The Hawkeye Heartlander



Photo Credit to: Todd Petrie

National Convention Denver, CO Aug. 26-Sept. 1 2023

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Disclosure: UMPA is not a union. It's a professional association. It is an organization of people who hold proud titles. It does not discriminate by race, gender, or salary level. It is a vehicle, an avenue, a method, and a tool that can and does help, assist, benefit, and encourage members to be better Post Masters.



From the President: Jeff Arment

Iowa Chapter Membership Continues to grow!

Currently the Iowa UPMA Chapter is at 87.12% Postmaster membership which puts us at #1 in the Nation for the past 2 months. We have been in the high 80 percent range for the past couple of years and with everyone's help, we can push that number over 90 percent by the end of the year. We recently had the IA-NE-SD District Career Conference in Newton and we were able to gain 24 new members while attending that event. This was the first face to face Career Conference we've had in the past few years so being able to talk to the craft employees and EAS that are looking for opportunities to advance into Management was very encouraging. Everyone we spoke with was excited to learn what we could offer them in becoming a member and how we could help them with their goals of moving up within the Postal Service.

Let's continue to reach to those craft employees that are interested in getting into management and sign them up with UPMA as Associate Members so they can have the opportunity to plug into our network of Postmasters, Managers, Supervisors, and other EAS Specialists that can mentor and guide them through what they need to do to be successful. In one of our recent meetings, we were told that over 40% of EAS were eligible to retire right now so we really need to build our bench so those new members are trained and ready to step up into those positions.

During State Convention in Dubuque this past month, we had the opportunity to network with many of our fellow UPMA members. This is definitely one of my favorite events we have each year. The Grand Harbor Resort as well as the Grand River Center were great venues and the city of Dubuque had many things to offer for those that had time to explore the area. We also had a great time at the PAC Auction on Friday night as well as the private bowling area we had reserved. Saturday nights entertainment was a major hit as the Rockabilly band "3 on the Tree" got everyone on their feet dancing and having a great time!

Finally, I would like to say THANK YOU to everyone of you that I have had the opportunity to work with on the Iowa UPMA Executive Board as well as all of the members I have had the chance to meet during my time as President of the Iowa UPMA Chapter. My term has gone by so fast and I enjoyed serving as your President these past 4 years.

Congratulations to Greg Snow who was elected as your next Iowa UPMA President during State Convention. Also, Sherri Lingle was elected Executive Vice President / Membership Chair and Jeff Stoltz was elected Vice President / Legislative PAC Chair. I will continue serving on the National Membership Committee and will serve for the next year as the Immediate Past President for the Iowa Chapter to assist Greg with his new duties starting July 1, 2023.

Next up is our 7th Annual National UPMA Convention in Denver Colorado on August 26, 2023 – September 1, 2023 at the Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel. If you are interested in attending, visit the national website at unitedpma.org and click on the events tab to access the registration form and hotel information. See you there!!!



Secretary/Treasurer: Kerry Nichols

What a Fun Convention!

It was so nice to see so many people. We had 53 EAS, 1 associate and 13 retirees.

We also had 8 vendors, and I hope you were all able to visit with them.

We gave away 3 cash prizes:

\$25 to Sheila Soppe

\$25 to Sam Schroeder

\$50 to Kelley Wells

We also drew names for lottery tickets. Hopefully someone won!

Bethani Metcalf, Thomas Bradley, Heather Heuvelmann, Lindsay Marin, Lindsay Campbell, Sara Lindauer, Sherri Lingle, John Schlichting, Jeanice Arment, Jeff Stoltz

We also had 3 raffle prizes. Congratulations to the following people who had their ticket drawn:

Charlie Luffy- Amazon gift card

Thomas Bradley- digital photo frame

Blackstone grill- Bethani Metcalf

We look forward to seeing you all at our combined Iowa-Nebraska- South Dakota tri-state convention in Council Bluffs on April 26-28, 2024.

For those of you interested, we again passed the special assessment to assist members in traveling to the National Convention. That assessment will be for the 2024 Convention in Orlando. As a reminder, in order to qualify for the stipend, you must attend the Chapter Convention and sign up. You must also attend the business sessions and training sessions at National.

