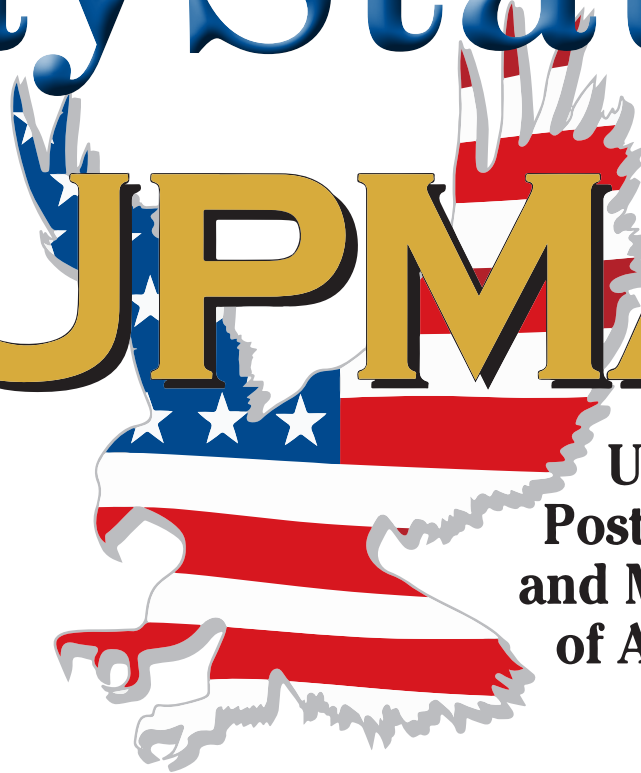
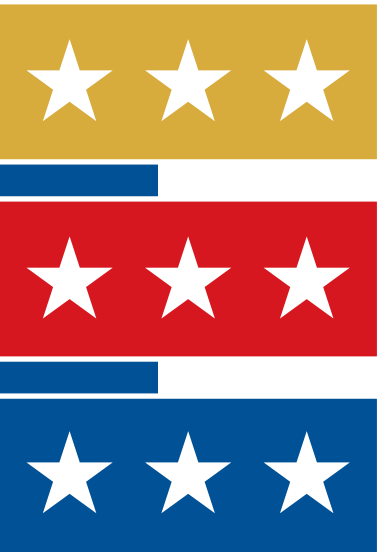


The Massachusetts

BayStater

UPMA

United
Postmasters
and Managers
of America



OCTOBER 2023

President's Perspective

Greetings Fellow Postmaster and Managers,

Well, I just returned from our National Convention in Denver, and all I can say is, what a great time! Beyond the magic of Denver and the Rocky Mountains, we had 38 members (active and retired) of the Massachusetts Chapter attend. Our chapter was recognized for having the most first timers in attendance with 10 making their first trip to a National Convention! It was an informative week where we heard from PMG Louis Dejoy, Deputy PMG Doug Tulino, and CRDO Dr. Joshua Colin. Each gave a presentation on current and future plans for the Postal Service. Notably, PMG Dejoy spoke about the SDC, LDC, and RPDC projects underway across the country. The transformation of the Postal Service is happening right before our eyes. With that said, PMG Dejoy expressed to all in attendance that no Postmaster will lose their job as a result of these new facilities being implemented. Jobs may look different as time goes on, but no one will live in fear of losing their job. In addition, take what you hear with a grain of salt. The rumor mill is rampant about what will happen in the future in regard to new SDC's and other facilities being created. Bottom line is, no one knows for sure until notifications are sent out informing us that we will be impacted in some way. What you read on certain sites will be there today and most likely change tomorrow. If and when this happens, reach out to your RVP or another member of the MA Chapter Executive Board for any clarification you need. We are here to help guide the membership through these challenging times. For more information on the future plans, refer to the PMG Delivering for America Plan on the blue page. Details on these new facilities and how they are being implemented can be found there.

As a long-standing member of our

great organization (19 years), it is still hard for me to believe this was my first National Convention. It was such an uplifting experience to be in a room with almost five hundred active members and another four hundred retirees. Hearing the tales from other parts of the country and how similar they are to the challenges we face daily reminded me just how important being an active member of UPMA is. I have said before, there is strength in numbers. Expand your network and become more involved! Be on the lookout for an invitation to an upcoming Chapter meeting and make it a point to attend. We are working hard to reestablish quarterly meetings that will hold value and make it worth your time to attend. If you are a regular at our meetings, make sure to invite a fellow Postmaster or Manager to the next one. By the time you read this, each Chapter will have had a recent meeting. In fact, I just attended a great meeting in Central MA earlier this week. It was so good to see over 40 people in attendance and feel the positive energy. The meeting had one of the POOM's and the Acting Postmaster of Boston as guest speakers followed by an in-depth training on CSV. The meeting concluded with a quick business session and more guest speakers. We've received a lot of great feedback on this particular meeting and the future is bright! I hope to have seen you at your own chapter meetings, but if not, let's make sure we see you at a future one!

