

NAPUS

Update

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Olihovik hails appointment of presidential commission on the USPS

Following is a Dec. 12 statement by President Wally Olihovik on the appointment of a presidential commission on the Postal Service (see "Capitol Briefs" on page 3 for more on the commission—Ed.):

"With the announcement of a presidential commission, I am encouraged that President Bush has decided to focus on Postal Service issues. Eight months ago, I was the first organizational official to call

for the creation of such a commission.

"I am pleased that the legislative efforts put forth by Rep. John McHugh (R-NY), Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) have been recognized by the Bush Administration.

"It should be noted that the commission will make recommendations, not decisions. The ultimate decisions will be made in the political environment on Capitol Hill. Everything will be on the

table, including defining universal service. The commission also will examine Postal Service bureaucracy that may hinder effectiveness.

"I can assure Postmasters that NAPUS stands ready and welcomes the opportunity to represent the communities we serve. I often have said Postmasters bring forth two important qualities—we provide outstanding quality of service and accountability to the communities we serve." ♦

Registration fee required for Leadership Conference attendance

NAPUS has been asked whether Postmasters planning on attending the Legislative Rally in Washington, DC, on Wednesday, March 26, also need to register for the Leadership Conference—Saturday, March 22, to Tuesday, March 25—that will precede the rally.

The answer is: It depends on what a Postmaster wants to get out of the event.

"We're obviously interested in getting as many Postmasters as possible to Washington, DC, for what I truly believe will be an historic event," President Wally Olihovik said. "We all know the Postal Service is at a critical juncture. Over the next few months, deliberations at L'Enfant Plaza and on Capitol Hill—along with those of the newly appointed presidential commission—will determine the future course of the Postal Service. Postmasters have an obligation to be part of the agency's transformation."

"That said, we recognize that the focus of some Postmasters—particularly those who don't plan on participating in the chapter officer training—will be to visit the offices of their members of Congress and attend the Legislative Rally break-



Photo by Bob Levi

President Wally Olihovik has been actively involved in continued discussions with incoming Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) concerning the presidential commission on the Postal Service and other issues affecting the nation's Postmasters. Discussions of this nature are part of an ongoing dialogue among NAPUS and congressional leaders regarding the future of the Postal Service.

fast,” he added.

Postmasters attending any of the Leadership Conference activities—including the business sessions, seminars, breakouts, entertainment, hospitality and the evening banquet—must pay the \$90 conference registration fee. That fee *includes* the conference banquet and Legislative Rally breakfast on March 26. Just as at the national convention, badges will be required and checked for admission to all Leadership Conference activities, including the hospitality room.

Postmasters not paying the full conference registration fee, but who wish to attend the Legislative Rally, may request seating on a space-available basis. No individual breakfast tickets will be sold, however, until seating has been confirmed for full-paid registrants.

To be placed on a first-come “Reservation Request” list for the breakfast only, chapter officers must *telephone* (no faxes or e-mails, please) Gerri Swarm at the NAPUS National Office (703-683-9027). It should be noted, too, that preference for breakfast seating will be given to full-paid registrants; those attending only the breakfast may not be seated with their chapters.

In other conference/rally business:

- Room reservation activity at the Omni Shoreham has been brisk, partly because the conference will be during Cherry Blossom time in Washington. If you haven’t already reserved a room, please call the hotel directly at (202) 234-0700, ask for “Reservations” and provide

Transition in secretary-treasurer’s office an orderly one

Secretary-Treasurer Dale Goff (*seated*) met with Secretary-Treasurer-Elect Jim Price at the NAPUS National Office in mid-December to effect the orderly transition of the organization’s financial records and review computer enhancements Goff directed during his two-year tenure. Here, as Goff demonstrates, Price gets a hands-on introduction to E-NOAH, the new NAPUS membership database.



