

## IRIS KILL EAGLE



**Whew!** This last Holiday season was fast and furious and I find myself still trying to take a deep breath as we are busy with the end of the year mailings coming through. The past year has found us dealing with more changes and challenges but we have met them head on with the help of our dedicated clerks. With this being said I have found through helping facilitate some of the Deliver The Brand trainings that there are some Postmasters and Clerks who need to maybe have more training, through no fault of their own. With the rash of retirements and new hires to fill vacated positions there has been some that have fallen through the cracks. That is why it is more important than ever to become part of our Organization to ensure that you have access to further training. Attending our meetings also allows for opportunities to meet valuable contacts that are near to your office and available for you to call for information or help. This next year will be exciting with The League of Postmasters and NAPUS joining forces to become one. We still work for a wonderful Organization and I hope all take advantage of veteran Postmasters to help you become and remain successful in your career. The Dakotas District has been doing pretty good with all their scanning which shows that we still have pride in the integrity of our work. I encourage all Postmasters to become more involved and have a voice as we begin the new year with new challenges that we may face. I wish you all the best and look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Montana NAPUS 1st Vice President, Postmaster, Malta, MT

## KAE MCCLOY

Happy New year to all. As time races by, let's take time to reflect on some aspects of our life/ organization which I can see are important from my perspective as Past President of Montana NAPUS.

The purpose of NAPUS, the League of Postmasters and UPMA (our future combined organization) is to assist, mentor and guide all postmasters, managers and supervisors - and anyone aspiring to these positions - toward achieving their professional goals. With all the new people in the field, paperwork like 1412s, 1260s, etc. etc. can be overwhelming. Not everyone knows who to turn to for answers and not all are receptive to receiving questions.

Someone recently said "The only thing you take with you to your grave is integrity". Another reflection was mentioned at my good friend and fellow Cattleman's Association member's funeral about how he lived with a "Want-To Attitude." He did things because he wanted to do the right thing, not because he had to. Integrity and a Want-To Attitude: what a pair to guide our lives, personal and professional.

As we encounter questions from customers, either angry or just wondering, and questions from our staff or our neighboring Postmasters/PSEs/PMRs/PTFs/RCAs/CDS, we can either show integrity and a want-to attitude or an unhappy, dissatisfied-with-the-union-and-management attitude. The same goes for how we answer questions about League and NAPUS combining. UPMA is coming in November, and I choose a Want-To attitude about it: I want this opportunity to make UPMA a great resource that will make the Postal Service a great place to work, offering a great service to the public.

Some of the reports about working conditions from the field are shocking. I understand and sympathize with some of the sore spots; the Postal Service can do better, with the help of a united voice from postmasters, supervisors and managers.

However, if we do not lead by example - with integrity and a Want-To attitude, nothing can improve. One positive accomplishment that should be noted is the PTPO Postmasters just got a raise to \$15.63 an hour. That is almost \$3.00 an hour more for some. Now we can choose to berate the fact the raise was so late coming or we can be thankful it came on Jan. 9, 2016, and then move on to the next thing that needs improvement. Our leaders at NAPUS and League help with such negotiations. Therefore, let's give thanks for them, encourage everyone to join, provide Form 1187 to our neighboring offices and look to a highly productive/successful 2016. Your attitude is everything. Your integrity is your legacy.

Montana NAPUS Past President, Postmaster, Worden, MT.



Merrill, continued from page 1

It could be a missed scan, a clerk that has called in sick with no one to cover for them causing you to go over the limit on your hours, and the list goes on. How we handle those situations can be the measure of our success and the building of our confidence. The new year is upon us and change is coming, lets embrace it, challenge it, learn more from it and go into this new organization with more confidence. We can do it!!! Remember you are amazing and you do amazing things every day!

Please register for the State Convention in June and let's make some great memories!