One thing that I have noticed lately is the uptick in the number of Postmasters and Managers across the state being called in for an Investigative Interview. More concerning is the number of members that choose to go to these meetings alone. Please remember that you are entitled to representation when called into a meeting with your POOM, Postmaster, Manager, and most importantly, the OIG/Inspection Service. Always ask the question



Rob Leary
President
Massachusetts
Chapter

“Am I the subject of an investigation?” If so, you should immediately ask for representation. More often than not, the interviewer will know of this benefit and ask you if you want a representative. Unfortunately, many who know this rule may not extend this courtesy and not give you this reminder. This puts the member in the uncomfortable position of answering questions without the benefit of a trained Chapter Member Rep. Always ask for a Rep! To expand on this, it’s also even more concerning as to the nature of some of the Investigative Interviews we’ve seen. Financial integrity, harassment, behavior unbecoming of a Postal Manager, reporting integrity, and the list goes on. Remember, you are the leader of your operation/office. Lead by example and treat others the way you would want to be treated. Handle your challenges in a positive and professional way, and don’t let anyone question your integrity. When things get to a point that you can’t take anymore, reach out to a friend/peer that you can vent to and

lean on. Don’t make decisions that will impact your own career in a negative way. By building your network through UPMA, you’ll see there is always someone with the answer to what troubles you!

In closing, it is hard to believe that Peak Season is upon us once again. As with every year, this will mean a challenging few months for all. Keep your integrity in check and take care of yourselves. We make many, some may say too many, sacrifices for our jobs but this should never compromise our own health and happiness. Do your job to the best of your ability and never be afraid to ask for help. Get out and enjoy the fall weather and reset a bit to prepare for the upcoming Peak Season.

Respectfully,
Rob Leary
MA Chapter President

Happy Fall Everyone!

Happy Fall Everyone! I was unable to go to the National Convention in Denver as I was moving my daughter into her freshman year at Merrimac College. It certainly looked and sounded like a great time from the pictures and stories I have heard.

We are heading into the busiest time of year in the Post Office and most of us are short staffed in all functions, making it nearly impossible to meet the day-to-day expectations of the position. You are not alone, and never be afraid to reach out for help. We are not miracle workers (although some days it certainly feels like we are) and can only do what we can do with the resources available.

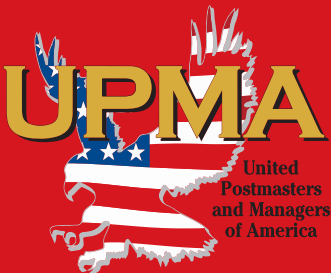
I want to briefly touch on the submitting of vouchers and documentation. Vouchers need to be filled out when being sent in, this includes your contact information on the top left of the page. If I do not have this and there is a question with what you have submitted, I then must figure out who to contact that may have your phone number which slows down processing the paperwork and issuing the check. Expenses will not be reimbursed without a receipt or proof of payment. This is not optional as I must file all paperwork and be ready for an audit. I am only allowed to reimburse according to fiscal policy. If anyone would like a copy, please feel free to reach out to me and I will send one out. Hard copies of documents must be submitted, if you send them via email the originals must be mailed as well. Lastly the vouchers need to go to my home address, which is on the top right of the form, do not send them to the Haverhill Post Office.

The Legislative Summit will be held March 17-20, 2024, in Washington, DC. It is not too early to start thinking about attending. More information will be available soon.

Respectfully,
Kim Donahue
Secretary/ Treasurer



Kim Donahue
Secretary/ Treasurer



Retired Members' Corner

The retiree meeting began with a presentation regarding the Postal Service Health Benefit Plan (PSHBP) and Medicare, in particular Medicare Part B. Members will be receiving postcards in Jan, March, May and Aug 2024 with additional information. You can receive information and updates by signing up for text messaging notifications by texting "PSHBP" to 39369. This information is extremely important for any retiree that did not sign up for Medicare B when they reached age 65. There will be a special enrollment period (SEP) for Medicare Part B starting on April 1, 2024, when you will not need to pay the late enrollment penalty so watch for those mailings and sign up for the texts.

Sunday was a presentation of the proposed bylaws to be voted on by paper ballot on Monday. There were 7 proposed changes published ahead of the convention for review by the members. During the discussion of each proposed change, I made an amendment to proposed change #2, which was passed. After completing review these 7 proposals, it was announced that there were 5 more proposed changes, 3 of which had not been submitted with time

allowing for publication and 2 which were submitted that very morning. Due to the lack of information surrounding these proposed changes, members were unclear of the context of the proposals, and it did not allow the states to caucus and discuss them to make informed decisions. Fortunately, passed bylaw change #5 will eliminate this from happening in the future as the change states proposed bylaw changes must be submitted 90 days prior to the national convention.

Charlie Peters the current UPMA VP Retired was elected to the position of UPMA Retired President and Kathy Frame was elected to the position of UPMA Retired Vice President.

Retiree dues will increase by 5% starting in January 2024. Under the national office active bylaws, the retiree dues will increase by the same CSRS COLA percentage. In January 2023, CSRS annuitants received an 8.7% COLA. We can thank National President Retired Mandy Heslep Whitten for negotiating the reduced increase with the national office. The active members will not receive dues increase.

Remember: The national



Donna Legro
Parliamentarian
Postmaster Retired

UPMA Retired Executive Board is continuing its \$25 incentive when a member signs any retiree or associate until December 2023 and the MA UPMA Executive Board is continuing its incentive as follows: active member \$50, retired member \$25, and associate member \$10. They have not announced if this will continue into 2024.

Updated bylaws for national active and retired members are available on the national website of unitedpma.org.