Speaking of National Convention, Executive Director Dan Heins and I had a meeting with HQ yesterday to finalize our ask for training at National in Denver.

The training sessions are Monday, August 28th from 3:30-5:00PM. Wednesday, August 30th from 1:30-3:00PM and 3:30-5:00PM. All of the training rooms are together in one location. Start thinking about which sessions you might want to attend!

They are subject to change but we are planning:

Rural Route Management, PFP/NPA, Postal Service Health Benefit Plan, Line H- custodial staffing and tracking, SWCs/PS 150, Lead programs, Retirement planning, TSP changes, Parliamentary procedures, Postmaster Finder and Postal History, mental health wellness programs. Stay tuned for more info!



VP-Membership: Amanda Reavis

PAC Auction Fun!!!!







VP Education:Rich Springer

Now's the time to get involved

The 2023 Iowa Chapter convention at the Grand Harbor Resort and Waterpark in Dubuque IA was a great success. There were 53 active members, 17 first timers, 13 retirees and District Manager Lisse Garrett and many guests in attendance. I hope every attendee came away feeling re-energized and informed.

Be sure to mark April 26-28, 2024, in your calendar for our next convention to take place in Council Bluffs IA. We will be joining Nebraska and South Dakota in Council Bluffs for our first ever Tri-State Convention. This will be a great opportunity to network and make new friends in some of our neighboring chapters.

There is still time to register for the 7th UPMA National Convention at the Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel in downtown Denver, August 26-September 1st. First timer's registration will be reimbursed. The Iowa UPMA chapter is again offering stipends for those members who attend both the State and National Convention.

Look for more information on Fall Tour in the upcoming issues of the Hawkeye Heartlander.

With so many events that our members can attend, there should be no reason why everyone doesn't attend at least one event this year. Now is the time to get moving again, regenerate ourselves, reconnect with colleagues and friends and start making new friends and memories. Sitting on the sideline is over, now's the time to get out and participate.

Be sure to keep your personal information updated on the UPMA National website, UnitedPMA.org, including your email address. There are email blasts being sent out on a regular basis and the best way you can stay up on current issues is to update your information when necessary. The lowa UPMA chapter has over 600 members, but less than 300 people have valid email addresses in their profiles.

Hope to see you soon! Rich



FACT SHEET

Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB)

USPS EMPLOYEES

The Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (PSRA) was signed into law in April 2022. Since then, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in conjunction with the Postal Service, has been working to implement a new Postal Service Health Benefits (PSHB) Program, as required under the new law. PSHB is a new, separate program within the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program and will be administered by OPM. Coverage under the PSHB Program will be effective January 1, 2025. Below is a list of facts regarding the PSHB Program for active employees:

- You are required to select a health insurance plan in the PSHB Program during the 2024 open season period, from November 11, 2024 – December 9, 2024.
- 2. PSHB plan options and premium information will be available in October 2024.
- OPM will launch a new enrollment platform for health insurance. Information on how to make elections using the new system will be available prior to the 2024 open season.
- 4. If you are an active employee age 64 or older as of January 1, 2025, you ARE NOT required to enroll in Medicare Part B to continue your PSHB health insurance coverage once you retire. However, upon your retirement and entitlement to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65), you will have the option to enroll in Medicare Part B during a special enrollment period.
 - If you are the primary subscriber, your covered family members will not be required to enroll in Medicare Part B to stay on your PSHB plan; however, enrollment in Medicare Part B may reduce your overall costs for health care-related expenses and may provide better value for you and your family.
- If you are an active employee under the age of 64 as of January 1, 2025, to continue your PSHB health insurance coverage in retirement, you WILL BE required to enroll in Medicare Part B after you retire and become entitled to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65).
 - If you are the primary PSHB enrollee, your covered family members will also be required to enroll in Medicare Part B when you retire, upon their entitlement to Medicare Part A, if they wish to remain covered by your PSHB insurance.
 - If you retire on or after January 1, 2025, and you are under 64, you WILL BE required to enroll in Medicare Part B when you become entitled to Medicare Part A (typically at age 65) to remain enrolled in a PSHB plan. The Social Security Administration (SSA) will mail you a notice when you are eligible to enroll in Medicare Part B during your initial enrollment period. Your initial enrollment period starts three months prior to your 65th birthday and ends three months after your 65th birthday. If you are the primary PSHB subscriber, your covered family members will also be required to enroll in Medicare Part B upon their entitlement to Medicare Part A, if they wish to remain covered by your PSHB insurance.
- 6. There are exceptions to the requirement to enroll in Medicare Part B as an annuitant. These exceptions will also apply to your covered family members. Annuitants may be responsible for providing proof of eligibility for the applicable exception(s) to the designated agency. These exceptions are:
 - You are residing outside of the United States and its territories. You are required to follow the policy and procedure set forth by the Postal Service to be eligible for this exception; or
 - · You are enrolled in health care benefits provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
 - You are eligible for health services provided by Indian Health Services.
- As a general rule, spousal and family member PSHB coverage is based on the primary enrollee's eligibility.
 If the primary subscriber is required to enroll in Medicare Part B, dependent family members will also be required to enroll when they are eligible.

