

# the Communicator

Baltimore Postal Customer Council

Winter 2009 Volume 8.2

## Postmaster's Corner



By William Ridenour  
Postmaster, USPS Baltimore

*Attendees gather at the Baltimore District Main  
Post Office for PCC Day 2008*

Once again National PCC Day was a great success. I hope the vast amount of information provided was helpful in your everyday operation. This year's topic provided up to date information on the new requirement "Move Update".

The Move Update standards provide ways for mailers to reduce the number of mail pieces that are undeliverable as addressed by the periodic matching of a mailer's address records with customer-filed change-of-address orders. Once a requirement only for First-Class Mail, the Move Update standards have recently been extended to Standard Mail. In addition, a new requirement means mailers need to increase the minimum frequency of Move Update processing from 185 calendar days to 95 days prior to the date of mailing.

More frequent processing will go a long way toward making sure mail reaches intended audiences. If mail pieces are undeliverable as addressed (UAA), senders lose opportunities to communicate with their customers. In addition, UAA is costly to the Postal Service, since much of this mail needs to be forwarded or returned.

Our intent is to improve address quality, reduce costs and make mail more valuable to our customers.

It's that time of year again; the 2009 membership applications are being prepared for mailing. I hope your past experience with the BPCCC has confirmed your decision to continue your membership.

## Baltimore District Customer Training 2009

The training sessions will be conducted at the Baltimore Main Post Office at 900 E. Fayette Street, Room 401 A and B. Please register for the following classes by calling 410-347-4436, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

|               |                                     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| <u>Mar 26</u> | Flats Orientation                   |
| <u>Apr 23</u> | PSW/Move Update                     |
| <u>May 21</u> | Periodicals Eligibility             |
| <u>Jun 18</u> | Non-Profit Mail Eligibility         |
| <u>Jul 16</u> | 1 <sup>st</sup> Class/Standard Mail |
| <u>Aug 20</u> | MDA/Intelligent Mail BC             |
| <u>Sep 24</u> | PSW/Move Update                     |
| <u>Oct 22</u> | Periodicals Eligibility             |
| <u>Nov 19</u> | Flats Orientation                   |
| <u>Dec 17</u> | Non-Profit Mail Eligibility         |



## Events

2009 Baltimore PCC Education Seminar  
March 19, 2009 University of Baltimore

National Postal Forum  
May 17-20, Washington, DC



## Baltimore PCC Fall General Membership Meeting

The Baltimore PCC Fall General Membership Meeting was held on December 5th 2008 at Martin's Valley Mansion in Hunt Valley. Attended by over 100 representatives from the industry, including U.S.P.S – Baltimore Postmaster Bill Ridenour, the event was a great opportunity to network and receive information.

Pritha Mehra, U.S.P.S Vice President of Business Mail Entry and Payment Technologies gave a presentation, which included a question and answer session, on Intelligent Mail.

The event benefited the Toys for Tots program. The Baltimore PCC donated \$2,000 worth of toys to the charity, and members attending the event brought additional donations. In addition, the PCC also donated \$100 to five charities suggested by members during the event. We hope that we helped brighten the holidays for many deserving people!



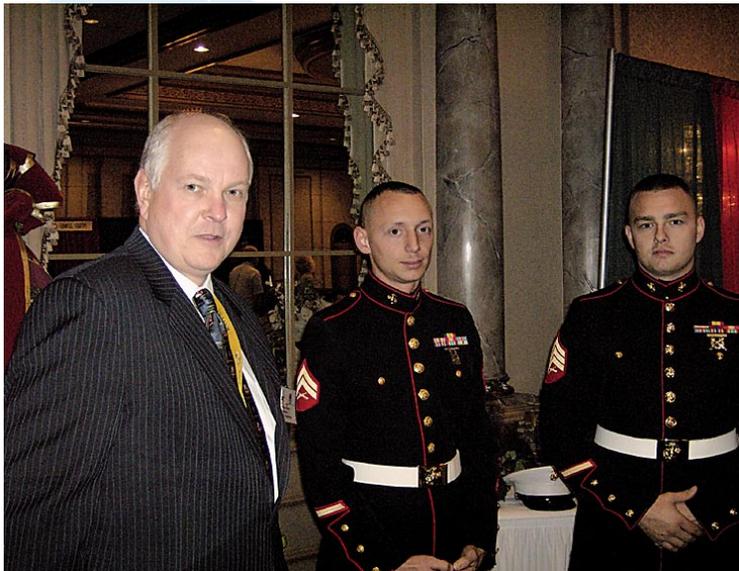
*PCC Board Member Jim Barlow helps set the scene for the Toys For Tots display*



