

"Postal Note"
NALC Branch 187
P.O. Box 363
Bay City, MI 48707-0363



POSTAL NOTE

Volume 6, Number 2, September 2009
Representing Bay City and Essexville in Michigan

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**AND MORE INSIDE
this issue of
POSTAL NOTE!**

Deadline for next "Postal Note" — NOVEMBER 18, 2009

Submissions for the December 2009 issue of "Postal Note" must be submitted no later than **November 18th**. "Letters To The Editor" require a signature and a phone number (it won't be published) for verification.

Submissions must be either legibly hand-printed, typed double-spaced, or submitted as a plain text computer file on disk to:

"Postal Note"
NALC Branch 187
P.O. Box 363
Bay City, MI 48707-0363

or hand it to one of the union officers, or, via-e-mail to:

editor_br187@yahoo.com .



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989-385-5596

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Dennis Steele,

"Postal Note" Editor:

Rob Wojciechowski



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*Branch 187 wishes to extend Congratulations
as these members mark their Postal Anniversary:*

September

Randolph Martin (1977) **Thomas Bartel (1977)**
James Alexander (1990)
Deborah Gwizdala (1998) **Cindy Martin (2000)**



October

Lisa Glazier (1997) **Angela Dubey (1998)**
Matt Little (2004)



November

Rob Wojciechowski (1974)
Francis Hawn (1978) **Michael Corbin (1980)**
Robert Bluhm Jr. (1984) **Robert Schooley (1986)**
James Tarkowski (1988) **Beth Chapman (1997)**
Matthew Loose (1999) **Patrick Glazier (2000)**



N.U.T.S. Looking for a Representative

Written By Doug Young, APWU, Bay City, MI

The Greater Michigan District (G.M.D.) N.U.T.S. (NALC/USPS Team Safety) Committee is looking for an NALC representative to join the team.

N.U.T.S. meets about four times a year to discuss projects, accomplishments and, all other safety related issues or concerns. The team members must be able to attend all scheduled meetings. Team member must also be willing to remedy current safety issues throughout the district as well as design or implement new safety ideas within their local and the GMD. Any NALC member can submit a request. All applicants names will be submitted to the NALC business agent. Anyone who has any questions, or is interested in submitting their name should contact me, Doug Young, in room 110 at the Bay City Main Post Office.



Moving?

Please send the Branch your new mailing address as soon as you know an effective date. Especially for retirees so we can send you your copy of **Postal Note** to your new mailing address.

If any member notices an error on this Congratulations Page, please contact the editor.



President's Point of Order

Hello Everyone,

I hope we are all having a great time being a mail carrier. We have the opportunity to control every situation we encounter. Be Smart!

ROUTE ADJUSTMENTS

Our office just recently went through route adjustments. I know that not too many people are happy with the adjustments, that's understandable. We as letter carriers are the backbone of the company. We have to adjust to every different, odd, upsetting, disruptive situation that is put before us. We always know how to come out on top. We know how to pull the Postal Service through tough times.

Right now, we are in tough times. What will it take to understand that taking the time to do the job safely and correctly is not being a slug. It is the right way to do your job! Consistency is the mark of a veteran carrier. Your patrons can set their clock by your delivery time on a daily basis. Wake up people! It is your job that we are talking about.

Just remember, everyone had their routes adjusted to eight hours, supposedly. When management comes around with your numbers, they are just that, numbers. Your accountables, parcels, and the morning runs to Station A are **not** included in your numbers. Remember, we are all in this together — let's stick together.

5-DAY DELIVERY

I need to address the five-day delivery question. The only way that we will be going to a five-day delivery is by an Act of Congress. By the way, Congress is on vacation until after Labor Day. I recently received information by text on their proposal.

By going from 6 to 5 day delivery, the employee impact will be:

- 32,000 T-6 carrier techs eliminated,
- 1,000 clerks eliminated,
- 50,000 RCAs (Rural Carrier Associates) eliminated,
- 100 BMEU clerks eliminated,
- 1,300 custodians eliminated,
- + many others, too!

For a total of about 94,000 jobs that will be eliminated. ONCE APPROVED BY CONGRESS AND POSTAL REGULATORY COMMITTEE the "5-Day Plan" could be implemented within 60 days of approval.