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Retiree President: Ellen Opperman

Iowa Retirees attend State Convention





Iowa PAC: Harry Healey

At this year's UPMA state convention we raised a total of \$3007.51.

The auction brought in \$2109.50 with 38 items auctioned off.

The 50/50 contests raised \$405 and we had \$1186 in contributions that had nothing to do with the auction nor the 50/50 contests.

Six active members took home payroll deduction forms for the PAC contributions, and I hope all of you have taken the time to start those deductions.

The report we received before convention showed that from January 1, 2023 to April 12 we had 27 lowa UPMA members contribute to PAC. That number will go up post-convention but the fact remains we have about 88% of our members not participating. I reported at convention of actual recommendations made by one congressional study group in which they recommend Federal employees get switched from high-three year average to high-five year average when figuring their retirement. Also recommended is having federal employees and retirees pay more of the premium for their health care insurance. There are other recommendations made that would lower your pay and adversely affect your benefits.

The good news is that there are still a lot of congress people who appreciate the work you do and the service you provide to their constituents. They have your back when proposals that hurt you are advanced. It's time to start having their backs, in return. Start participating in UPMA PAC now.

Forms to sign up to create a recurring electronic PAC contribution can be found at the UnitedPMA.org website under the government relations tab.

One time contributions can still be sent to me at 1219 42nd St NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402-5734. Make checks payable to UPMA PAC.



VP Editor: Merri Burgart

On to National Convention Denver Colorado!!

Another convention in the books. Looking forward to going to Denver, CO August 26th, 2023 thru September 1st, 2023.

Hopefully some of the first timers that attended State Convention this year will be able to attend National Convention in Denver. There are many more networking opportunities at National as well as many more friendships to be made. It's always a good time to attend National Convention. They have a lot of information to pass along at the meetings they have planned as well.

Please remember the Iowa Chapter is offering the stipend to help with expenses at National if you attended State Convention. You can contact any board member to find out more details if you unsure if you qualify. Please reach out with questions you have we would love to have as many first timers as possible.

See you there,

Merri

Letter to the Editor:

I would like to thank the committee members who bestowed upon me the honor of being named to the Iowa UPMA Hall of Fame. To have my good friend, Lisa, present the award to me made it extra special. I'll always love my "Cher."

I'm not sure what all the criteria was they considered, but I would think my continued advocacy for postal employees concerning their earned pay and benefits had a lot to do with it. My position as your PAC person has been a huge part of that and, apparently, has been my niche. I was told early on that a good PAC chair has to be "a bubble off plumb." I displayed such quality.

I never "ran" for elected office in our organization. I was nominated a couple times but, thankfully, lost to somebody who could and did a better job than I could have. Those positions I was nominated for weren't my niche. My personality just didn't lend to that.

Having said that, I encourage active members to explore what your niche in Iowa UPMA may be. Tell your membership chair, your legislative chair, your education/training chair that you are interested in learning more about what they do for the organization.



You may find your niche. And UPMA needs you to do that for the long-term vitality of our organization.