*The festive Holiday lobby scene at Martin's Hunt Valley*



*Attendees gathering in Martin's Valley Mansion in Hunt Valley*



*Baltimore Postmaster William Ridenour with United States Marines for Toys For Tots*



*Pritha Mehra, U.S.P.S Vice President of Business Mail Entry and Payment Technologies*

# Baltimore PCC Upcoming Education Seminar

by Jim Barlow  
Mail Systems Management Consultant,  
Education Committee Chairperson

The area's premier mailing industry education event is right around the corner. The annual Baltimore PCC Education Seminar and Business Expo will be held Thursday, March 19th, 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., at the University of Baltimore Thumel Business Center, 11 W. Mt Royal Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21201. If you haven't received the registration packet in the mail, check it out on our website, [www.baltimorepcc.com](http://www.baltimorepcc.com) under "Upcoming Events." You can NOW register online!

This one-day event is filled with exciting education opportunities to help our members keep up with the changing US Postal Service regulations and prices. Classes are designed to present the latest postal information and will be conducted by postal and industry specialists. This year's keynote speaker will be Delores J. Killete, Consumer Advocate and VP of Consumer Affairs for the USPS. We will have our standard much sought after sessions and three new sessions: Branding, Industry Certifications and the Direct Mail Symposium. Branding will give you the keys to developing your team, understand and sell your "brand", and increase your value to your company. Industry Certifications will present the three valued certifications that give the mailing professional the recognition that they deserve as they strive for excellence: These would be Mailpiece

Quality Control (MQC), the Executive Mail Center Manager (EMCM) and the Certified Mail and Distribution Systems Manager (CMDSM). This session will address the requirements and give you an inside look at what it takes to achieve each of these three certification programs. The comprehensive Direct Mail Symposium will be presented in two one hour sessions. Part 1 of this fast track course is designed for mailers who want to gain a better understanding of how to target their audience with the right message, segment their internal mailing lists or develop appropriate direct mail practices to reach new customers. Part 2 will focus on proper printing techniques and design advice to make your business or consumer critical mail cost efficient and powerful. Again we will have our Super Session that will cover the USPS Five Year Plan and the Upcoming Rate Changes which will be conducted by Laraine Hope, Pricing Economist/Pricing and Classification for the USPS. With the state of the economy it's uncertain what those changes will be and how they will affect the mailing industry. Be sure to attend.

The nine scheduled sessions are: Direct Marketing Symposium, Mailpiece Design/Mail Quality Control & Intelligent Mail Barcode, Address Management/Ancillary Endorsement/NCOA, Branding, Industry Certifications, Non-Profit Mail, Postal One/Postage Statement Wizard, Presorted Standard Mail and Flats, and the Super

Session on the US Postal Service Five Year Plan & New Rate Changes.

Make plans now to attend this informative and educational seminar to gain the latest and best information critical to growing your revenue and maintaining a more efficient mail operation. BPCC Members that register before February 20, 2009 pay only \$65.00! The cost for BPCC members after the February 20, 2009 deadline will be \$75.00. Cost for non-BPCC Members is \$90.00. However, join the BPCC before February 20, 2009 and pay only \$65.00! That's a savings of \$25.00. To join, please visit our website at [www.baltimorepcc.com](http://www.baltimorepcc.com) -- download the membership application and send it in with your registration today. The seminar fee includes workshop sessions, continental breakfast (beginning at 8:00 a.m.), lunch and parking.

The Education Committee strives to provide education opportunities for the Baltimore PCC members in partnership with the US Postal Service. Education events facilitate the exchange of ideas about new and existing Postal Services products, programs, services and regulations that affect all businesses that use the mail.

Check our website [www.baltimorepcc.com](http://www.baltimorepcc.com) for "Upcoming Events." Please let us know if you have any ideas about possible future Education Seminar sessions or events for our planning process. You can reach me at [jamesbarlow@comcast.net](mailto:jamesbarlow@comcast.net) or call 410-321-8821.