Donna Legro
MA President Retired

Membership Matters

Don't forget the MA cash \$\$ incentive for signing new members is still going on! Each time you sign a new member and are listed as the Sponsor/Person who influenced their decision to join UPMA on the 1187 or 1187R you will receive a cash award as follows:

**\$50 for each new active MA EAS member • \$25.00 for each new MA Retired member
\$10.00 for each new MA Associate member**

Be sure to let potential new members know UPMA approved offering new EAS members who join from now through December 31, 2023, one free year of membership. Dues withholding will start once they reach their 1-year anniversary with UPMA. The 1187 and 1187R are in this issue of the BayStater.

Remember, the true winner of any membership contest is the NEW MEMBER! In my opinion, MA members especially gain an extraordinary network of support. Share that benefit and encourage nonmembers to join today.

As always, stay active, stay positive and attend your area regional meetings!

Happy recruiting MA Chapter Executive Board

Strangulation by Disintegration Teams

Hello UPMA members far and wide. We truly have a lot of work to complete with how we get treated at every level of the organization. How are you getting treated by your employees and manager? How are your processes and directives being carried out? Are you being respected by those above you and below you? The more we think about the events that happen to us during a normal workday the more we realize how important it is to understand that we are only 1 Postmaster, Manager, Supervisor or EAS professional. Together we are one organization that brings all of us collectively together to network, vent about the flavors of the month, and support one another from one crisis to another.

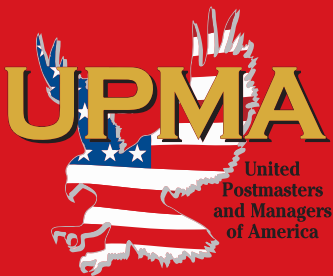
We only have so much we can complete within a given day. A lot of times I personally feel guilty for leaving work after my 8 hours. My wife, supervisors, and craft employees continually tell me to leave work after my 8. Taking their advice is difficult and a work in progress. A lot of times I want to stay to the very end but we all must realize that we need a work-life balance. Like most of us, I have a family that I care and love very much. Most of us have an 8:00-5:00 Form 50 position with Sat/Sun NS days however our operations span much longer than that. Many of us spend tireless hours outside the hours we get paid because of our commitment to the service, customers, and employees we work with.

Many of us feel burned out after a long week, day, or month. I know I have had a challenging August in Waltham delivering mail with nearly half of my 50 routes open... Triangulated Non-Deliveries micromanaged strangulation by data sent by those who truly do not understand the word "Gemba". Gemba = go where the work is at...it is such a silly joke to be audited by those who will not stick around to help fix your deficiencies. It is not those who conduct the GEMBA's, it is those at the very top mandating those GEMBA be completed by making a "quota". You cannot dig a hole without a shovel, without the shovel you are forced to use your hands that will indeed crumble this organization. I understand we must adapt to a changing marketplace, but to change many of our processes without training all of us in these new processes, like the Change of Address, can cause more problems. I have spoken to multiple UPMA members in the state from district, field, and headquarters support staff who are at a loss for the changes constantly happening without a chance to understand these new changes. How about a firm customer of yours wanting to pay for their caller service with a check at the retail window? Most of us for years were able to do this yet we now cannot complete this without the customer creating an EPS account. How frustrating is it that many of our leadership are not privy to this process?

Are you excited about the next Zoom you are going on or are you looking for a tie to put on when you get back from delivering to attend the meeting? The organization we love and are loyal to the end has become so top heavy by the weight and lack of understanding of our policies, culture, and treatment of one another. Let's remember that a good doctor received his doctorate from an uncredited educational institution. I hope that speaks for itself.

On a positive note, I have had the opportunity to attend a CRDO Supervisor Symposium in Nashville as well as the National UPMA convention in Denver, CO. I truly appreciated these opportunities to see the leaders in our organization explain to members in the field why they are implementing certain changes. I believe in the work we do at UPMA, and I believe we have a level of comradery that we must have to get by in the day-to-day grind. I cannot count on my hands how many occasions a UPMA member has been there for me in my time and need. I appreciate the commitment by our state President Rob Leary to bring members together to start growing the organization after many years of downward trends with our active membership. I am committed to growing our organization the right way by putting our members first! Lean on one another and allow others to have your back when you get in a bind. We are stronger together!

Ryan DiEoreo
Membership Chair





Form 1187

Request and Authorization for Voluntary Allotment
of Compensation for Payment of Employee Organization Dues
*Fill Out Form On-line, Print it out, and Return to
UPMA National Office at the Address Below for Processing*

Section A: All New Members Complete

USPS Employee Identification Number (EIN)	Social Security Number	Date of Birth	Gender Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Name (PRINT Last Name, First, MI)		Contact Telephone	
Home Address (Street and Number/Box)	City	State	ZIP+4
Personal E-mail Address			

Section B (Check One): **Postmaster** **Manager/Supervisor** **Associate** **PMR**

Position	PO/City/State/ZIP
Post Office/Work Telephone Number	Pay Schedule Level
Post Office/Home Payroll Office Finance Number	Designation Code

Section C: For Use by the Employee Organization

P

Mail completed form to: **United Postmasters and Managers of America (UPMA)**
8 Herbert Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22305-2600

Visit the UPMA website unitedpma.org for membership benefit information.

Section D: Authorization by Employee

I hereby authorize the above-named agency to deduct from my pay each pay period the amount certified above as the regular dues the (UN-P) United Postmasters and Managers of America (UPMA) and to remit such amounts to that employee organization in accordance with its arrangements with my employing agency. I further authorize any change in the amount to be deducted that is certified by the above-named employee organization as a uniform change in its dues structure.