So, thank you to all you UPMA members. This award is for all of you because without the support you have given me over the years in whatever I have done for our organization, it couldn't have happened.

Harry Healey

Networking Fun!!!



The Hawkeye Heartlander

Dubuque Color Guard presenting the colors



University of Dubuque Choir Opening Ceremony Music





Retiree Secretary/Treasurer:

Lisa Eittreim

Hello Retirees! Another great state convention is behind us. We had eleven members present and our guest Charlie Wells, National Retiree Area Representative, joined us to share news from headquarters regarding by-law changes to be voted on at National convention. Lewis Linkugel, Linkugel Financial Services, also joined us and gave a great presentation on Estate Planning. This is a great topic for all of us to think about and consider.

Eva Finley, National Retiree Editor has asked us to help with the Veterans project again this year. They are asking for donations of stamps and stationery for Veterans to use to send letters to their families. Flag and Purple Heart stamps would be especially appreciated. <u>Donations can be sent to Eva Finley, PO Box 500, Graford TX 76449-0500</u>. If they could be sent before the national convention that would be much appreciated. Any questions Eva may be contacted at (512) 569-4680. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Speaking of generosity, a special thank you goes out to Dixie Bentley for her donation of two afghans to be auctioned for the UPMA National Scholarship Fund. I am proud to announce that we raised \$580.00 from the auction for that fund. THANK YOU, Dixie, and those that bid on the auction! This is a great cause.

Elections were held for the retiree board. Congratulations to Ellen Opperman, re-elected President and Dixie Bentley, re-elected Vice President.

A special thank you goes out to Dixie Bentley and Lane Hill for their work in pulling the hospitality room together and to all others that helped pitch in to keep it going and to clean up at the end.

The memorial service was beautiful and remember to notify Ellen of members from April on this year for next years' service.

Next will be the board meeting July 14-15 in Council Bluffs where our joint state convention will be held next year. Remember all members are welcome to attend board meetings. No costs are covered but as a member you are welcome to sit in. This is a great opportunity to see what happens in running our organization, especially if you are interested in running for board positions. I strongly encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity.

Then on to Denver for the National Convention. Hope to see many of you there!

As Ellen says, "Until next time!"

Lisa

Calling all Iowa Postmaster and Manager Retirees! (and Actives too!)

By Kevin Schwab

At our recently completed UPMA(United Postmasts and Managers of America) State Convention, I floated an idea that got a good response so thought I would pursue it. No it is not totally my idea but one I have borrowed from Florida and would like to adapt to Iowa. I think it would be fun to have a Retiree outing one day somewhere in Iowa where all the retired Postmasters and Managers could gather together. Florida has their steak out where they invite people from all over the country for a couple of days. But for starters I am thinking just Iowa Retirees for one day. After 42 years of working with many of you, I have lost touch and think it would be fun to catch up with many of you. Past Officers like Alan Steckman, Dave Massarini, and Sandy Bolin-Townes just to name a few. We could spend the day reminiscing about life under past District Managers like William D Burch, Harold Coyne, Tom(Cleveland) Johnson, David(Red Laws) Fields, Joleen Baxa, Gail (DUO) Duba, Doug Morrow, Jim Hermann, Shawneen Betha, and Mark Talbot. I am sure each and every one of us has many Postal stories we could tell from our days on the job! I am thinking maybe have a short program where we go around the room and each tell what we have been doing since retirement and even maybe have the memorial program from State Convention. We could play an acronym game and see how many acronyms we remember! Door prizes of essential items we need these days like Polident, Metamucil, and Depends are also a possibility since we are all on fixed incomes now!! LOLjust kidding!

So I am thinking there might be about 4 possibilities about where to meet so will toss my ideas out and you can let me know which idea you like most and will use that to determine where we meet, the place that gets the most votes will be where I plan something. For this first year I am just thinking maybe a simple meal of hamburgers, brats, chips or potato salad, baked beans, a salad, and dessert if we have it catered in. We could eat like noon – 1pm or just be flexible and come and go as you can.

IDEA #1 – a community center. For example Grundy Center has a nice community center that they rent out. We could have a catered in meal or a potluck where we all bring something.