Photo by Bob Levi

the “NAPUS” group code. Room rates begin at \$147, single or double. **Room rates expire Feb. 21.**

- The NAPUS group rates are good for five days prior to or after the conference/rally.
- The conference/rally registration form may be found in the insert in the December 2002 *Postmasters Gazette* or by logging onto the NAPUS website at www.napus.org.
- The latest confirmed congressional speakers include Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), incoming chair of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee; Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-CT), a possible

presidential candidate in 2004; Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE); and Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO).

- The world-famous entertainers, “The Classics,” will perform at the conference banquet. Their hit recordings include the million-selling record, “Till Then,” “P.S. I Love You” and “You’ll Never Know.”
- Many interesting breakout sessions are being planned. For example, it has been confirmed the NAPUS chapter editors will be touring the Postal Inspection Service’s forensic laboratory in Northern Virginia. ♦

Gazette seeks staff photographer

If you like photography and have always wanted to assist your fellow NAPUS Postmasters at the national level, this may be your opportunity: The *Gazette* is looking for an additional staff photographer.

If you think you might like to take photos at both the national convention and the Leadership Conference and Legislative Rally—and you generally

attend those functions—we’d like to hear from

you. Please submit a little biographical information about yourself, your photography background and samples of your photography to Cindy Kain, *Gazette* Editor, Box 216, Burdett, NY 14818-0216 by a postmarked date of Jan. 31. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of any photos you’d like to have back.

NAPUS photographers must own,

insure and use their own *digital* (no single-lens reflex) cameras, lenses, flash attachments, light meters and other photographic equipment. NAPUS provides the necessary “film” (memory cards), plus pays for the travel, lodging and per-diem expenses of all photographers on official NAPUS business.

A selection will be made in time for the photographer to take photos at the Leadership Conference and Legislative Rally in Washington, DC, March 22 to 27. ♦



Capitol Briefs

Bob Levi

Director of Government Relations

By now, the entire postal community is well aware that President George Bush has taken a keen interest in the future of the U.S. Postal Service.

On Dec. 11, Treasury Undersecretary Peter Fisher announced the creation of a nine-member presidentially appointed commission to make recommendations regarding the future of the Postal Service. The following day, Postmaster General Jack Potter met with President Wally Olihovik and the leadership of the other postal employee groups regarding the commission announcement.

Appointment of the commission yields three noteworthy results—postal reform legislation will be deferred until next summer, when the commission issues its report; the White House has raised the political stakes for postal reform, potentially making it an issue in the 2004 election; and the focus has shifted from Capitol Hill to the White House. All these factors represent new challenges and opportunities for Postmasters and the Postal Service. But they are challenges NAPUS and the Postal Service *will* tackle head on.

It is important to recall that NAPUS has predicted and endorsed the establishment of such a presidential commission since early spring. We believed that, despite the best efforts of such congressional leaders as Reps. John McHugh (R-NY) and Henry Waxman (D-CA), congressional consensus was elusive, if not impossible. In June, incoming Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) drafted the blueprint for a presidential commission and NAPUS worked with her to promote the concept. At the same time, we continued to consult with Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE), who has expressed a strong desire to introduce postal reform legislation.

Our early support of a presidential commission has provided NAPUS with a unique opportunity and responsibility to

ensure that universal service will remain the core mission of the Postal Service and a commission priority. Indeed, Undersecretary Fisher stated it was important that we “protect affordable universal service.” However, the White House is concerned that declining mail volume at the same time costs are increasing is making it extraordinarily difficult for the Postal Service to fulfill this historic mandate.

NAPUS has pledged to work with the Postmaster General and postal employee groups to develop a consistent and clear message to enable the commission to make recommendations to guarantee universal service and the continued viability of the Postal Service.

The commission is co-chaired by Harry J. Pearce, chairman of Hughes Electronics Corporation, and James A. Johnson, chairman of the board at the Brookings Institution and former chairman of Fannie Mae. The commission will operate within the Department of Treasury and must issue its final report no later than July 31, 2003.

