



Secretary's Department Newsletter

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Report from the National Secretary

Secretary's Department COMMITTEES

www.usps.org/national/secretary/

Historian

www.usps.org/national/historian/

Information Technology

www.usps.org/national/itcom/

Operations Manual

www.usps.org/national/om/

Publications

www.usps.org/national/pubcom/

Ship's Store

www.usps.org/national/shipstore/

The Ensign

www.usps.org/national/ensign/

Headquarters

www.usps.org

Editor/Web Publisher

Webmaster

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The Secretary's Department has had a very successful year. The success was a result of the efforts of both the many volunteers in the department, as well as the wonderful employees at headquarters. Highlights of the year's accomplishments include:

Major upgrades to the headquarters computer system and re-organization of the warehouse, with the separation of the inventories of Ship's Store and the Education Department have combined to make the operation at headquarters much more efficient.

The *THE ENSIGN*® committee has initiated a plan to print newsletter articles from D/33 in *The ENSIGN* in both English and Spanish in a side-by-side two-column format. The hiring of a copy editor for *The ENSIGN* staff along with changes in layout and copy of *The ENSIGN* makes for continued improvements in the magazine. Along with these changes, a plan is being developed to make major upgrades to the magazine over the next five years. The goal is to make *The ENSIGN* a professional magazine in which boat manufacturers would be willing to place advertising. The ultimate goal is to generate advertising revenue in the same magnitude as the cost of production.

The development by ITCOM of a new security system for access by members to the members and committee pages on the national web site has been a great success. The system utilizes the membership list to ascertain if the member is current, employing their Certificate Number and Zip Code. Introduction of the latest version of DB2000 allows Roster Chairmen to access and update squadron and district rosters over the Internet directly to the membership files on the AS400 at headquarters. The OD1 and OD2 forms can now be downloaded online and submitted electronically to headquarters using the new version of DB2000. The Secretary's Department is working in coordination with the National Treasurer on two projects, the acceptance of credit cards by squadrons, and the implementation of a voluntary Headquarters Collection/Anniversary Billing system trial limited to the members of three districts. Kathy Kesterson of headquarters and a team from ITCOM are working diligently to create the software systems and web site necessary to accommodate the new dues collection process.

The Publications committee has completed the process of evaluating the newsletters for the 2003 'Distinction in Journalism' award. 23 Districts and 270 Squadrons will receive awards for 2003. The committee had a very successful year, achieving their two main goals: evaluation of newsletters in Spanish; and evaluation of newsletters in electronic format. Newsletters in both categories were winners of the 'Distinction in Journalism' award for this past year.

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POWER BYTE

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What's New at USPS® Headquarters?

www.usps.org



**National Headquarters
Raleigh, North Carolina**

**Headquarters Director
Mary Catherine Berube**
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Almost every new initiative undertaken by USPS affects the headquarters staff. The Power of One Campaign is no exception. Staff members in the Membership Department are now entering data into a new members' record that will allow the Membership Committee to capture the name of the member who most influenced a new member to join. Because of the large volume of MemCom1 applications in stock, we are continuing to ship the existing applications until the inventory is depleted. However, these forms can be easily adapted to show the name and certificate number of the influencing member. A member may simply add the data to the top of the form and indicate that it is Power of One information. An updated MemCom1 application, which includes Power of One information, can be downloaded at http://www.usps.org/national/membership/printable_forms.htm. A redesigned membership pocket application, which also includes Power of One information, is now available at headquarters. The new membership applications also include member's skills data that will be entered into a member's record at headquarters.

Headquarters is also focusing on the headquarters anniversary billing test that will begin in April 2004. Members in districts 10, 15 and 16 will receive a different dues notice than members in other districts. These members will be able to renew their dues using their credit card via the Internet or by mailing in their dues notice and check to headquarters. Headquarters will retain the appropriate national dues and will remit the district assessment and squadron dues electronically to district and squadron bank accounts.

