

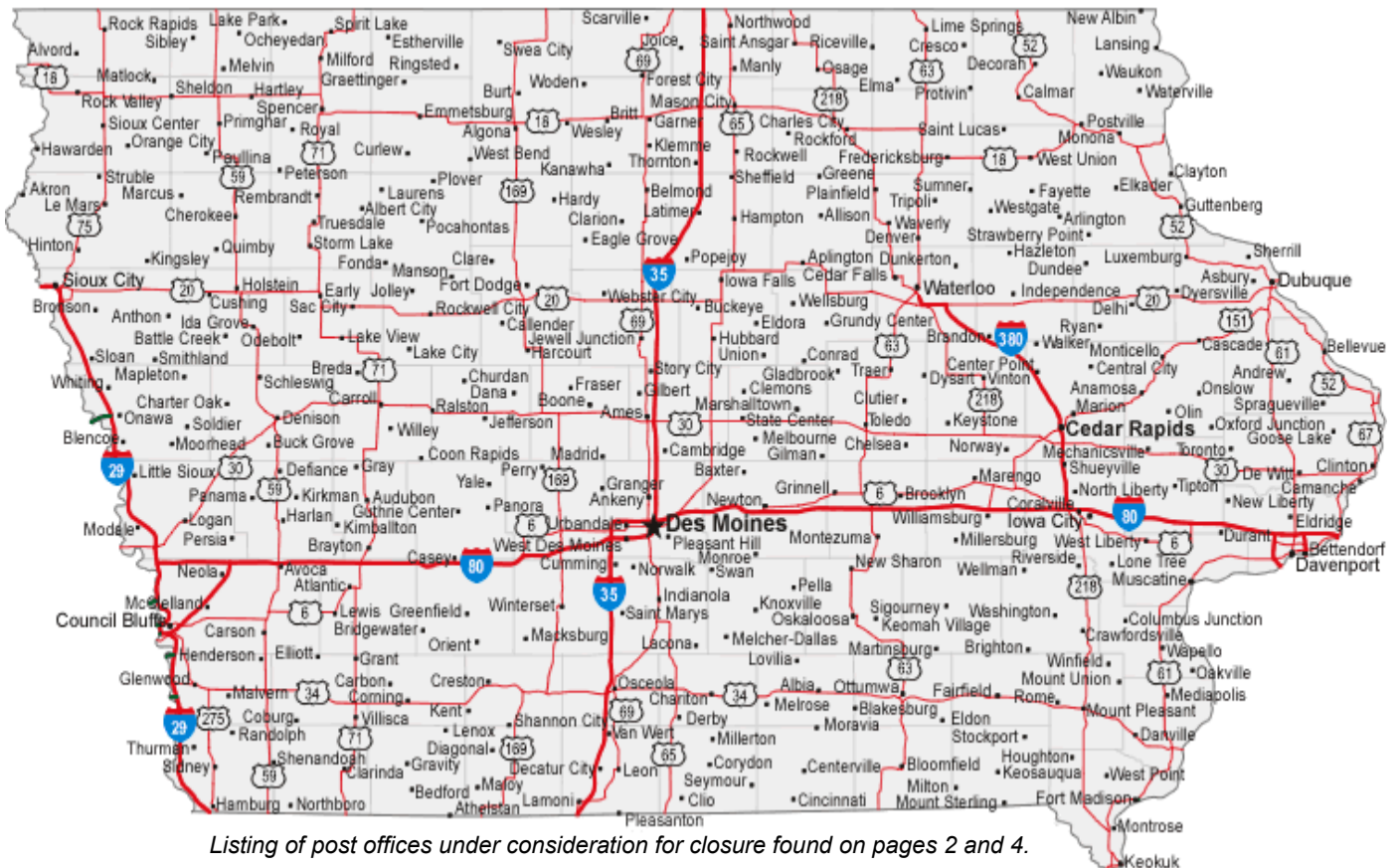
THE HEARTLANDER



IOWA BRANCH, NATIONAL LEAGUE OF POSTMASTERS
Vol. 11-3 Iowa Branch NLPM Newsletter Sept. 2011



ARE YOU STILL



ON THE MAP?