At the press conference when the commission was announced, both Undersecretary Fisher and Co-Chairman Johnson stated emphatically that the commission’s goal is not to privatize the Postal Service. Moreover, Fisher said the commission would not make recommendations that would burden either taxpayers or postal ratepayers. It is clear, however, that, as expected, the scope of universal service will be part of the discussion about the future of the Postal Service. Johnson recognized that “the post office is not broken, but changes are needed.”

Other commission members include:

- Dionel Aviles, president of Aviles Engineering Corporation, in Texas.
- Don V. Cogman, chairman of CC Investments, in Arizona.
- Carolyn A. Gallagher, former president and CEO of Texwood Furniture,

in Texas.

- Richard C. Levin, president of Yale University.
- Norman Seabrook, president of the NYC Correction Officers’ Benevolent Association.
- Robert Walker, chairman and CEO of the Wexler Group, and former member of Congress from Pennsylvania.
- Joseph R. Wright, president and CEO of PanAmSat, in Connecticut, and former director of the Office of Management and Budget under President Ronald Reagan.

The commission’s objective is to examine the state of the Postal Service and to submit to the President a report expressing a vision of the agency’s future and recommending legislative and regulatory changes to ensure the viability of postal services. The commission is expected to consider the following issues as part of its review:

- The role of the USPS in the future;
- The flexibility the USPS should have to change prices, control costs and adjust service in response to financial, competitive or market pressures;
- The unnecessary inflexibilities in cost or service that limit postal efficiency;
- The ability of the USPS to maintain universal mail delivery at affordable rates and cover its financial liabilities;
- The extent that the postal monopoly continues to promote the public interest under evolving market conditions and the extent that the USPS competes with the private sector; and
- The most appropriate governance and oversight structure of the USPS

It is essential to note that, whatever the commission recommends, Congress must pass legislative change. We anticipate hearings as part of congressional consideration of the recommendations. Therefore, NAPUS members must continue to educate members of Congress

Continued on page 4

Postmasters mourn deaths of two former NAPUS national presidents

It is with sadness that NAPUS reports the deaths of two former NAPUS national presidents—Effie Brickhouse and Hal Hemmingsen.



Recent file photo

Brickhouse was Postmaster of Columbia, NC, when she was selected as NAPUS national president by the National Executive Committee to succeed James O'Toole, who resigned to work for

Postmaster General Lawrence F. O'Brien. She was sworn into office on Nov. 6, 1967—her birthday—in the Postmaster General's office in Washington, DC, and served until the end of the year.

During the NAPUS 91st National Convention in Chicago, IL, in 1995, "Miss Effie," as she was affectionately known by many, and longtime friend

Stella Bowers, retired Postmaster of Newland, NC, were honored for their many years of service to NAPUS Postmasters. They were featured on the cover of the convention issue of the *Postmasters Gazette* and in an article titled, "Lives That Make a Difference."

Brickhouse is survived by a grandniece, Patricia A. Douthit. Condolences may be sent to the family at 2013 Nolen Park Lane, Charlotte, NC 28209.

Details are incomplete regarding the death of Hal Hemmingsen, who died just after Thanksgiving. He was Postmaster of Glendale, CA, when he was elected NAPUS president at the

1973 national convention in Kiamesha, NY. It was during Hemmingsen's administration (1974-1975) that NAPUS and the Postal Service entered into an historic agreement for regular consultative meetings.



Undated photo

Capitol Briefs

Continued from page 3

about universal mail service and postal survival.

President Bush's review of postal finances, operations and structure is not the end of the story; it is only Act 2 in a multi-scene, multi-act legislative play. Therefore, if you needed any further encouragement to attend the NAPUS Leadership Conference and Legislative Rally in March—now you have it! ♦

NAPUS Policy posted to website

The latest version of NAPUS Policy—updated at the national convention in Las Vegas last August—is on the NAPUS website, www.napus.org.

Section VI, "Pertinent to NAPUS Only," is *not* posted to the website, however, because it contains sensitive information of interest only to NAPUS members. Members may request a copy of Section VI by contacting Executive Director Charlie Moser at the NAPUS National Office. ♦

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