## RESERVATION FORM: Mailer's Education Seminar - Thursday, March 19, 2009, at 8:00 a.m.

COMPANY: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES OF ATTENDEES: 1) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

NO. OF ATTENDEES: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one of the following:

\_\_\_ PCC Member cost \$65.00 before 2/20/09

\_\_\_ PCC Member cost \$75.00 after 2/20/09

\_\_\_ Non-PCC Member cost - \$90.00

2) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

***Please return this form with your check payable to the Baltimore PCC no later than February 20, 2009 to:***

VANYA H. BURKHALTER  
MARKETING DEPARTMENT/PCC SEMINAR  
900 E FAYETTE ST ROOM 508  
BALTIMORE MD 21233-9996

Seminar, Directions, and parking information will be mailed upon receipt of registration.

## Move Update Matters - Make the Right Choice

By Judith Antisdell, Anne-Tisdale & Assoc.

On November 23rd, 2008 the New Move Update policy went into effect.

All mailers were required to use the NCOA (National Change of Address) update every 95 days or an ancillary endorsement line for mail to be returned and updated.

The purpose of this article is not to define the methods but to make mailers and vendors aware of the choices they have in preparing their mail for updating. You can choose to use the 18-month NCOA file or the 48-month NCOA file. At this time the USPS does not endorse one choice vs. the other. Both have benefits and limits depending on the option that you choose.

There are similarities in cost and file preparation among the NCOA vendors, but most have a preferred file layout. I urge you to check with your vendor and prepare your file exactly as requested or you may truncate states and addresses and compromise your data. I also suggest that you request the NCOA file to be sent to you for review before your mail is processed. It is better to do some quality control on your end so that your mail is addressed properly and reaches its destination.

Costs are based on how many months you go back to check your data against the postal service records. The 48-month NCOA is more costly because it passes over so many more records. If you update your files frequently then it may be safe to use the 18-month NCOA and keep your costs down. Remember you only need to process your list in a 95-day period if you plan on mailing it. And once it's done you can use the list for any rate of mail in that 95-day period.

For clients that have multiple files, I suggest that you code them for the purpose of separating them after the NCOA, and batch as many files together to save cost. A vendor will charge you a per-thousand rate or a flat rate, so choose wisely. If you can get a flat rate it will save you quite a bit of money in the long run.

HIPPA laws bind some organizations and due to the nature of their data they cannot send internal files through such a process. I urge you to check with your legal department if you are unsure of what you can or can't do. You can contact Nathan.orr@usps.gov, 1-877-640-0724, Extension 4664 if you need to update your files in a different manner.

Should you choose to use one of the Return Service endorsements instead of the NCOA you will have to pay for all of your returns and update your list on the back end. This will cost you more money and time than the NCOA. Keep in mind that the NCOA or the use of an endorsement line will not completely update your files. The USPS does not keep the change of address records forever and about 1 in 11 families move within a given year so there will always be returns. However, the NCOA process will cut returns, save you money, and make sure that your business or consumer critical mail reaches its destination on time.

1504 Pot Spring Road  
Lutherville, MD 21093-5908



**James C. Barlow, Jr.**, CMDSM, EMCM  
*President*

**MAIL SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS**  
*division of: Barlow & Associates*

Office: 410.321.8821  
Fax: 410.321.1056

Cell: 410.303.1322  
jamesbarlow@comcast.net

**CONSULTANTS FOR THE MAILING INDUSTRY**

## USPS launches New Priority Mail Box

Jan. 13, 2009

The US Postal Service (USPS) is launching a new, smaller Priority Mail Flat Rate Box as of January 18, giving customers another choice in packaging to ship anywhere in the United States for one price, regardless of weight or destination.



The Priority Mail Small Flat Rate Box measures 8-5/8 x 5-3/8 x 1-5/8 inches — about the same size and shape as three stacked DVD cases. The smaller sized box is perfect for jewelry, electronics, event tickets, or other small items that need expedited shipping.

“Customers will find this new sized box a great addition to our line of flat-rate packaging,” said Gary Reblin, vice president of Expedited Shipping. “If an item is too thick for a flat-rate envelope but too small to fill a larger flat-rate box, this is an ideal choice. Customers get quick and easy shipping without having to use a box larger than needed. It’s the perfect combination of size, speed and price.”

The box will have a retail shipping price of \$4.95 effective Jan. 18 — one price, regardless of weight, up to 70 lbs. for U.S. addresses. The international price, for up to 4 lbs., will be just \$10.95 to Canada or Mexico and \$12.95 to all other countries. There is a 5% discount for customers shipping online and the box itself is available free of charge.