Remember — our main focus at headquarters is providing excellent customer service. Please do not hesitate to contact headquarters by calling 888-367-8777 if you have questions or concerns.

by Mary Catherine Berube
Headquarters Director



***“The Flag
and Etiquette
committee will
join the
Secretary's
Department ..”***

www.usps.org/natioanl/fecom

Report from the National Secretary

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2004 looks to be another exciting year for our department. The Flag and Etiquette committee will join the Secretary's Department on Saturday, January 17th as part of a reorganization of national committees. Please join me in welcoming to our department R/C Jim Williams, Stf/C Barbara Spraggins and the other members of their committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in the Secretary's Department for their efforts both for the department and for USPS this past year. Special thanks for all their work go to R/C Joyce Shaw of *The ENSIGN*® committee, R/C Peter Michelson of the Operations Manual committee, R/C Bill Reasons of the Publications committee and R/C Charlie Sutter, National Historian all of whom are ending their term of office at this meeting. They have my best wishes for their next endeavor and may God Bless.

V/C Frank A. Dvorak, SN

SERVICE IS OUR PLEDGE



THE ENSIGN® has had a very productive year in 2003 and continues to excel in the pursuit of its mission statement: "To publish a quality magazine for USPS® that informs and educates members, increases awareness of past and present accomplishments, and promotes and inspires safe recreational boating and boating education."

In preparation for 2004, three new columns have made their way into the December issue of *THE ENSIGN* and the fourth arrived in time to celebrate the New Year in the January issue of *THE ENSIGN* "Squadron Success Stories"! At this time we have eleven stories accounted for to be published in every issue in the year 2004. Watch for your Squadron Success Story! Continue to look for and read the Crew Corner, Boat DockTor and Test Your Knowledge that had been introduced in the December issue of *THE ENSIGN*.

We are grateful to Yvonne Hill and her entire staff and to The Ensign Committee for helping to create and upgrade our publication. Everyone can be proud of the quality of *THE ENSIGN* as we go into 2004!

by R/C (elect) Ina Fay Zitter, JN

YEAR END SYNOPSIS OF ACTIVITIES

- 2003 Photography contest netted 82 entries; 461 votes were cast by USPS to select the winner at the Annual Meeting.
- New part time employee, Kelly Anderson, hired at HQ to work with TE staff.
- Redesign of TE website effected in 2003 at URL theensign.org.
- TEC working with Publications to produce an Online listing of publication editors.
- Mission Statement developed for TEC:
- Vendor Lobby Table displays are now coordinated by TEC. TEC has developed Letters of Invitation to participate, Terms and Conditions for Exhibitors, and Application to Exhibit Form. Packets are mailed to potential exhibitors and exhibits coordinated for the Meetings Committee.
- New Columns in TE include Crew Corner, Boat DockTor, Test Your Knowledge.

by R/C Joyce Shaw, AP



PUBLICATIONS

The January 2004 'Editor's Newsletter' published by PubCom is on-line at www.usps.org/national/pubcom/. 2004 Editor's Newsletter Advisors are included.

PubCom's primary mission is to help each USPS editor produce the very best newsletter possible, so don't hesitate to contact your advisor whenever you have a question or desire a progress report.

2003 'Distinction in Journalism' award recipients will be posted in Orlando and on the PubCom web site. While in Orlando, visit the Parade Of Publications table and introduce yourself. *(Information for this article from the "Editor's Newsletter" Jan 04)*

The Ensign Mission Statement

*"To publish
a quality
magazine
for USPS
that informs
and educates
members ...
inspires
safe recreational
boating ..."*

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SERVICE IS OUR PLEDGE



Are you protected from viruses and intrusion?

Virus Prevention

There have been numerous virus attacks against many of our mail lists. Dozens have come from a site called security@microsoft.com. The message exhorts us to install the patch immediately, and allows the recipient to infer that it will prevent problems with viruses. Microsoft does not distribute patches in this manner. The attachment contains a malicious virus which is difficult to remove.

Fortunately, our mail list screens have so far been successful in preventing them, as well as Spam, from actually being posted. These screens are working now, but may not be 100% effective in the future. If they fail, you could all receive a dangerous virus. I want to remind members that all connected computers must have operating, effective, and regularly up-dated anti-virus software. My own computer has been repeatedly attacked, not only on my personal e-mail address, but on the various USPS addresses which I monitor. To date, my automatically updated Norton Anti-Virus 2002 software (now upgraded to version 2004) has kept my computers virus free. There are many effective anti-virus applications available, but all of them require regular updating.