POST OFFICE	STATE	ZIP	LEVEL
ALEXANDER	IA	50420	13
ALLEMAN	IA	50007	11
ANDOVER	IA	52701	E
ARCHER	IA	51231	11
ARGYLE	IA	52619	E
ARISPE	IA	50831	C
AYRSHIRE	IA	50515	11
BARNUM	IA	50518	C
BEAVER	IA	50031	E
BENTON	IA	50835	C
BLAIRSBURG	IA	50034	11
BLANCHARD	IA	51630	11
BLOCKTON	IA	50836	11
BOONEVILLE	IA	50038	E
BOUTON	IA	50039	11
BOXHOLM	IA	50040	11
BRADYVILLE	IA	51631	11
BRADFORD	IA	50041	E
BRADGATE	IA	50520	E
BRANDON	IA	52210	13
BRAYTON	IA	50042	11
BRIDGEWATER	IA	50837	11
BRUNSVILLE	IA	51008	E
BURNSIDE	IA	50521	E
CALLENDER	IA	50523	13
CALUMET	IA	51009	E
CASTALIA	IA	52133	11
CASTANA	IA	51010	11
CEDAR	IA	52543	E
CENTER JUNCTION	IA	52212	11
CHELSEA	IA	52215	13
CHESTER	IA	52134	11
CINCINNATI	IA	52549	13
CLARE	IA	50524	11
CLEGHORN	IA	51014	13
CLEMONS	IA	50051	C
COIN	IA	51636	11
COLLEGE SPRINGS	IA	51637	13
CONESVILLE	IA	52739	11
CONROY	IA	52220	11
CRYSTAL LAKE	IA	50432	11
CUMBERLAND	IA	50843	13
CURLEW	IA	50527	11
CUSHING	IA	51018	11
CYLINDER	IA	50528	11

DANA	IA	50064	E
DAVIS CITY	IA	50065	13
DAWSON	IA	50066	E
DECATUR	IA	50067	11
DEDHAM	IA	51440	11
DELOIT	IA	51441	11
DERBY	IA	50068	11
DIAGONAL	IA	50845	13
DOLLIVER	IA	50531	11
DUNDEE	IA	52038	11
ELBERON	IA	52225	11
ELLIOTT	IA	51532	13
ELLSTON	IA	50074	11
EXLINE	IA	52555	E
FARMERSBURG	IA	52047	13
FLORIS	IA	52560	11
FREDERIKA	IA	50631	11
FRUITLAND	IA	52749	11
GARDEN CITY	IA	50102	C
GARDEN GROVE	IA	50103	11
GIBSON	IA	50104	E
GILLETT GROVE	IA	51341	C
GRAFTON	IA	50440	13
GRAND RIVER	IA	50108	11
GRANDVIEW	IA	52752	11
GRAVITY	IA	50848	11
HARDY	IA	50545	11
HARVEY	IA	50119	E
HASTINGS	IA	51540	11
HAVELOCK	IA	50546	11
HAVERHILL	IA	50120	11
HILLSBORO	IA	52630	11
HOMESTEAD	IA	52236	11
JAMAICA	IA	50128	11
JOICE	IA	50446	11
JOLLEY	IA	50551	E
KAMRAR	IA	50132	11
KESWICK	IA	50136	13
KIMBALLTON	IA	51543	11
KIRKVILLE	IA	52566	E
KNIERIM	IA	50552	11
LANESBORO	IA	51451	11
LARRABEE	IA	51029	11
LEDYARD	IA	50556	11
LEWIS	IA	51544	13
LIBERTY CENTER	IA	50145	C

From the President's Desk...

As I sit here on a beautiful Friday night contemplating what to put in my news article for you, I am also reflecting on this previous week and all that has happened. To say the least, this past week has been one to "top the books" with 49 Post Offices being placed into the DUO Process in the Hawkeye District, which sent 49 Postmasters into a week of turmoil!! We all have been forewarned that every office is being looked at for a possible DUO, however this latest announcement of the offices that have been placed into this process really has me scratching my head as to the logic and cost savings the Hawkeye District is looking to save. Moving carriers 15-25 miles in an LLV (which are ice skates on wheels in the winter), to downgrading one office only to upgrade the gaining office, to stating that there are only three criteria now to put an office into this process instead of using the regulations printed in the DUO guidebook. All these make me want to scratch my head and question "Where is the savings?"