# Uff-da! Its UPMA!

JASMINE KROTKOV

PM RETIRED, NEIHART, MT  
EDITOR EMERITUS



Whoever decided on the new name United Postmasters and Managers of America, with its acronym UPMA obviously doesn't have Norwegian heritage. If they did, they'd know that Uff-da is what you say when you stub your toe in Norway. Now every time a postmaster or postal manager decides to assist

one another in matters connected with their employment in the USPS, they'll sound like they just stubbed their toes. Or like the toast landed peanut-butter-side down. It just isn't the sort of connotation one wants to have with such a powerful, effective and positive endeavor. It could be worse, though: we could be called Postmasters, Managers, Supervisors.

Article 3 of UPMA states our purpose:

*The purposes for which the corporation is organized as an independent, non-partisan professional membership association shall be to: provide a vehicle through which members may assist one another in matters connected with their employment in the United States Postal Service; to foster a favorable image of public service; to assure the users of the mails the best service possible; improve the conditions under which individual members work, having concern for salaries, hours of employment, working environment, and related issues; to cooperate with other groups and levels of postal management in the achievement of common goals.*

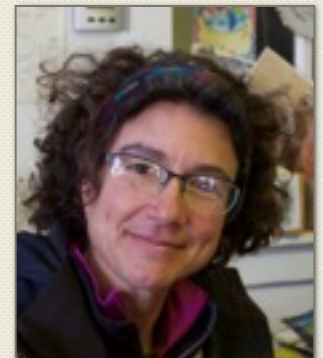
You may notice that our mandate will be changing. The new one includes "having concern for salaries, hours of employment, working environment and related issues...", which makes us sound a lot more like a labor union than we used to. The purpose of NAPUS, however, had our happiness at stake:

*"The primary purposes of this organization shall be as follows: to promote the best interests of the U.S. Postal Service and NAPUS members; to foster a favorable image of public service; to assure the users of the mails the best service possible; to cooperate with other groups and levels of postal management in the achievement of common goals; and to cultivate the welfare and enhance the happiness of its members. 2005"*

It's hard to say whether having happiness as a goal is better than having a good salary. From my vantage point as an early retiree whose annuity is small enough to require an electron tunneling microscope to find it, but whose life has become infinitely happier, I'll choose happiness over a salary, but that's me. And it used to be that a job in postal management would, without question, be well-paid, but that isn't the case anymore. You can now get \$20 per hour to scrub toilets, but only \$15.63 to manage a post office. UPMA has its work cut out for it.

Negotiating salaries is infinitely harder for a professional association whose goals don't include bargaining the employing agency to its knees. Labor unions are often criticized for using strong-arm tactics which can cripple the employer. Professional associations, on the other hand, can be criticized for being unruly blowhards over-indulging at fatuous conventions. Both types of organizations start off with the best intentions: providing a counterbalance to the urge corporations can have to put profit above all else, even those things like employee happiness, which will enable the company to succeed over time.

How lucky that we are here at the beginning of UPMA, when we can shape it into anything we want it to be! Those of us who used to curse the darkness of both NAPUS and League, will now have no choice but to light a candle. We can be strong-armers or blowhards or judicious negotiators as we please. All you have to do is show up.



# National Level News

## CURT ARTERY, AREA 1 VICE PRESIDENT

Are you ready for the downgrades coming in 2016? Why not? It isn't as though NAPUS, through the mighty depth and breadth of knowledge contained in our own Curt Artery (well, actually he belongs to Wyoming, but he is a good enough neighbor to us for us to claim him....) hasn't prepared you for these downgrades. It isn't like Curt hasn't been coming to our conventions in Montana, year after year, showing us and postal executives how to read, understand, and correct the information in your DUO, SOV and CSV reports, and forestall unnecessary depletion of service to our customers. Had you been paying attention, you would have run your reports, found the anomalies, reported them and had them corrected, and taken any other action you could to keep your office from being downgraded. Had you been on top of it. Sigh. But wait! There's still time!