(Continued on page 7)



We need to work to save our jobs

Dear Br. 187 Members,

Seasons are quickly changing (time flies, as usual), soon the children will be back to school, baseball will give way to football, and as a matter of fact, only about 100, or so, shopping days left till Christmas! So with route adjustments and the threat of going to five day delivery, there are more changes in our future. There is no better way for all of us to deal with these coming changes than to stay informed on these issues.

How many of you have had a customer ask when we were going to five days, as if it was a done deal? They heard it on TV, or the radio, so it must be true. Did you have an answer for them? Quite simply, the answer is, only an act of Congress can cause that change to occur. Rumor and misinformation abounds, so if you need ACCURATE INFORMATION go to the NALC website, or read your *Postal Record*.

With the changes we are seeing in mail volume, it is more important than ever for us all to help "grow" the business. Our editor, **Rob Wojciechowski**, has done a good job as our Customer Connect Coordinator. If you have anyone on your route who you know is using a competitor to do their shipping, make contact, or if you are unable to (for whatever reason) give the contact info to Rob and he can set something up.

We can all do our part by continuing to use the mail for all types of our own personal correspondence, such as buying stamps, mailing in your bills, and not paying online. I know, it is convenient and we probably have all done it, but you can change back to paper statements. Our very jobs now depend on it. It is especially disheartening when I see a former employee (retiree) using another service to do their shipping, (sad but true).

HEALTH BENEFITS

As of this writing the HBP has submitted and OPM has accepted the proposed list of benefits for next year. I have no details as of yet on "new" benefits for 2010. The negotiation of benefit rates is planned for later this month. I will be attending this year's Health Benefits Seminar to keep up with the changes and to continue my training to better serve our membership. I am always available to help with any questions or you can reach the plan directly at 1-888-636-NALC.

In Solidarity,
Andy (Kman) Kostrzewa



UNION MEETING:

First Wednesday of the Month
at American Legion Hall, 701 Adams, At 5:30 PM.

NEXT CONTRACT COLA:

Currently 0¢
Payable in September 2009

NEXT CONTRACT INCREASE:

1.9% - November 24, 2009

UPCOMING NON-WORKING HOLIDAYS:



Labor Day,
Monday,
September 7th



Columbus Day,
Monday,
October 12th



Veterans' Day,
Wednesday,
November 11th



Thanksgiving Day,
Thursday,
November 26th

Progre\$\$ive Jackpot Results

Lost \$20 — **Steve Grauf** at the Regular June Meeting.
Jackpot will be \$30 at the Regular September Meeting.

Attend Union Meetings! What have you got to lose?

UNIONS

We Build

America



Write your representatives...



Senator Carl Levin
269 Russell
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
FAX: 1-202-224-1388
E-mail: <http://levin.senate.gov/>



Senator Debbie Stabenow
702 Hart
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
FAX: 1-202-228-0325
E-mail: <http://stabenow.senate.gov/>



**5th Congressional District
Congressman Dale Kildee**
2107 Rayburn
House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515
FAX: 1-202-225-6393
E-mail: <http://www.house.gov/kildee/>



**4th Congressional District
Congressman Dave Camp**
137 Cannon
House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515
FAX: 1-202-225-9679
E-mail: <http://camp.house.gov/>



Mailing
addresses for our
Federal Legislators.

COLCPE

(Committee On Letter Carriers Political Education) helps elect members to Congress who support NALC's legislative goals. Active and retired letter carriers rely on friends in Congress to safeguard their benefits, so invest in your future:

[Give generously to COLCPE.](#)

Contributions are not tax deductible.



Route adjustments and...

Route adjustments have just been completed in Bay City. For the most part, I think they went pretty good. The main problem I have with the route adjustment process, is the fact that no one from our office was involved in the

adjustment process. To make this process more efficient, we need someone locally involved with actual adjustments. How can they (management and upper union) expect someone from another city to know how to adjust the routes here? Hopefully the NALC and management will fix this flaw. The adjustments were based on the individual carrier's averages, not made up numbers or route inspection times. We all know the volumes have dropped substantially, so adjustments were inevitable.