With the launch of the Priority Mail Small Flat Rate Box, customers will have four different flat-rate boxes from which to choose: the two original boxes (similar to a clothing box and a shoe box), the Large Flat Rate Box introduced in 2008, and the new smaller box.

CEP Research

# Polar Bear Plunge 2009

By Bill Sell, BPCC Treasurer

Saturday, January 24th started out like any other day, except that rising at 6:30am on a weekend is very unusual for me. Today was Plunge Day and an early start was required to gain access to the parking lots at Sandy Point State Park ahead of the thousands of anticipated attendees.

For those of you who have never heard of the Maryland State Police Polar Bear Plunge ([www.plungemd.org](http://www.plungemd.org)), it is an event that began in 1997 with 350 plungers jumping into the icy waters of the Chesapeake Bay. That year they raised \$75,000 in order to support and raise awareness for the 10,000 athletes who train and compete throughout the year in Special Olympics Maryland's sports programs. Since that time the event has grown each year. In 2007, the event featured 7,400 plungers and raised \$2.2 million.

But enough about the history of this worthwhile event. I was faced with the proposition of jumping into the bay for the 4th consecutive year and the weather was definitely not on my side this year. My first Plunge in 2006 was accompanied by 70° air temperatures and plenty of sunshine. Other than the 39° water that year, it had turned out to be a pretty nice day.

Saturday was different. The recent spate of frigid weather had reduced the bay tem-



BPCC Board Member Bill Sell takes the plunge with other hardy participants in the 2009 Polar Plunge

perature to 34° and left ice fragments on the beach. In addition, the air temperature barely made it above freezing, the sun wasn't out, and the winds were blowing with 20 mph gusts. As I left the tropical-like warmth of the changing tent attired in only swim trunks, I thought about sneaking back to the parking lot and driving to the nearest bar to watch the event on television. I pushed that thought aside and approached the water's edge tentatively.

As I learned from previous Plunges, there is no entering water this cold slowly, so I began my sprint out into the bay and then dove under the surface. As I had feared, the water was much colder than in previous years and the pain was like a thousand tiny pin pricks over

every exposed part of my body. As I exited the water, the wind took my breath away and my legs began to throb as the evaporating water made my extremities even colder. Pausing so that my sister could take a picture of me in obvious pain, I made my way back to the tent and changed back into my warm clothes.

All in all, 2009's Plunge was another successful year. The final numbers are not in yet, but preliminary estimates put the number of plungers at 11,000 with total donations of over \$2.5 million dollars this year. As for me, the rest of Plunge Day was spent eating steamed crabs, drinking beer, and lounging in the neighbor's hot tub.

My legs are still cold...

## Partnership Opportunities with the BPCC

It is our Partners' generous support that enables us to provide quality speakers, educational seminars, and special events throughout the year. As a BPCC Partner you will be afforded the following benefits:

### Platinum Partner - \$1000.00

- Includes a \$150 corporate membership for up to 7 members
- 2 free tickets to BPCC events
- Company recognition at BPCC events
- BPCC Executive Board opportunity
- ¼ page ad in BPCC newsletter\*
- Company name, logo, and link on BPCC web site
- Special Platinum Partner BPCC member plaque
- Reserved platinum table at BPCC events
- Submission of one article per year in BPCC newsletter
- Annual meeting with District Level Postal Executives

### Gold Partner - \$500.00

- Includes a \$100 membership for up to 3 members
- Company recognition at BPCC events

- Business card ad in BPCC newsletter\*
- 1 free ticket to BPCC events
- Company name and link on BPCC web site
- BPCC member certificate - gold seal
- Annual meeting with local Postmaster/station manager

### Silver Partner - \$250.00

- Includes a \$50 membership for one member
- Business card ad in PCC newsletter\*
- Company name on BPCC web site
- BPCC member certificate - silver seal

Special Corporate Sponsorships – contact the appropriate BPCC committee chairperson for details on sponsoring our web page, newsletter, or one of our annual events.

Thank you for your support.

\* Please note that the ¼ page and business card ads refer to the same ad for 4 consecutive issues.

Dear Business Mailer:

The Baltimore Postal Customer Council (BPCC) is part of a vital network of business mailers and postal representatives working together toward creating cost effective mailings, increasing the efficiency of mail service, and communicating information on various topics related to the mailing industry.