I understand that this authorization is a pay periods deduction. It will become effective the first pay period, following its receipt in the employee organization's headquarters office: UPMA, 8 Herbert Street, Alexandria, VA 22305-2600.

I further understand that revocation forms Standard Form No. 1188, "Revocation of Voluntary Authorization for Allotment of Compensation for Payment of Employee Organization Dues" are available from my employing agency and that I may revoke this authorization at any time by filling such a revocation form or other written revocation request by "Certified Mail" directly to the employee organization's headquarters office: UPMA, 8 Herbert Street, Alexandria, VA 22305-2600. Such revocation will not be effective, however, until the first full pay period following March 1 or Sept. 1 of any calendar year, whichever date first occurs after the revocation is received in the employee organization's headquarters office.

Signature of Employee	Date
-----------------------	------

Section E

Check this box to signify you've read and understood the terms in Section D of this form.

Who/what most influenced your decision to join UPMA?

Person's Name _____

Career Awareness Conference USPS Provided Training Other _____



FORM 1187-R

Request and Authorization for Voluntary Allotment of Compensation for Payment of Employee Organization Dues

Please complete and mail to:

UPMA National Office
8 Herbert St.
Alexandria, VA 22305-2600
(703) 683-9027

*OPM assigns the CSA number to all Civil Service and FERS annuitants and/or surviving spouse

Social Security Number

My Annuity Number is:

			-			-			
--	--	--	---	--	--	---	--	--	--

CSA

		-							-	
--	--	---	--	--	--	--	--	--	---	--

Name of Retired Employee (PRINT Last Name, First, Middle)			Date of Birth			
Street and Number/PO Box		City		State		ZIP+4
Month/Year Retired	Home or Cell Number ()	Gender Male_____ Female_____		Chapter		
Email Address			Sponsored by:			

Note: If not receiving an annuity contact National Office for information on membership.

SECTION A – Authorization

The United States Office of Personnel Management is authorized to make an appropriate deduction from my annuity payments, not to exceed the amount certified by the **United Postmasters and Managers of America (UPMA)** as the amount of dues for which I am obligated, and to pay the deducted sum to **UPMA**. This authorization shall apply to any and all dues changes certified by **UPMA**. This authorization shall be valid until **UPMA** receives and processes my written notice of cancellation in accordance with its agreement with the United States Office of Personnel Management. Any disputes regarding this allotment authorization shall be a matter between **UPMA** and me; I hold the United States Office of Personnel Management harmless for any erroneous deductions made pursuant to this authorization.

I also request the United States Office of Personnel Management to disclose any information necessary to execute this request.

Signature	Date:
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Radical Acceptance

Tips for Practicing Radical Acceptance

Radical acceptance is accepting a challenging situation exactly as it is without trying to change or avoid it. Practicing radical acceptance is about controlling the way we cope rather than trying to control the situation itself. It is a powerful tool that helps us let go of what we struggle against. It is not approving of or liking the situation. It's taking on a new perspective, like thinking "so be it," and embracing reality as it stands. This perspective allows us to let go of the intense negative emotions that a situation may evoke.

Radical acceptance is a challenging practice because instinct often tells us to try to fix problems. However, the reality of some situations is that they are outside of our control and therefore are not able to be fixed. We are often left feeling sad, angry, or frustrated after attempts to fix the unfixable.

To practice radical acceptance...

- **Practice mindfulness.** Be aware of your thoughts, emotions, and bodily sensations without judgment. Mindfulness helps you stay present and avoid unnecessary suffering caused by resistance.
- **Recognize what you *can and cannot* control.** Identify situations, circumstances, and outcomes that are beyond your control. Acknowledge that some things are simply out of your hands, and attempting to change them might only lead to frustration and stress.
- **Acknowledge your emotions.** Accept that your emotions, even the painful ones, are valid and natural.
- **Let go of judgment.** Release judgment about yourself, others, and situations. Judgment adds extra layers of suffering to them. Instead, observe things as they are without attaching value judgments.
- **Practice self-compassion.** Treat yourself with the same understanding and kindness you'd offer a friend.
- **Develop flexibility in your thinking.** Embrace the idea that things don't always have to be a certain way.
- **Avoid catastrophizing.** Avoid blowing things out of proportion or expecting the worst-case scenario.
- **Practice gratitude.** Cultivate gratitude for the things that are going well in your life. This attitude can help shift your focus away from what you can't control and toward what you can appreciate.
- **Detach from outcomes.** Shift your focus from the end result to the process and effort you're putting in.
- **Stay present.** Suffering often comes from ruminating on what *has to be* or what *might* happen.
- **Use acceptance statements.** For example, "I can't change this situation, but I can control how I react."

Radical acceptance is a skill that takes time to develop. Be patient with yourself. Over time, you'll likely find that this approach can lead to greater peace of mind and emotional resilience. If radical acceptance is difficult for you, consider seeking support from the EAP.

Some Convention Tidbits

The attendee count on the final day of convention was 472 active members, 359 retirees and associate members, 136 guests and 3 kids for a total of 961.

I have attended every national & state event for NAPUS and then UPMA since 1995 except four due to health matters and COVID. I was excited to attend the 2023 national convention in Denver CO, especially considering the strong turnout from MA. We had a total of 35 attendees as follows: 12 active members, 18 retired members, 2 active guests, and 3 retired guests. MA was recognized by the national office at one of the general business sessions as the state with the most first timers registered with 10 members. Unfortunately, one first timer was unable to attend at the last minute. It was a great showing of the MA Chapter. Let's keep the momentum going.