The reason I am so confused about all of this, is that we were issued a DUO guidebook back in December that was put together by Headquarters, with the help of all the organizations. The DUO guidebook was compiled so that we would have a fair and equitable guide to use in the process of DUO across the board from one office to another. The regulations and criteria that were addressed in this guide book were to be followed by every District, not just a few. From the DUO teleconference call that was held this past week for all the affected offices, the message was twofold: there are only three criteria now that will be considered and that the DUO guide is ever changing. This is so not true!!!! The guide has not changed and there are many more criteria than three to look at when you look at an office for DUO. Miles traveled and savings are big issues, and the cost savings needs to be reviewed every 30, 60 & 90 days following the DUO implementation to be sure a savings is realized. Looking at this from 30,000 feet is not an answer for cost savings. A garbage dump at 1,000 feet still looks like a garbage dump at 30,000 feet!! Rules and regulations are made to be followed with very few, if any, exceptions. Postmasters are asked to follow the rules every day in their offices, so why is a Headquarters guidebook not being followed by our District.

I know I am venting here, but it really has been one heck of a week and I know it has been an awful week for so many of you too. Nothing, anymore surprises me!!! I cannot emphasize to you enough, when something is happening in your office, please call me or one of your state officers. We need to know what is happening in your office or to you immediately, so we can hopefully get a handle on the situations quickly. Your National Board has been my best friend lately with everything that has been going on in the Hawkeye District. They have more knowledge and resources than I have in Iowa. That is why I depend on them to get me the correct answers I need to help all of you.

◀ Post Offices being considered for closure on page 2 and 4.

In closing, I would like all of you to remember the following:

Make the call to me or your Iowa Board members if anything out of the norm happens in your office.

Always follow up a phone call from your MPOO or District personnel with an email stating "Per our phone conversation, it is my understanding that... (whatever was discussed)". This way you have in writing what was discussed and a confirmation from your MPOO so that there is no "gray" area later on.

Notify me or the board of any disciplinary action in your office.

Always document everything that you do in your office. "CYB" is a good rule to live by!

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY.....

Be the best POSTMASTER you can be. We are a proud select group of employees, and we will stay proud Postmasters of the USPS if we stick together and fight this as a team as League members.

Hope to see many of you at our National Convention in New Mexico. The convention should be filled with information that I will be bringing back for all of you. So stay tuned for the next *Heartlander* with an update from our National Convention.

Until the next *Heartlander*,

Barb Rasmussen
State President



**Congratulations to
Sally Birdsall
on her
103rd
Birthday!**



Sally is still a LEAGUE and Auxiliary member and wishes she could attend the conventions. Her health is good, but she says she is unsteady on her feet. Amazing!

On behalf of all the Iowa Postmasters and Auxiliary members....

Happy Belated Birthday to you Sally.
We wish you the best!

Letter of Introduction

Greetings fellow League members, please allow me to use this, my first 'Heartlander' article, to introduce myself. I am Carol Sieck, and I have been a postal employee since 1989. Currently, serving as Postmaster of the Jefferson, Iowa post office. Prior to Jefferson, I served as Postmaster in Gowrie and Dawson. I still live on our family farm in rural Greene County where my husband Allan and I raised our three children.

I share the same concerns that all of us have about the future of the postal service and I cannot help but wonder what the USPS will look like ten years from now. I endure the same anxiety that at all of you do, the unnecessary and unproductive anxiety that has become an endemic aspect of our daily work environment.

The burning question we are all asking each other right now probably boils down to this; How do we handle the endless stress and frustration that our profession currently requires us to endure? My response is this: there is nothing we can do right now that is more important than staying united and maintaining excellent communication. Not only is there strength in numbers, there is also comfort in our connectedness. I look forward to hearing from you and I hope you will stay in touch. Don't just stay in touch with me, **stay in touch with each other**. We all need the support.

Carol Sieck
Vice President

From the Auxiliary

The State League of Postmaster's annual convention is past. It was great seeing all our friends, too bad that several were unable to attend because of work. Speaking of which, it sounds like it's getting worse rather than better. The Postal Service is now trying to close so many post offices which are important and a major part of the communities they serve. Some Postmasters, Retired Postmasters and Auxiliary members have been attending meetings where the Postal Service is trying to close Post Offices.