Membership in the BPCC is the key to insuring that your voice is heard on mailing matters of immediate and local concern. Through the BPCC newsletter and the BPCC website located at [www.baltimorepcc.com](http://www.baltimorepcc.com) council members are kept abreast of issues that may affect long range plans for their firm or the mailing industry as a whole. As USPS rates and regulations change, this information is vital to the success of all of us who rely upon the mail. The BPCC holds an annual education seminar that provides information on a variety of subjects related to the USPS and growing your business, and the BPCC keeps members informed of other educational opportunities available, such as the annual Executive Mail Center Manager Certification Program.

Participation in the BPCC is not all about education. It also includes networking events including an annual Spring membership meeting that is held at an outside location and a Fall membership meeting that is held in a banquet hall setting. Both events involve a relaxing afternoon of good food and valuable networking with fellow council members and industry representatives.

As in previous years we are also offering Partnership Opportunities for organizations within our industry. These partnerships offer increased membership benefits including advertising opportunities and networking with the USPS. This is a great way to increase your company's name recognition, industry knowledge, and exposure to potential clients.

Please take some time to visit the BPCC website and learn more about this worthwhile organization. The website includes contact information for key members of the BPCC and the USPS. For your convenience we have included a registration form. We are confident that you will find the BPCC to be a valuable resource for your company.

Thank you.

William L. Ridenour  
Postmaster Baltimore  
Postal Co-Chairman, BPCC

Lisa Kline  
Ivy Envelope  
Industry Co-Chair, BPCC

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**Select One-Part or Duplicate Business Checks**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 300  | 600   |
| One-Part <input type="checkbox"/> \$19.95  | <input type="checkbox"/> <del>\$39.95</del> \$29.90 |
| Duplicate <input type="checkbox"/> \$39.95 | <input type="checkbox"/> <del>\$79.80</del> \$49.90 |

Check Price \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Expires 12/31/09 TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE NOTE: Unless you tell us otherwise, we will ship orders to the address we print on the checks. We reserve the right not to process incomplete orders. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery. Call for signature delivery service details.

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Se habla español.

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For first-time customer pricing, use OFFER CODE BG0024 during online checkout.

To order by mail, enclose 4 items:

1. VOIDED CHECK (or reorder form from current supply), with any changes indicated. No photocopies, please.
2. DEPOSIT SLIP (also from existing supply).
3. PAYMENT CHECK payable to CHECK CRAFTERS.
4. COMPLETED ORDER FORM.

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Edgewood, MD 21040-0100

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## Pitney Bowes Presort Services Ad



**POSTAL CUSTOMER COUNCIL**



**BALTIMORE POSTAL CUSTOMER COUNCIL**  
**PO BOX 1010**  
**BALTIMORE MD 21203-1010**

**2009 CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION**

|                 |                       |                           |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>PRICING:</b> | <b><u>Members</u></b> | <b><u>Annual Dues</u></b> |
|                 | 1 member              | \$ 50.00                  |
|                 | 2 members             | \$ 75.00                  |
|                 | 3 members             | \$ 100.00                 |
|                 | 4-7 members           | \$ 150.00                 |

**COMPANY:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY/ST/ZIP+4:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERS:**

| <b><u>NAME</u></b> | <b><u>PHONE #</u></b> | <b><u>E-MAIL ADDRESS</u></b> |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| _____              | _____                 | _____                        |
| _____              | _____                 | _____                        |
| _____              | _____                 | _____                        |
| _____              | _____                 | _____                        |
| _____              | _____                 | _____                        |
| _____              | _____                 | _____                        |
| _____              | _____                 | _____                        |
| _____              | _____                 | _____                        |

**2009 CORPORATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM** - (See next page for details)

|                 |                                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>PRICING:</b> | <b><u>Partnership Level</u></b> | <b><u>Annual Dues</u></b> |
|                 | Silver Partner                  | \$ 250.00                 |
|                 | Gold Partner                    | \$ 500.00                 |
|                 | Platinum Partner                | \$ 1000.00                |

Please make check payable to **Baltimore PCC**. Thank you.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Baltimore PCC  
Box 1010  
Baltimore, MD 21203

PRSR STD  
POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
USPS  
PERMIT NO. G-10

## Baltimore Postal Customer Council EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICERS CY 2009

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