Another problem I have is that fellow employees are pissed off about employees who had their routes cut. Their numbers justified the cut. So MYOB! In particular calling a fellow employee/union brother a dirtbag is uncalled for. I am sick of it. This employee has done nothing wrong, he is consistent every day, has no discipline on file, and has been observed many times doing his job professionally. You need to worry about your own route, not his! Many of these fellow carriers/union brothers and sisters constantly cut their lunches, breaks and oftentimes work unsafely. The same carriers are bitching their routes were added to. Hmm, I wonder why. Worry about your route and yourself, not anyone else. Grow up.

The Postal Service is in dire financial straits. As usual upper management wants to attack the backbone of the postal service, hourly workers. This is bull. I have heard nothing about cutting management jobs. Sure, management says they are losing jobs too. I don't buy it. The latest RUMOR I heard said that by eliminating a day of delivery would eliminate 94,000 jobs. Thirty two thousand of those jobs are T-6 positions. Think of how many T-6 positions we have in Bay City. There are ten T-6 positions in Bay City, alone. This would be very bad. The NALC is fighting this proposal vigorously. Hopefully we will prevail. The NALC's stance is that if it is not on their website, then it is just a rumor. Keep checking www.nalc.org for updates.

Just the other night our wonderful president of the United States, Barack Obama, slammed the Post Office on national TV. He said UPS and FEDEX are doing fine, what's wrong with the post office. This pisses me off royally. Who the hell does he think he is? This is the guy that bashed GM and Chrysler. The UAW, NALC, and many other unions endorsed this "labor friendly" president. When is he going to do anything "labor friendly", or "postal friendly"? We shall see. Public Healthcare, what a joke.

The senators grilled the auto execs about how much they make and about their bonuses. I have not heard one senator question our postmaster general about why he made almost \$1 million last year. I have not heard one senator ask our postmaster general why he received a lower mortgage rate through Country-

(Continued on page 9)



Some Do's and Don'ts

Hard to believe summer will soon be coming to an end. Route adjustments have finally been implemented, and now the review period. I was a little disappointed in the way the entire process worked, I think the team is too out of touch with what really needs to happen. Over all, I think it could

have been worse. The numbers used actually were real close to what people were telling me. So during the review period, continue doing a professional job.

I'm sure MSP points will become an issue again once all the adjustments are made, so continue to scan them. If you happen to miss one let them know — they can't punish you for being informative. The "N"-mail thing has come up a couple of times which really bugs me. So take the time to check for good orders if that's what they want then take the time to do it, use it to your favor. Discipline is down so keep it up the attentiveness.

Some things I've noticed that need to be corrected and I have discussed with management in the past are as follows:

1. If you grab your scanner before you clock in, please stop. That is an "on the clock function".
2. If you cut across the gravel parking jumping the curb with a postal vehicle, please stop.
3. If you park your postal vehicle, then drive your personal vehicle over to or near the post office, please stop. Is it really that big of a deal to walk out to your vehicle?
4. Last bitch, for right now — I still see people in LLVs going through intersections with doors open. This includes loading area and parking area, to and from. If I see this you can bet someone else is going to eventually see it.

I want to thank all who helped with the summer picnic the food was great and so was the company we had a great time. Marjorie did a great job with the kids my daughter had lots of fun. I think next year, a September date might work better for people after all the big vacations are done. This picnic gives people the chance for something if they can't make the Christmas party.

With all the negative news about the Postal Service, try to stay positive and be thankful that we all have jobs to pay the bills. I know its tough with all the BS they feed us, so think happy thoughts. Hope to see you at the September meeting.

Mike Ratajczak

Branch 187 Finances

As reported by Branch 187 Treasurer, **Jeff Yurgaites**, we have \$6,550.53 in our savings and \$856.36 in our checking for a total of \$7,406.89. Also the VISA card is now unsecured and the escrow account is closed.