IDEA #2-a golf course. Ackley has a golf course with a clubhouse that has a bar and kitchen along with a party room you can rent. Here again we could do a potluck, catered in, or we could just order at our convenience from the kitchen. They have pizza and sandwiches

IDEA #3-a state park. Pine Lake has a shelter house we can reserve and have a meal catered in or a potluck where we bring our own food

IDEA #4- rent a meeting room at a hotel. Of course then we would have to order the food through them. Hotel Pattee in Perry comes to mind as a fun place to meet.

As for the time frame, I am thinking July, August or September. I don't think I can get it put together by June. And the August dates will be limited as I am planning on working at the State Fair again this year and the National UPMA convention is the last week in August. I am thinking a week day as places would be easier to reserve. As for the location, I would like for you to indicate your town. That way if most of the people interested are say from east of I-35 with a couple west of I-35, I would pick a location probably east of 35. If I get a response from all over, I will probably pick like the Ames, Boone, Perry area as a central location. The locations I used in my ideas were just examples and not the actual locations at this time.

This would be open to ALL retirees! You would not have to be a UPMA member and spouses would be welcome if they could stand a day of postal talk! Active Postmasters and Managers are invited to join us also, but of course a day of AL! As for meal costs and room rental, I am thinking a couple things. #1 just pass the "kittie" and we feed that as a free will offering. #2 would be to determine a set price that everyone pays. Or #3, I could approach the UPMA board and see if there would be funds available from our dues money to offset the costs. So UPMA members would eat free and non-members would have to pay a nominal cost. Of course 1187-Rs would be available for you to sign up that day and become a UPMA member so you could eat free! Of course this idea would require approval from the State Executive Board, which I DO NOT have at this time.

The more members we have the more the possibility of expanding this outing in future years due to having more money to do things with. Maybe future years we could do a day trip to the Amanas, Field of Dreams or Winterset as a group. Increasing Retiree attendance at the State Convention is another possibility. There we could do fun things also. Unfortunately this year, a trip to Galena, Il fell through due to some unfortunate circumstances. Next year we will be in Council Bluffs, and maybe a riverboat trip up the Missouri would be fun! Since that is Keva Richardson's neighborhood, maybe she could give us some ideas on what to do! UPMA is the organization formed from NAPUS and League joining.

I haven't come up with a catchy acronym on what to call this day, you know the Post Office is all about acronyms! The best I have come up with is Iowa Postmaster and Manager Retiree Outing(IPMRO). If you can come up with something catchier, let me know! So at this time I am asking you to fill out the survey below and return to me ASAP! I am asking for your name, town and email so I can determine the location using the area I get the most responses from and then create an email list so I can communicate quickly with those interested. You can return it to me at Kevin Schwab, 1130 Main St, Ackley IA 50601. Or email me at mailman4699@yahoo.com, or call or text at 515.669.9616.

I prefer :	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	Week day preference:	MON TUE WED THU FF	- स
I prefer:						
IDEA 1with a Potluck meal				Catered meal		
IDEA 2with a Potluck meal				Catered meal	Order from menu	-
IDEA 3with a Potluck meal Catered meal						
IDEA 4ordered through the hotel						
Option 5	your id	dea stinks and	d am not interes	sted in attending such an	event	
NAME				CITY/TOWN		
EMAIL or o	other con	tact informati	on			

In Memoriam:

A life that touches others goes on forever.

Condolences to Janeene Beeman, retired Postmaster of Dallas Center, on the death of her husband David on December 3rd, 2022.



Greg Snow: CMR Rep. and newly elected President

Do the right thing, be responsible and set the attendance example!

As A Chapter Member Representative for UPMA, I would like to t ouch on the responsibilities we have as Managers.

The first and foremost is attendance. How can we hold our

employees accountable to deliver the mail or help our customers, when we ourselves have poor attendance? We need to lead by example, which means we should be at work, period.