In previous years, the opening ceremony of the general business session on Monday morning was met with grand gestures such as performances from the hosting state's local and cultural bands or dancers. The most memorable opening ceremony was when all the State Presidents actually

rode into the meeting room and down the aisles on the back of motorcycles. I was extremely disappointed that there was no such grand opening. I hope the national office reconsiders the decision to eliminate this. I believe this always started the convention off with excitement and anticipation for what was to follow.

The national officer election results mirrored how the MA members voted at the state convention in June, with Greg Nors of TX was elected to the position of National Sec/Treasurer and Bernadette Puodziunas of NJ was elected to the position of UPMA Vice President – Atlantic Area.

The 2024 national convention will be held in Orlando FL Aug 21 - Aug 30, 2024. Registration and hotel reservations are currently open. The national office prints information on tours, sites, and activities for the upcoming convention in The Leader every issue usually beginning in Nov or Dec. Keep your eyes open and plan ahead. Information will also be available on the national website and in the UPMA Gold.

Dallas TX won the bid for the 2025



Donna Legro
Parliamentarian
Postmaster Retired

national convention from Aug 6 – Aug 16, 2025.

The Legislative Summit is scheduled for March 17-20, 2024.

Updated bylaws for national active and retired members are available on the national website at unitedpma.org.

Donna Legro
MA President Retired

Susan Hui Memorial Scholarship

Thank you, MA Chapter UPMA, for donating \$300.00 to the Susan Hui Memorial Scholarship! For the ones that had attended the National Convention, it was very emotional for me to announce the winner of this year's scholarship on stage.

The National UPMA Auxiliary Chapter would like to continue this scholarship annually. So far, we have \$1400.00 left in our scholarship account, our goal is to raise it to \$3000.00. So, it will allow us to at least give out a scholarship for the next two years. Thank you for your donation to kick start our effort.

MA Chapter members that would also like to contribute, please make check payable to UPMA BRATS and send to:

Shayne Francis Secretary/Treasurer
UPMA Auxiliary
PO Box 64
Lumber Bridge NC 28357

Please write in the bottom of the check for Sue Hui Memorial Scholarship. No amount is too small!

I would like to thank you in advance for your generosity.

Best regards, **Rich Hui**

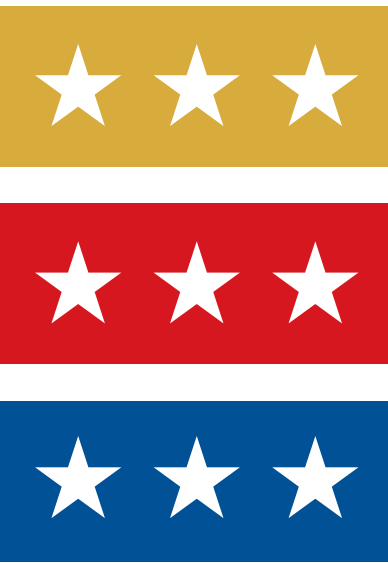


UMPA NATIONAL CONVENTION 2023





Shoes, Boots & Skis



The Honorable Stanley Skamarycz recently left this planet, but not without leaving a formidable imprint upon it. His contributions as a soldier, a family man, a Postmaster, and “this is how to live your life” ambassador are known to most of us. We all knew him as a Postmaster, active and retired, and nearly all of us knew him as a friend.

During his Postal career, Stanley was active in the National Association of Postmasters (NAPUS) serving as the President of Central MA for three terms, as Secretary/Treasurer for the State Chapter for three years, followed by a two year term as State President for Massachusetts. When Stan retired, he served as the

State President of the Retired Postmasters for a number of years. He also served as the PAC (Political Action Committee) Chairman, raising thousands of dollars to support elected officials who supported Postal and Postmaster legislation.

I met Stan shortly before he retired as the Westminister Massachusetts Honorable Postmaster, appointed by Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965. Of course, he let everyone know his address was PO Box 1. I was a junior in high school, Stan was not perfect, but then, who is? But he made sure to represent the positions he held with passion and compassion. He could also be stubborn. We all know that, too.

I was a newbie to NAPUS when Stan solicited my help with the convention scholarship auction. My job was to walk the items around the room for viewing. Stan was serious about his auction because it was a fundraiser to help the kids. He would get perturbed when the bidders were more interested in conversations than bidding. Sometimes he would get upset when he couldn't get the price he had in mind for an item, he would stop the bidding, put the item back on the table and try again later. This led to some fun consternation between his auction partner Bernie Duggan and himself. Somehow, I wound up doing the job when neither of them could be at the auction, and you've been stuck with me ever since! I'm proud to have filled Stan's shoes in this role.

Throughout the 90's and into the new millennium I ran an annual ski trip that filled a bus with postal people, Tantasqua Regional Junior High teachers, and a few friends of mine in town. Stan loved these trips, and I was amazed at this old coot's skiing talent. I was a god-awful skier, even though I loved trying. Once, (just once) I followed Stan the Mountain Man down a slope with small to moderate moguls. I watched him glide through the course and told myself “Heck, if he can do that at 80 something, I must be able to it as well.” I could not. Stan tried to spare my feelings and told me I did fine. I did not fill his skis. Through the years of these trips, I came to know Stan as the ambassador of Mount Wachusett, Princeton. He was their greeter and their Santa Claus. He loved helping the people at “his” mountain, just as he loved taking care of “his” postal customers. I think Stan skied until well into his 80's.