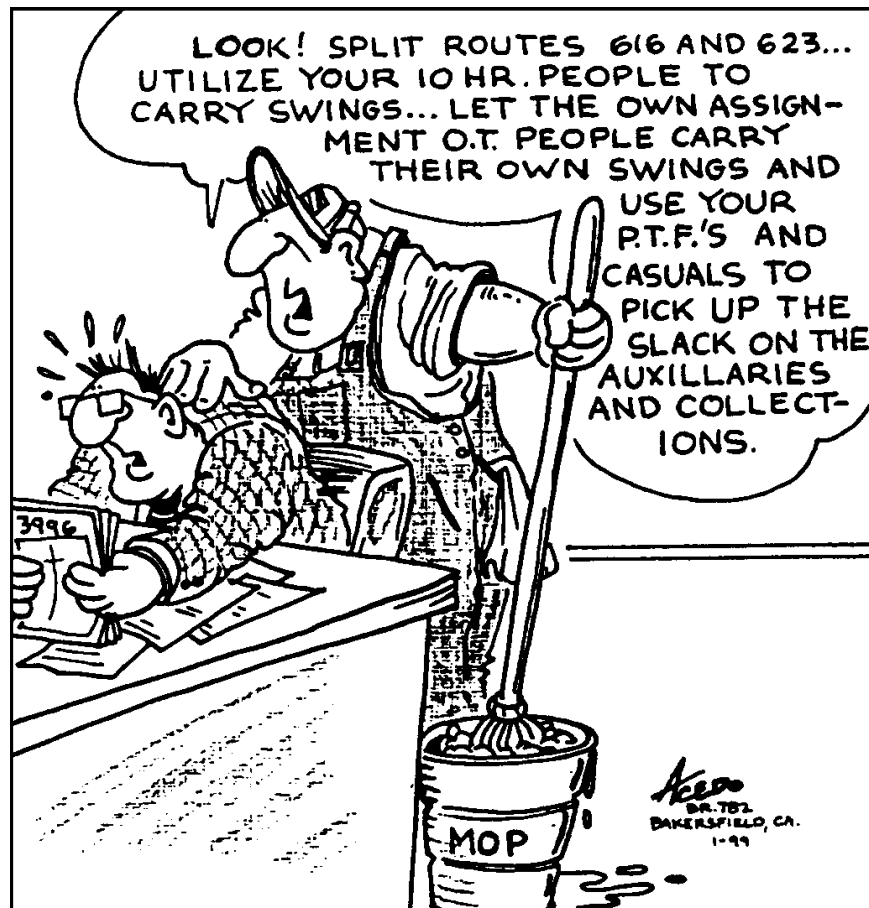
postmaster, or other designated employee, asks the separating employee if any uniform purchases have been made during the past 30 days. If the answer is negative, complete the item in the same manner as the other items on the checkout sheet. If the answer is affirmative, contact the district accounting office and advise the employee accordingly.

Keep in mind that even if you are not retiring, the Postal Service could refuse to honor an invoice if...

936.33 Disallowing Payments

The district accounting office may disallow payment for excessively priced items, for items not needed for local climatic conditions, and for excessive amounts of civilian-type items.

SOURCE: Postal-Bytes, Neal Couey, Branch 290, Santa Barbara, CA
Posted 08.20.09



Editor's Note: Some little known information worth remembering when approaching retirement.

From the Employee & Labor Relations Manual (ELM)

936 Payments

936.2 Payment for Uniform Purchase After Separation of Employee Payment to the vendor is not allowed if the following conditions exist:

The employee separates from the uniform program for any reason, including retirement, within 30 days following purchase of items of uniform wear that are not recognizable as distinctive uniform items unless worn with the basic outer garments of the uniform. In these cases notify both employee and specific vendor involved. Return the invoice to the vendor. Non-distinctive items include shoes, gloves, rubbers, galoshes, overboots, hose, face masks, pith helmets, and belts.

When there is evidence that, before making the purchase, the employee indicated an intention to separate from the uniform program for any reason, including retirement, involuntary separation, or bid to an assignment not requiring the same uniform category, do not process the invoice for payment. After placing a copy of the invoice in the employee's uniform file with the appropriate remarks, return the invoice to the vendor advising why it will not be honored.

936.4 Separating Employees

936.41 Conditions for Nonpayment

Invoices dated before an employee's separation date and submitted for payment are processed for payment. However, they are not paid under any of the following conditions: When purchases of uniform items not recognizable as distinctive uniform items were made within 30 days before separation (see 936.2a). When there is evidence that before making the purchase the employee indicated an intention to separate for any reason, including retirement (see 936.2b).