Intrusion Prevention

The easiest, most efficient, method for a home or small-office network to prevent intrusion, through many of Windows' open ports and inadequacies, is by use of a router. A router is also the best way for two or more computers to share a high speed internet connection. A router contains a firewall called NAT (Network Address Translation), which prevents external computers from seeing any of the computers on the network. If your computer(s) uses a wireless connection to the internet modem, a wireless-capable router might be better than a simple access point, even though a bit more expensive. In addition, one never knows when he might wish to add another computer to the household. Some experts recommend both hardware and software firewalls. Without a router one MUST use a software firewall. There are many from reputable companies which are reported to work well. The major differences are mainly in convenience and ease of use.

I have used a four port router with my home network for three years. To my knowledge, I have had no problems. External sites have tested my ADSL connection, and have not detected any open ports on my networked computers. One site even reported not even detecting any computers. So the router firewall seems to be working. The router firmware requires updating from time to time, but not usually as often as anti virus definitions. A firmware patch can usually be found at the manufacturer's website.

I have been unable to learn if the NAT is sufficient, or if one should have a software firewall as well. I do not have one. The router is certainly easier to use. To my knowledge all routers have the NAT feature, but one should be sure when buying it. There is more information about intrusion on the internet. www.grc.com is a bit technical, but interesting, and a good place to start. The site will also offer to test your connection.

Be Safe out there

Visit the ITCOM Site at www.usps.org/national/itcom/ Help Desk. E-mail help@usps.org if you have questions.

Stf/C Phil Arcuni, SN
Asst Chairman, ITCOM



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OPERATIONS MANUAL COM



Dock Box Mark Downs



A new category "Dock Box Sale" is now at the on-line Shipstore. Prices are greatly reduced on discontinued and older items to make way for new inventory. **Limited Sizes, Colors, and Quantities** are available at the **on-line Shipstore!**

www.usps.org/national/shipstore

HISTORIAN COM UPDATE

Under the leadership of R/C Charles Sutter, AP, the Historians Committee had another banner year. Squadron history reports were at an all time high.

Our squadron history form 701-H has been incorporated into DB2000 by D/Lt/C Ken Guscott, JN. and is ready to use. Our Historians Com webmaster D/Lt/C "Andy" Sausser, AP will keep our website updated with the latest information.

R/C Sutter will remain on the Historians Committee and with his guidance the new leadership team of R/C Edward Bauer, SN and Stf/C Phyllis Millan, P and all our committee members look forward to 2004 being an outstanding year for the Historians Committee.

by R/C (elect) Edward Bauer, SN

The past three years have seen many changes in our organization—and the committee has made many amendments to the Operations Manual to reflect this. At our upcoming meeting in Orlando, the organization will once again go through a major restructuring with many committees changing departments. This was announced in Reno and will be voted on by the membership at the Annual Meeting. However, some of the announced changes have been given more thought and the committees will remain where they are—other committees that were not moving will now be moving.

As you can see, the job of the OMCom is constantly to review the procedures and structure of our organization—making changes to the manual as necessary. But that must be borne against the cost effectiveness of printing hard copy manuals or providing CD-ROMs—hard copies will be available when the organization structure is more stable. Until that time you can download the latest information from our website.

The members of the committee have worked hard to provide quick and reliable updates to the manual and I would like to thank them all for their efforts during these three years. We have lost members due to ill health and they will be missed but others are now stepping up to the mark. I wish incoming rear commander Pat Gagliano, AP the very best for her tenure as leader of this exciting committee.

by R/C Peter Mitchelson, SN



National Meetings Calendar

2004	Annual Meeting Rosen Ctr, Orlando, FL	15–19 January
	Spring GB Hilton, Pittsburg, PA	19–23 May
	Fall GB Adams, Jacksonville, FL	8–12 September
2005	Annual Meeting Rosen Ctr, Orlando, FL	5–9 January
	Spring GB Adam's Mark, Charlotte, NC	1–5 June
	Fall GB Hilton, Portland, Ore.	6–11 September
2006	Annual Meeting Rosen Ctr. Orlando, FL	4–8 January

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**Historian Com
Information and forms
can be found at**

www.usps.org/national/historian/

*"The
Operations
Manual
can be found
on the USPS®
Web site"
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