Jerry Robertson



Another little gem to remember Stan was the jars of honey he gave out as long as you promised to return the jar. And if you were promoted after he retired, he always stopped in, introduced himself and “set you up” with a name plaque for your desk and/or door, business cards, and whatever paraphernalia he could convince you to buy.

Stan loved almost everything about his life, and for his 90th birthday he put it all on display for his town, his friends and his two families, the Skamarycz’ and the

Postal Service to celebrate.

Stan, I already miss you. I miss the random phone calls, the love you shared with my family and your concern for them. You may be gone but I’m keeping your number in my phone. You never know!

Jerry Robertson
Retired President



Tom Driscoll
PM Randolph MA

It’s a Small World After All

Greetings to all. Very glad to be in it albeit on the mend for now and awhile longer. I had the opportunity to be the relay man providing some of retired PM Ruth Bosworth’s postal memorabilia that was donated by her for the auction to retired PM Don Nelson. Both Ruth and Don were prior Postmasters at Hanson MA 02341. Don was quite surprised and showed me some of his extensive stamp collections. I did not know he, as well as Ruth, is quite the Philatelist.

As this article will take a bit to get to print, I wish all a happy and healthy holiday season soon to be upon us. I know Don would love a note or Christmas card and his address is as follows:

Don Nelson
C/O All American Assisted Living
1084 Broadway Unit 240
Raynham, MA 02767

Also, while you’re in good spirits- Ruth could use a note or card as well. Her address is as follows:

Ruth Bosworth
249 Elm St
Halifax MA 02338

All the best to all for a healthy and happy 2024!

Respectively submitted,

Tom Driscoll

RVP 020-024 Mayflower Chapter

Atlantic Conference Recap



Greetings Fellow Postmaster and Managers,
 The end of September marked the end of FY 23 but also a weekend for our annual Atlantic Officers Conference. This conference is held once a year where 14 Chapters are represented from all over the Atlantic Area. We heard from UPMA National President,

Edmund Carley, as well as National Membership Chair, Tony Leonardi. In addition, we were given a presentation by NJ District Manager Mike Deignan. Some of the highlights:

President Edmund spoke about recent changes made to the end of year PFP percentages. Through consultations between UPMA, NAPS, and Postal HQ, the EOY cell values changed in our favor (see chart).

President Ed also spoke about potential PS 150 changes that will impact the credit given to certain criteria that will determine a Postmaster Level. Changes have not been announced yet, so stay tuned for more info on that. The expectation is that the changes will be positive. Also discussed was the importance of notifying your manager of expected leave taken. ELM 519.733 clearly states that Postmasters approve their own leave. Ensure your 3971 is filled out correctly and send it to your manager or POOM as notification of your absence. All other EAS should also fill out the 3971 correctly, and follow guidelines set forth in the ELM.

Tony Leonardi, National Membership Chair spoke about Membership and the need to recruit. For me, this is not about achieving a number, but ensuring that all potential members are given the chance to reap the benefits of being a member of UPMA. This includes Postmasters, all other EAS, and Associate Members, which would be craft employees seeking to move up in the organization. We are currently at a 75% rate in Massachusetts. Let's get back to the glory days when we

enjoyed a membership rate of over 90%! We all know at least one person that is not yet a member of this great organization. Reach out and extend that invitation to join. By signing up a new member, you may just see a little reward in your future. It's free for the first year to all EAS employees that choose to join. Associate members can join for \$2.00 a pay period and start networking with our current members right away!

NJ District Manager Mike Deignan spoke next on behalf of Atlantic Area VP Scott Raymond. He spoke about the CRDO report card and how the indicators in this report will be the focus as we move forward. F4 will be scrutinized as usual with a focus on POT, OT, and CSV. F2 will have an equally high focus on POT, OT, Office to 60 minutes, Street Variance, etc. As in every year, the goal is to start off strong and focus on producing quality results.

Next on the program we heard from our own Rich Hui, who along with Cathy Winnie gave a presentation on Adverse Action. As always, never let your own integrity be challenged. Keep your manager informed of obstacles that may prevent you from completing your assignments. Most importantly, always ask for representation if invited to a meeting with your manager.

Special thanks to New Jersey State Chapter President Danny Estrict for hosting the event. It takes a lot of work to put a Conference like this together and it was appreciated by all in attendance. Also, best wishes to Emad Attaalla, an acting POOM and Postmaster of Hoboken, NJ, who celebrated his retirement one day before the conference started. If you've ever met Emad, I am certain it was an enjoyable experience.

Next year's Atlantic Officer's Conference will be held in New York. Details still to come, but the event will be roughly the same time as this year's took place in late September/early October. Start thinking and planning to attend. It's a great opportunity to hear from the National Office in person and network with members from the great chapters around the Atlantic Area. All members are welcome to attend, and I hope to see you there.

In closing, keep in mind that the Legislative Conference will be March 17-20, 2024. It may seem like that is far away, but it'll be here before you know it. If you've never been to Washington DC to attend this event, please consider going. You'll have the chance to hear about the legislation affecting the USPS and have an opportunity to walk the halls of Congress and the Senate to meet with your representatives and Senators in person to discuss issues and legislation concerning the USPS. You'll also find some time in there to do some sightseeing in our Nation's capital as well as network and spend time with Postmasters and Managers from all over the country. Truly a great opportunity.