The Auxiliary awarded a scholarship to Ethan Knight, grandson of Donna Matheson which was announced at convention. The Auxiliary along with fellow Retired Postmasters helped with the hospitality room during convention as well.

We need auxiliary members, so it is important to work and sign up Postmasters as well as Retired Postmasters as members. We really need you and hope you need us. So, sign up whoever you can. The cost for Auxiliary membership is only \$5.00 for a year. You can sign up your spouse, children or grandchildren or a friend of Postmasters. Send the name, address and phone number along with \$5.00 for each member to: Nancy Malmquist, Boxholm, Iowa 50040.

We all hope to see many of you at the State Convention next spring.

Auxiliary Executive Vice President
Gloria Lee

New PSE Clerk

I'm sure all of you have heard that we will have a new position soon. The new APWU contract provides for a Level 4 PSE Clerk. Instead of PMRs in the level 15-16 offices, we will have a PSE Level 4 Clerk. Level 13 and below offices will keep PMRs. The PMRs in those offices will have to reapply to keep their job or transfer to another office that is a 13 or below. Letters were sent out to those PMRs and are aware that their position will end August 23. There seems to be some confusion on what this position exactly is, so I will share with you what information I have. I have heard they will not be assigned to one office and will be shared by two or more offices.

In an email from Chris Mozena, the PMRs will need to apply on eCareer, the jobs will post for five days. Current PMRs will not need to retake the drug screen, background check, fingerprints and orientation. The salary is \$12.38. They will need to take an exam and complete a Medical Assessment (after they are selected). They will earn annual leave. They will be able to purchase health insurance after their first 360 days appointment.

There is some confusion on being able to OIC, through League it was said they could OIC and in my email it is stated that they will not be allowed to OIC. Also, it states they will not be allowed to apply for permanent Postmaster positions if they open them up.

There is still a lot of clarification that district is waiting to get from WEA/HG. Look for the updates in your emails or bulletins. To check out the new APWU contract go to apwu.org. I hope this information will help you. If I get any major clarifications I will try to keep you updated in the *Heartlander*.

Have a great summer,
Diana Diersen, Exec. Vice Pres.

Be the Solution...

Lately, I have been doing route adjustments and walking 3999's for the district. What I have found is that we are finding a lot of savings with city carriers. There is room to make adjustments to better structure the work load. For the most part, the carriers would flat out tell me what they thought they could take extra. They all know that the company is in financial trouble. But a lot of them were scared for their future...as we all are. To be able to still work for a company that is losing 23 million a day is not a big confidence booster. You can't help but think about the doom and gloom that could be lurking around the corner.

The fact is, nobody likes to change. When you do something for so long for so many years and then you are told to do it a different way, nobody accepts it right away. Bottom line, this company is changing so rapidly it's easy to get lost in the shuffle and lose sight of what is really happening. Survival, many of us will be possibly losing our routes, clerks, and/or building, whatever it takes for us to survive. Change is coming. "Everyone knows we need help and need to cut...just don't do it to me". Sound familiar? We all know it, we just don't want to accept it yet. Just remember we are all in the same boat. If you are having problems call a fellow Postmaster and talk it through. Be part of the solution and not part of the problem. As hard as it will be look to the future. What can I do to help bring in revenue? Keep morale up in your offices by talking about positive things. No missed scans, returning on time, attendance, or business connects and let your employees know you appreciate them. I know I tend to want to do more when I know my boss supports me and doesn't treat me like I'm not important. To feel appreciated in this company is not as easy as it used to be. In fact, it's lacking all over the place. You should not have managers, supervisors and Postmasters out on stress leave. I'm asking that you as Postmasters lead by example and bring back appreciation to your employees and the work place. Who knows, maybe it will rub off on someone else.

Adam Griswold, VP
Postmaster
125 E 1st Street
Earlham, IA.50072
515-758-2118

FINDING THE POSITIVES IN THE U.S.P.S.

These days the news from the Post Office can seem all doom-and-gloom. Often, we forget the invaluable service we provide to the public. Though we may sometimes feel taken for granted, I'd like to highlight a few stories that resonated with my sense of pride in the work we all do.

