

# Use Retirees to Make Your Convention Better

**H**ow successful is your state convention? Are you making the most of your time together? Have you thought of utilizing your retirees? If you don't ask them to help, you may lose all of their knowledge and talent. Think of using them to make your conventions more helpful and meaningful to your

active Postmasters. Let's consider when and where your retirees can help. At the planning stage, a retiree can be a valuable asset. Let a retiree meet with the scheduler at the hotel. The scheduler usually works Monday through Friday so a retiree does not have to use annual leave to spend time traveling to the hotel, time reviewing contracts, time discussing room rates and time to go over menus for meals. A retiree would welcome a little trip.

A retiree might also find ways to save your state some money. After all, a retiree has learned to scrimp and save his own money and will do everything possible to save your state some expense. Perhaps the retiree was once the convention chair and can provide valuable information on convention planning.

So now the convention dates are set, the hotel is booked. You now need speakers and entertainment. Let a retiree write the invitational letters. A retiree may welcome the chance to use his or her mind to compile these letters. Perhaps a retiree has the time to spend finding the right group for entertainment. A retiree has time to check on things of interest in the convention city. Just maybe a retiree can plan a scenic tour to take place during your convention.

Now it's the first day of convention. Have your retirees on registration, welcoming or transportation committees. A retiree remembers his or her first convention and knows how important it is to make the first and lasting impact on convention attendees. Retirees will be willing to sit at the registration desk while you attend your meetings. Retirees are not under the normal everyday stress that an active Postmaster is. Therefore, meeting and greeting with a smile may be easier for them. Also retirees love giving directions, friendly advice and hugs. What better way to start off a convention?

Your convention is under way. Did you forget to pick up that plaque or do you need snacks? Ask a retiree to make that pickup. Retirees really like feeling useful but they may need a little nudge to get started. Ask, and you may be surprised at what all your retirees may do for you. Convention is over but there is more to be done. There are membership drives and the legislative issues. Don't forget to include your retirees. The retirees can make phone calls, write letters and actually travel throughout the state for you. Letting the retirees go out on the drives may save you annual leave. A retiree makes a good membership recruiter. They have many examples of why the LEAGUE is the organization to join. The retirees have time to map out the state and time to travel. And, when it comes to legislative issues, a retiree has the time to study the proposed bill. Maybe the retiree has time to meet with the aide in the local office of your senator or representative? Regular visits by a retiree will keep our legislative issues on your congressman's desk. What better way is there to be sure they are aware of our position on the proposed bills?

Remember also to ask your retirees to attend National Convention. If you have an active retirees branch, your state is entitled to a retiree delegate on the convention floor. If no retiree attends, you lose that vote. Your retiree delegate can also vote at Area meeting elections. The National RLP President is a member of the National Executive Board and has voting privileges. The retirees have two meetings at National Convention and a luncheon. It is wonderful when each state has great representation.

As I have traveled to different states, I have noticed many retirees working hard. I have seen retirees as editors of state newsletters. I've seen retirees receive the M.B. Morrison jacket for signing 100 members. I've seen a retiree as the convention chair. I have seen retirees help in hospitality rooms. I have seen retirees give state scholarship awards. I have even seen retirees have a bingo breakfast. So that has to mean that many states are utilizing the retirees. I have also seen states that have no retiree attendance at conventions. It will take some time and effort to get the retirees active, but it can be done. Ask, ask and ask again to gain retiree participation. It will be for the betterment of your state branch. •

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# Random Thoughts on the Auxiliary

## Membership

Membership is very important if an organization is going to thrive and survive. We hear this from our National Board and increasing our membership is very important. Along with increasing Postmaster numbers, we need to remember to increase Auxiliary numbers. If this seems as if it's redundant, it is. I can't stress enough the importance of membership.

## Support

The National Postmasters Auxiliary was established to help the LEAGUE help Postmasters. The Auxiliary supports Postmasters while providing family, friends and retired Postmasters with an organization of friendship and fellowship. The support of the Auxiliary to the LEAGUE is invaluable and makes the LEAGUE the *only family-supported Postmaster organization!* We are here to make things easier at home and at LEAGUE functions for the Postmasters in our lives.

## Having Fun

Behind the scenes, the Auxiliary works to ensure that LEAGUE functions run smoothly and that a good time is had by all. Is there a hospitality room at your state convention? Who set this room up? In most cases, it's the Auxiliary. At our state convention you can come by and grab that cup of coffee and a quick roll on the way to your first session. It's a place for you to stop between sessions or meetings to grab a soda and a piece of chocolate—and who doesn't need chocolate to get through the day? In the evening, it's a place to gather and share concerns, ideas, stories and laughter. We can go back to work knowing others are there to help.

## Friendship

Along with networking with your fellow Postmasters and their families, we form friendships that last us a lifetime. I always look forward to our state convention, Legislative Forum and the National Convention because we will be seeing all those friends we have made from other states. You see them, get that hug and pick up right where you left off.

## B.R.A.T.S.

Bringing Real Attributes To Society ... this group was formed to help our young people learn the purpose of the LEAGUE and the importance of being responsible citizens. These young people learn teamwork, leadership skills and develop lifelong friendships. Each year at our National Convention the B.R.A.T.S. has activities such as pool parties, museum visits, scavenger hunts, pizza parties, etc. National Conventions are a wonderful time to bring the whole family for a great family vacation. The next National Convention is in San Diego and fun at the San Diego Zoo comes to mind. Auxiliary members between the ages of 6 and 21 are part of our group.

## Members

Auxiliary members can be a Postmaster, the spouse, children and grandchildren, parents or in-laws, or brothers and sisters of any Postmaster or Retired Postmaster. Auxiliary members can be active members; those who attend state and National Conventions work on committees, hold leadership positions or work behind the scenes to be sure that LEAGUE functions run smoothly and are enjoyed by all. We have semi-active members who attend functions and help as often as they are able. Lastly, we have supportive members who are not able to attend or take part in the activities but who, through their membership in the Auxiliary, make our Auxiliary stronger and better able to do things for our Postmasters and their families.

## Why?

The Auxiliary has only 1,300 members. Membership in the Auxiliary is open to the family of any active Postmaster, OICs or Retired Postmaster. If you are a member of the LEAGUE, you should have at least one Auxiliary member. The cost of membership in this great organization is only \$5.00 annually. Contact your state Auxiliary or anyone on the National Auxiliary Board to get your Auxiliary member enrolled.

—Lucy Olson, National Auxiliary Secretary

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