Our own Curt Artery is once again our Area Vice President! He was Area 20 VP before Don Knight, and has been instrumental in getting the USPS to adhere to its own convoluted rules governing SOV, CSV and DUO. His knowledge on those topics draws not just Postmasters, but other postal managers to attend NAPUS conventions, to learn from him. We're very lucky to have him, so don't let another minute go by without using his expertise to protect your post office.

In his new term as Area 1 VP, Curt plans to focus on finding relief for exempt Postmasters who are required to work an inhuman number of hours, and on pushing for more training programs for Postmasters. These are things you want, and Curt has proven that he will work for you, but he can't help you without your participation. Get busy and call a Montana NAPUS board member to get started, so that you can leverage the invaluable resource you have in Curt's advocacy for you at the national level.



**Curt Artery**  
**Postmaster, Guernsey WY 82214**  
**409 Ferguson Road**  
**Wheatland WY 82201**  
**Work: 307-836-2804**  
**Cell: 307-331-0919**  
**kartery409@hotmail.com**

### COME TO THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE!

**When?** March 12-16

**Where:** Marriott Crystal Gateway Hotel  
1700 Jefferson Davis Highway  
Arlington VA 22202  
703-271-5119 703-920.3230

Room Rate: \$234 (1-4 in a room)

**MAKING RESERVATIONS**

A dedicated website is now available for you to book your hotel rooms online. find it at the [napus.org](http://napus.org) website, under the "conventions and conferences" tab  
Register for the conference on the same page.

#### **What you get to do:**

Network with people like Curt, and the National NAPUS board.

Visit Senators Tester and Daines, and Representative Zinke  
Learn how to improve your job, service to your customers and relations with your employees.

Take Selfies at the Capitol... but be careful....



...from a Russian pamphlet on how NOT to take selfies....

# NAPUS Member Specials



## *Let your equity open up a world of possibilities*

We all have different ideas about what you can do with a home equity loan. The most obvious is home improvements, but did you know you can also use it to consolidate debt, pay for education, plan a dream wedding, take a trip of a lifetime, and many other things. A home equity loan or line of credit allows you to borrow money using your home's equity as collateral. But what exactly does that mean?

**Equity** is the difference between how much your home's worth and how much you owe on the mortgage. For example, if your home is valued at \$300,000 and you owe \$225,000 (with no additional loans against the house) you would have \$75,000 in equity. As the value of your home and your mortgage balance changes, your equity changes as well.

**Collateral** is property you pledge as a guarantee that you'll repay a debt. Cars and homes are the two most commonly used forms of collateral. Keep in mind that if you don't repay the loan, the lender can take your collateral and sell it to recover the funds owed.

**A home equity loan** is typically a second mortgage that allows you to use your available equity for any reason. There are two types of home equity loans: closed-end and home equity lines of credit (HELOCs). Both are secured by your property in the same way as your original mortgage.

When you tap into the value of your home by obtaining a home equity loan or line of credit, you open up a whole world of possibilities without having to make a major dent in your budget or hard-earned savings and we can help you get there. With our great rates and quick and easy application process, you will be making your equity work for you in no time. **Plus, when you get a home equity loan you will also receive a Home Depot gift card. Don't miss your chance; the home equity promotion is only available through March 31, 2016.**

Contact us at (800) 336.0284 for details about our home equity promotion or visit [SignatureFCU.org](http://SignatureFCU.org) for additional information or to apply. No matter which loan option you choose, the possibilities are endless.

## Auto and Home Insurance

NAPUS members qualify for a special group discount\* on auto, home and renters insurance through Group Savings Plus® from Liberty Mutual. With Group Savings Plus, you can enjoy the ease and convenience of paying your premiums through checking account deductions with no down payment or finance charges or receive your bill directly at home. You'll also enjoy fast, easy, round-the-clock claims service and a variety of discounts including multi-car, multi-policy, safe-driver, passive restraints and anti-theft device discounts\*.