I recently heard a story out of Belmond, Iowa that illustrated the dedication of our carriers. A young couple left town for what should have been a weekend trip with their new daughter. As it so often happens with newborns, the plan abruptly changed. Suddenly, the two-day trip became a five-day trip. On the last day of the trip, the couple learned that his grandmother had mailed a hand-made present the day before they left on the trip. When they returned home, they were heartbroken to find no package and no mail. In a panic, they hunted down their route carrier whom they had not personally met before. Upon hearing their story, the carrier realized he had taken the package and the mail to return it to the post office for safekeeping when it had not been picked up the day of delivery. The grateful couple received a handmade baby blanket from an equally grateful grandmother. Yet another example of the United States Postal Carrier who did not just go the last mile, he went the extra mile.

Excellent customer service doesn't stop with our carriers. I recall a story of a postal clerk who received a frantic call from a couple that had been married that afternoon. While they were saying their "I do's" a carrier had been trying to deliver their honeymoon airline tickets in a package that required a signature. The tickets were taken back to the post office that Saturday afternoon and the couple was going to miss out on a tropical paradise. When the clerk heard their story, she rushed to the post office to meet the couple, re-open the office, and delivered the tickets to their dream vacation. Stories like these remind us that every choice we make matters to our customers and to our business.

I chose these two stories because they remind me that we are an integral part of our communities. The smallest decision to do the right thing can create life-long bonds between a post office and the public. Let your pride in a job well done replace the fear that you might sometimes feel. Continue to serve the people with smiles and consistency. When other companies fail them, remind the customer that they always and still matter to the United States Postal Service.

Submitted by Janeene Beeman, Vice President



Iowa Group at National Convention

2011 NATIONAL LEAGUE OF POSTMASTERS

WESTERN AREA II - FALL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 7, 8 & 9



Holiday Inn Express

2501 S. Shirley Ave
Sioux Falls SD. 57106



Expected speakers include: National President Mark Strong, National Ex. VP John Olson and National VP Kelly McCartney plus others

Registration

First Timers	_____	\$30 before Oct 1.	_____	\$40 after Oct 1
Postmasters	_____	\$40 before Oct 1.	_____	\$50 after Oct1
Aux, BRATTS and Guests	_____	\$30 before Oct 1.	_____	\$40 after Oct 1

Send registrations to: Dawn Case
111 1st ST N
Ellendale, ND 58436

Hotel Reservations can be made at: HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS
605-361-1022
Use Reservation Code:
National League of Postmasters
Room rate of \$95 a night + tax



IN TOO DEEP

I know most all of you United States postal service employees are in deep with their work. I want to take the time and write this article about you recognizing yourself and where you are with your home and family. Life could be short and you not know it. We just don't know what God has planned for us.

I spent six days in the hospital from a ruptured ulcer; I know what it's like to put work first. I'm not saying work caused my ulcer, we will never know, but I do know how much time and effort I put into my job and it's too bad it took that to realize how much my life is in a continuous cycle. Up at 4:30, five days a week; rush my kids off to daycare and Grandma's and off to work for ten hours. I don't know about any of you guys but I have a 2 hour lunch that keeps me away from my home also. If I go into OT I could be away from my home and family for 12+ hours. I'm not complaining about my job, I really truly do love and enjoy it. I'm complaining about myself and what I do with my family after my job is over.

I think it is easy to get into a rut and be in this continuous cycle with your life. One of the best cures for this is FRIENDS. Friends and family are your best medicine to come home to from a hard day of work. I encourage all of you to reach out to another League member when you need something. Just think of League as part of your family. They are a huge supporter in you and they have got your back. Any of your closest postal employee friends not League members? Why not? Now's the time to get them joined. With ALL the changes, pressure, and challenges, the Postal Service is facing now is the time to join League. You want somebody to fight for you or recognize your brick walls you're running into at work really shouldn't be stoppers but learning experiences that you can climb over, then call a League member.

I really wanted to write this article to get some if not all of the readers to recognize how easy it is to not be able to realize yourself, that you're in a continuous cycle that is not healthy. So, Doctor Jo's advice is try not to get in to deep with your work. Spend time with your family and loved ones. Call on your Postal friends and make time for yourself. If you're not a League member, don't you think it's time? — Johanna Hill, Secretary

THE HEARTLANDER

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**NEXT ISSUE
DEADLINE**

October 3, 2011



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