Postmasters have the benefit of using up to 4 hours of Personal leave to go to those appointments that we as individuals must go to, but that does not mean we can work 4 hours and then go home every day. It does mean if we have a doctor's appointment, we can take part of the day as Personal leave without using 8 hours of our Annual or sick leave to go. We should not be abusing this privilege, and we should be reporting our absences to our bosses as our employees are expected to report their absences to us. Each MPOO has their requirements that you must follow to report Personal Leave use. You also need to make sure you fill out a PS Form 3971 for each time you are using leave, whether it is Annual or Sick leave or the occasional Personal Leave requests.

The second topic I want to discuss and caution everyone on is reporting non-deliveries of mail. You can have action presented against you for not reporting your office's non-deliveries, and this can be very severe, it is not a slap on the hand. Your MPOO has the SOP for non-deliveries, and you should follow it to perfection, don't think it will go unnoticed, it will be noticed and reported by someone, it is better that it comes from YOU! There are at least 3 locations you must report to: first is your MPOO, notify them as soon as you know you will have ANY non-deliveries; estimate high if you do not know exactly, you can decrease the number as the mail is being delivered. The second location is in FDB under "Operational Impact Reporting for SITREP", and the third is in DCV.

This is one thing that is not better to ask forgiveness after you have failed to report your non-deliveries, be proactive. Your MPOO should understand and maybe they can help get you assistance. NO, it may not be pleasant, but neither is being removed for failure to follow instruction.

I will now step down off my soapbox and tell you how proud we are of you for being Managers, it is not easy, and we probably can no longer call it fun and exciting, but it is a great time to be growing (and changing) with the United States Postal Service. Hang in there and don't hesitate to reach out if you need help.

Thank you for everything you all do, and we hope to see you in Denver in August!

Greg Snow



UMPA New Executive VP of Membership: Sherri Lingle

Hello fellow Postmasters, Managers and Associate members:

It is Official, I am the new Membership Chair for the United Postmaster and Managers of Iowa.

This is a new chapter for me, and I am more than willing to listen to any ideas that may be out there that will help aide me in developing the possibilities to grow as a Chapter!

Our state convention was a terrific start to this!

I met several new Postmasters/Managers and some Postmasters/Managers that were not so new, but they were first timers at the Iowa Convention. I was incredibly happy see so many there.

I recently read a saying.

"SOMEONE IS STITTING IN THE SHADE TODAY BECAUSE SOMEONE PLANTED A TREE A LONG TIME AGO"

How true this is. In my short time as a Postmaster (8 years). I have seen what a difference one manager can make.

The Managers that invest in their people, their place of work. They were there to make a difference.

We are here to make a difference, and we DO make a difference every day.

We need to be the ones that plant trees and allow them flourish so that the ones that follow can enjoy the shade.

We must, as a collective, help one another. We must reach out our hand, our voice, or our person to aid the fellow Postmaster or Manager that is struggling. We must be willing to put on a smile and share it with all those that just need that smile or that need just a word of encouragement. Whether it is the first day or the 1000th day, we all need to know that someone is out there, someone that cares and that are willing to help, in some capacity and UPMA is just that collective. You all have talents, talents that we all could use. You are what makes UPMA so important. We have A goal each day and it is the same goal every day.

On the return drive home from the State Convention, our little car with us 3 Postmasters, detoured and again I was reminded of how the 3 of us became such good friends. Each of us from a different part of the state. Each of us with different life lessons. Each of us live at-least 2 hours from the other, in any given direction and yet here we were at the Field of Dreams. I watched as one Postmaster pitched to another Postmaster. They swung at the pitches and the encouragement could be felt. We ran the bases. (I was not so smooth at the running part.) These opportunities are only available through the gathering of our group of Managers, those that Plant trees.

The previous Board has done an extremely well job (They are here for the "I Make a Difference Every day") and they will continue to guide the board and the members, on how to plant those trees. I will try every day to Make a difference and my hope is that you will have that knowledge and go home each day believing that "I Make a Difference Every day" and I hope that I can help those that will come after as well as that help those in need today, no matter what type of help is needed.

Talk to you all soon!

Sherri L Lingle

Executive Vice President/Membership

Kerry Nichols

IA Secretary/Treasurer

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Looking Ahead:

Articles for the Newsletter (July/August) will be Aug.10th, 2023. Submit to Merri Burgart at iowaeditor2022@gmail.com