Respectfully,

Rob Leary
 MA Chapter President

FY23 Proposed Pay Matrices Adjustments

Current

Cell	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Base Salary Increase	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	2.5%	3.0%	4.0%	5.0%	6.0%	7.5%	9.0%

Proposed

Cell	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Base Salary Increase	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	4.0%	5.0%	6.0%	7.0%	8.0%	8.5%	9.0%
% Var	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	1.0%	0.0%

Do You Know the Difference Between FMLA and SLDC?

Greetings Postmasters and Managers,

First and foremost, I hope this article finds you well. By the time you have a chance to read this the fiscal year of the Postal Service 2022-2023 will come to an end. And soon enough, peak season will be around the corner, or you are one year closer to your retirement, and you are starting to investigate your leave cumulative status.

One of the more pressing questions lately was pertaining to the difference between FMLA (Family Medical Leave Act) and SLDC (Sick Leave Dependent Care). Often, Postmasters and Managers are frustrated because they are facing roadblocks when they are applying for sick leave (long term) to care for their medical conditions.

The difference between FMLA and SLDC is simple, FMLA is administered by the Department of Labor, and for federal employees such as you it is administered by OPM (Office of Personnel Management). SLDC is from the Postal Service and can only apply for up to eighty hours per calendar year.

Regardless of which type of leave you would like to apply for with your situation, proper documentation and constant communication with your immediate manager is a must. Some Postmasters and Managers can get themselves in a situation where either their leave was denied, or possible corrective action might be issued. To help with this type of confusion I am attaching the following condensed version fact sheet.

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, **job-**

protected leave per year. It also requires that their group health benefits be maintained during the leave.

FMLA is designed to help employees balance their work and family responsibilities by allowing them to take reasonable unpaid leave for certain family and medical reasons. It

also seeks to accommodate the legitimate interests of employers and promote equal employment opportunity for men and women.

Employees are eligible for leave if they have worked for their employer at least 12 months, at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months.

These employers must provide an eligible employee with up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave each year for any of the following reasons:

- **For the birth and care of the newborn child of an employee.**
- **For placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care.**
- **To care for an immediate family member (i.e., spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition; or**
- **To take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.**

The U.S. Department of Labor administers FMLA; however, the Office of Personnel Management administers FMLA for most federal employees.

WH-380-E: FMLA Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition

Please remember, if you are facing a long-term illness or medical condition and need to apply for FMLA, notify the Postal Service with ample time before you are taking your leave, and make sure you have proper documentation to support your request. If you are constantly communicating with your immediate manager for information, you should not be facing any issue in the future.

As always, I am at your service.

Regards,

Richard Hui
National Members Representative



Rich Hui
National Adverse Action
Rep - Retired

Welcome New Leaders of 025 - 027



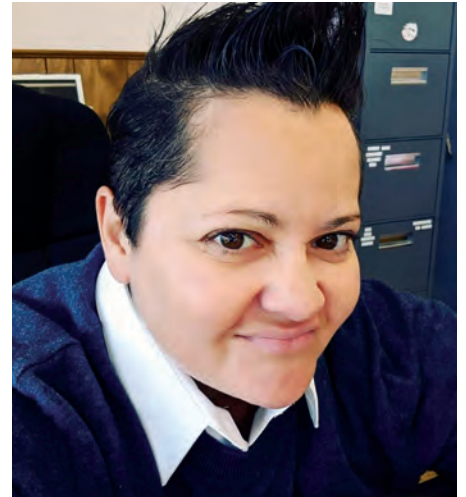
Trevor Anderson,
SCS Centerville



Brendon Barbo,
SCS Harwich



Matt Campbell,
SCS Buzzards Bay



Wes Palmeira, SCS Brewster



Mike Phelan, SCS Mashpee



Monique Reis,
SCS South Dartmouth



Emily Teixeira,
SCS Vineyard Haven



Sarah and Mike Phelan

The 025-027 area welcomes our newest leaders: Trevor Anderson, SCS Centerville; Brendon Barbo, SCS Harwich; Matt Campbell, SCS Buzzards Bay; Wes Palmeira, SCS Brewster; Mike Phelan, SCS Mashpee; Monique Reis, SCS South Dartmouth; and Emily Teixeira, SCS Vineyard Haven.

The entire 025-027 area congratulates Sarah and Mike Phelan on the happy news of their marriage! Thank you,

Jack Tompkins
RVP 025-027

EAS professionals *have been* fired for:

- Falsifying clock rings to hide the fact that carriers are out past 1700 or 1800
- Falsifying scans to hide the fact they have packages with an AAU and no ADE
- Falsifying a certification
- Sharing a password with another employee to complete a certification
- Sharing a password with another employee to correct clock rings—or worse
- Not reporting delayed or curtailed mail
- Artificially inflating mail-volume reporting
- Abusing employees about using more hours than they have workload to justify those hours
- Failing to follow an instruction
- Abusing personal time
- Not being at work when your manager thinks you are at work
- Not having protection as a UPMA member after being accused of any of the above

EAS professionals *never* *have been* fired for:

- Having carriers out past 1700 or 1800
- Having packages with an AAU and no ADE
- Not completing a certification
- Having clock ring errors
- Delaying or curtailing mail
- Having employees use more hours than they have workload to justify those hours
- Telling their manager that an instruction is unreasonable or unsafe and requesting it in writing
- Using personal time correctly
- Being a UPMA member

The purpose of UPMA is to assist, mentor and guide all **Postmasters, Managers, Supervisors and other EAS Professionals**—as well as anyone aspiring to these positions—toward achieving their professional goals. We are an avenue through which all United States Postal Service employees can help one another and themselves in matters concerning their careers. We provide the essential training and networking necessary for every member to be successful.