See for yourself how much money you could save with Liberty Mutual compared to your current insurance provider. For a free, no-obligation rate quote, call 1-800-524-9400. Or request a free quote on-line! Please mention client #112734 when you call.

## NAPUS Supplemental Insurance Plans

**Term Life**—Up to \$300,000 in coverage for both the NAPUS member and spouse.

**Supplemental Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)**—Additional accident, hospitalization, surgery benefits. Pays even if a member's Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) deductible has not been satisfied.

**Disability Income**—Provides monthly income up to age 65 (Civil Service Retirement System) or age 62 (Federal Employees Retirement System) if a member is totally disabled and cannot work.

**Dental**—Available in all 50 states. Members may go to any dentist.

**Accidental Death and Dismemberment**—Up to \$250,000 in coverage for accidents at home, on the job, while on vacation—anywhere.

Supplemental policies are available to NAPUS members through Mass Benefits Consultants. More information about these programs, designed for NAPUS members and their families, is available from Mass Benefits.  
1-800-221-3083

# Volunteering: Just Say No? How Can I?

JANICE ERFLE, POSTMASTER RETIRED, RAPPLEJE, MT

There are so many rewarding moments when I volunteer to help a Postmaster in trouble. Lately, I listened for three hours to a Postmaster who can't tell his wife about his work situation except that he is getting a paycheck. Another Postmaster is thankful to be back to work and needs to talk to me because she can't talk to her family or friends about her work situation.



Postmasters wanting to retire call and email for help filling out the "BLUE" Book. About 160 pages of written information with forms included. Take out the pages that you need to fill out and mail them to HRSSC. I have read the "BLUE" Book cover to cover. If we don't chat about anything other than the forms we are filling out, we can do it in under an hour and only have about 12 pages to send in. I do this through FedHub.

Then there is NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees). I am Billings Chapter President and Editor, Federation Legislative Chair and Membership Chair. The membership expects me to keep on top of all that is going on that affects our Federal Benefits and sign up new members wherever I go. The Federation Convention will be in Billings May 10-12, 2016. Guess who is Convention Chair?

Then there is NAPUS. I am the President of the Retirees. Retirees help with State Convention. As if the plate is not full enough, I volunteered to do Individual Income Tax for AARP as a TAXAIDE from February 1 - April 14. Training was 5 days to update the Federal and State laws, computer skills, and get reacquainted with the other Tax Counselors.

I will be retired 10 years on February 3. I don't have time to get depressed. My 6 grandchildren who live in Loring and Whitewater keep me interested in LIFE, Volleyball, Basketball and Track. My twin grandsons in California keep me on my toes in the electronics arena.

**RETIRES: GET OUT THERE AND DO SOMETHING. VOLUNTEER!** Read to kids, volunteer at the local hospital, Want to get back in a rut? Get a job! But, get one that is fun. Then it will not seem like WORK!

## DATES TO REMEMBER

1. LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE  
WASHINGTON DC MARCH  
12-16
2. MONTANA NAPUS STATE  
CONVENTION, (LAST ONE!)  
LEWISTOWN, 9-11 JUNE
3. JOINT LEAGUE/NAPUS/  
UPMA NATIONAL  
CONVENTION, NEW  
ORLEANS, LA AUG 27-SEP 1

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# REGISTRATION MONTANA NAPUS CONVENTION 2016

CALVERT HOTEL, LEWISTOWN, MT

JUNE 9-11 2016

216 7th Avenue South ~(406) 535-5411 ~ (877) 371-5411

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Office: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone : \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Is this your first Montana NAPUS convention?   Y   N

Fees: Indicate all that apply

Montana NAPUS Member \_\_\_\_\_ (no fee) Guest \_\_\_\_\_ (\$20) Guest's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Montana NAPUS Retiree/PMR/OIC/Associate member \_\_\_\_\_ (no fee)

Guest \_\_\_\_\_ (\$20) Guest's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Registration fee includes refreshments during convention and banquet. Retiree and PAC-sponsored lunches are a low-cost way for you to have lunch and support NAPUS!