As an organization, we always strive to improve the conditions under which our members work and the compensation they receive. Our organization's leadership consults regularly with Postal Service management on policies affecting the welfare, happiness and morale of our members.

Our leaders at the chapter and national levels are current USPS employees. We believe this is fundamental for staying in touch with the priorities and concerns of our members. After all, who is better equipped to represent you than your fellow Managers, Supervisors and other EAS Professionals living and working in the same conditions you do every day?



2024 UPMA Legislative Summit

March 17th - 20th 2024

Hyatt Regency Crystal City
2799 Richmond Highway | Arlington, VA 22202

Contact the Crystal City Hyatt Regency to book hotel rooms. Mention you are attending the UPMA Legislative Summit and use group code: G-POST. PH Number: 703- 418- 1234 GROUP CODE: G-POST

Managing Tense Conversations in the Workplace

Many of us struggle with handling conflict—especially in the workplace—because it is not typically a skill taught in school, at home, or by society at large. Strong communication techniques are essential in order to manage workplace conflict so we can continue to collaborate effectively with others on projects, complete work tasks, voice our ideas, and generally get along with others. Even if you are familiar with effective communication principles, it is helpful to remind ourselves of communication techniques we can improve on or implement, especially when we need to disengage from or defuse tense conversations in the workplace.

The first step to handling conflict in the workplace is to be aware of your own emotional state, and to ask yourself questions such as: *Do I feel tension in my body? What are the feelings I am having, and what are some of the reasons I am feeling upset, angry, or frustrated? Am I making assumptions or personalizing what my coworker, boss, or employee is saying? Am I being triggered because this situation and/or person reminds me of another person in my life that I don't get along with?* The goal here is to recognize that we are responsible for how we feel and react to the situation.

Once we have identified what we are feeling and why, it is crucial to use reflective listening skills. This not only shows the other person we are listening but also helps us to understand the other person's perspective. We can do this by paraphrasing what the other person said rather than focusing on what we are going to say next and getting our point across. An example of reflective listening is, "So what I hear you saying is" This is an important part of validating their perspective and is a key step in helping to diffuse tense interactions.

In addition to reflective listening, another important method is to incorporate "I" messages in our communication style in order to be assertive rather than aggressive or passive-aggressive. For example,

an "I" statement may sound like this: "I am feeling a bit frustrated/overwhelmed when you give me tasks to do at the end of the day because I often have to pick up my children at a particular time and can't be late. I would appreciate if you could give me those tasks earlier in the day if possible or understand if I am unable to complete them by working overtime." This approach is an effective way to communicate our needs or wants in a non-confrontational manner.

If you have used reflective listening to try to validate and diffuse the conversation with a coworker, but it becomes clear that they are unable to have a civil conversation because they are too angry to listen to reason, then using healthy boundaries is the best option. For instance, one might say to the person, "I can see this situation or topic is really upsetting to you, and I am willing to talk it through with you, but right now does not seem like the best time for either of us, so let's revisit this conversation later." However, if it is not an issue essential to resolve for work purposes, then an appropriate boundary-setting comment would be: "I can see you are very upset about this, but it is not helpful for us to continue this conversation because it is not relevant to our job duties."

The strategies described above of being aware of your own emotional state, using reflective listening, and incorporating "I" statements when communicating with others are all critical practices we need to use in the workplace if we want to have more satisfactory interactions and relationships at work. It is also important to remember that we do not have control over how other people react. However, if we choose to take responsibility for our own reactions and implement these skills, we can learn to manage tense conversations, maintain boundaries, and avoid detrimental outcomes.



8th UPMA National Convention

Aug. 24-30, 2024

Official Registration Form

Registration also available at www.unitedpma.org

Register on-site at the Sheraton Denver Downtown and save!

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

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Title:

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

First Name (for your badge): _____

Post Office You Represent City: _____ State: _____

Your Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP+4 _____

Cell Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

*Active First-Timer?

Yes No

UPMA Retired First-Timer?

Yes No

Convention Registration (only one person per form):

Please circle the appropriate fee:

	8/26/23-9/1/23	9/2/23-3/31/24	4/1/24-6/30/24	After 6/30/24
Postmaster/Manager/Supervisor/Associate/OIC/EAS Professional	\$160	\$176	\$208	\$260
UPMA Retired or Guest* (UPMA Retired Luncheon included)	\$155	\$167	\$191	\$230
Auxiliary/Spouse/Postmaster Guest (Does NOT include UPMA Retired Luncheon)	\$120	\$132	\$156	\$195

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

*Active first-timers must pay their registration fee in advance. 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. 29, 2024

Payment Information

Convention Fee: \$ _____

_____ Additional tickets for UPMA

Retired Luncheon @ \$35 each \$ _____

Total Payment: \$ _____

Check payable to UPMA

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 Aug. 24, 2023. 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 22, 2024.** 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 22, 2024, or all rooms in the block are sold, whichever comes first. The group rate is available three days pre- and post convention based on availability.

Caribe Royal

407-238-8000

\$174—single/double/triple/quad

Be sure to request the group rate: UPMA 2024

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, 2024; no refunds after that date. All refunds are subject to a \$40 handling fee.

Registrations are non-transferable.

Questions?

Call 703-683-9027

ORLANDO FLORIDA



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