Please bring a door prize, and/or an foot-or-a-pound gift to be auctioned in support of PAC. Thank you.

TOTAL REGISTRATION FEES ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Register before May 1st and be entered to win one of two \$100 grand prizes!

Prizes also given: \$75 to the Postmaster who travels the farthest to get here.

\$75 to the Postmaster with the most career years of service.

\$75 to the Postmaster with the fewest career years of service

**MORE DETAILS ABOUT THE  
CONVENTION WILL BE IN THE  
NEXT ISSUE OF THE TSPM, DUE  
IN YOUR MAILBOXES IN APRIL!**

## MAIL REGISTRATION TO:

Janice Erfle  
12 Willow Bend DR  
Billings, MT 59102-7319



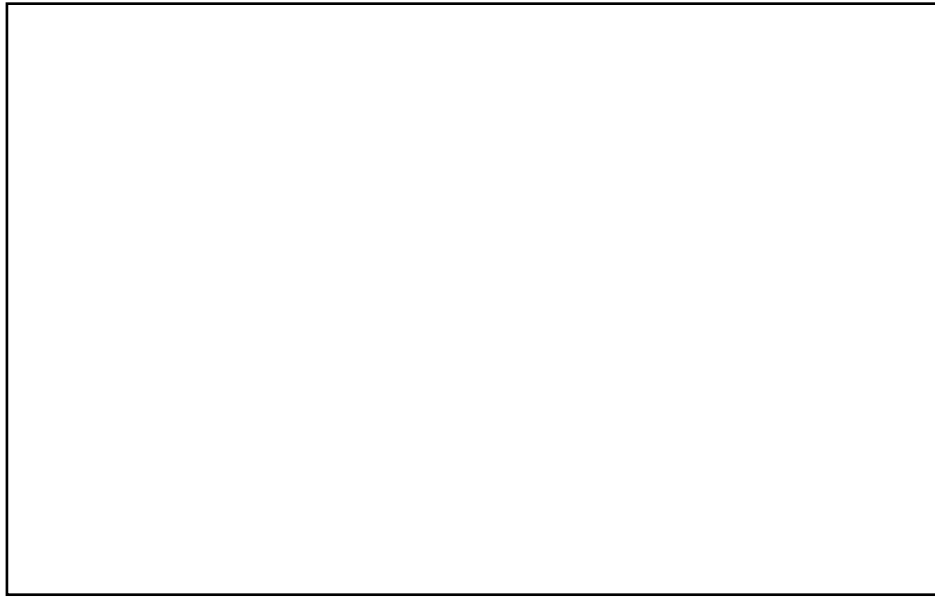
But you ARE coming to this historic Montana NAPUS convention, so just register now! We can't WAIT to see you!!!

**LOOK AT ALL THOSE WINNERS! ONE OF  
THEM IS BOUND TO BE YOU!!!**



**NAPUS**  
*Postmasters—Proudly Serving America*

MONTANA NAPUS CHAPTER I  
PO BOX I  
NEIHART, MT 59465



# NAPUS PAC for Postmasters

## Member Voluntary Contribution

Thank you for returning this form with your contribution.

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**I'll do my share!** Enclosed is: \_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_ \$200 Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please PRINT)

\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_  
Social Security Number

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address/PO Box

\_\_\_\_\_  
City

\_\_\_\_\_  
State

\_\_\_\_\_  
ZIP Code

My contribution is by (check one):  Check  Money Order  NAPUS FCU Visa Credit Card

Please charge my contribution to the following 16-digit NAPUS FCU Visa Account Number:

\_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (required for credit card charges)

Office use: \_\_\_ Pin Received \_\_\_ Active Postmaster \_\_\_ Retired \_\_\_ Associate State to credit \_\_\_

PAC for Postmasters will neither favor nor disadvantage anyone based on the amount of a contribution or the failure to make a voluntary contribution to this non-partisan political action fund.