936.42 Addition to Form 337

Postmasters and installation heads add "Uniform Allowance Invoices Submitted" on PS Form 337, Clearance Record for Separated Employee, as a write-in item.

936.43 Employee Submission of Invoices

When an employee who is leaving the Postal Service checks out, the

President's Point Of Order, continued

(Continued from page 3)

My understanding is that going from six to five-day delivery is only eliminating the work force and not any managerial positions. In my view I believe that the Postal Service is trying to push this though before the next fiscal year starts (October 1) in order to save their positions.

I hear all the rumors about what is "happening" with the Postal Service. Until it actually goes up on the NALC website, it is just that, a rumor. If any information is brought to my attention on any of these issues, I will inform our membership either on the union board or at the union meeting. So help yourself out by getting involved and volunteering.

I attended the Presidents' Meeting on June 11, 2009. We had a lot to discuss, but these issues were the most important — TEs are not being offered the test; not enough people took advantage of the last VERA (about 2,500), so there are no vacancies in any districts that need to be filled; in some offices OIG is installing cameras in the LLV's. So let us know if you see anything suspicious. The next President's meeting is August 20th — too late for this issue of **Postal Note**. I have a few issues that I need answered and will update you at our next union meeting.

A reminder, our next union meeting is on the first Wednesday in September, the 2nd. Thanks for taking the time to listen to me,

Dean Kukla

e-mail: docdean@charter.net

phone: 989-415-7313

USPS Revenue Solutions in the Era of Incredibly Shrinking Mail Volumes presents Fix #34

THE CARRIER PLUS PROGRAM

We deliver! We shop! We change your oil! We do it all!

Dear Postal Patron,
As part of our ongoing effort to provide topnotch customer satisfaction, we're happy to announce our new service, Carrier Plus! Please take a moment to review and select any tasks you may be interested in having your official USPS letter carrier assist you with while on his or her appointed rounds. For additional tasks and pricing please visit us at www.carrierplus.gov.

<input type="checkbox"/> Dog walking	<input type="checkbox"/> Squirrel shooting
<input type="checkbox"/> Lawn mowing	<input type="checkbox"/> Kids' homeworking
<input type="checkbox"/> House painting	<input type="checkbox"/> Bottle/can cashing
<input type="checkbox"/> Houseplant watering	<input type="checkbox"/> Cat bathing
<input type="checkbox"/> UPS package signing	<input type="checkbox"/> Credenza repairing
<input type="checkbox"/> Tree pruning	<input type="checkbox"/> Shoe repairing
<input type="checkbox"/> Garden weeding	<input type="checkbox"/> Tanning
<input type="checkbox"/> Grocery shopping	<input type="checkbox"/> Coupon clipping
<input type="checkbox"/> Jiffy Lube	<input type="checkbox"/> Guitar picking
<input type="checkbox"/> Garbage disposing	<input type="checkbox"/> Turkey basting
<input type="checkbox"/> Oven cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/> Bird watching
<input type="checkbox"/> Vittle fetching	<input type="checkbox"/> Silver polishing
<input type="checkbox"/> Thank you note writing	<input type="checkbox"/> Snipe hunting
<input type="checkbox"/> Letter posting	<input type="checkbox"/> Chicken plucking



By Neil Wolfe and Tom Knott
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PUSHING THE ENVELOPE

A tip of the pith to Brother J-Man for the concept! Photography by Val



"HONEY, I SHRUNK THE POSTAL NOTE!"

*Written By Rob Wojciechowski
Editor, Postal Note*

What the heck happened? New Postal Service regulations is what happened.

The last issue, we've gotten away with stapling *Postal Note* and getting a machineable, letter-sized postage rate. Not anymore.

But now, we're forced into a "booklet" format to allow the Branch to save money on postage. Last month, I was assured that this format will continue our favorable two-ounce First Class rate without changing how we prepare our newsletter for mailing. Placement of staples the way we did before is now frowned upon, especially when machines are doing (going to do) all the sorting.

Perhaps you may have noticed some catalogs coming to your mailbox in a smaller format. Mailers are using the letter-sized format to save money as we must also do. The cost difference between letters and flats is about double and I've always looked for shortcuts and ways to save the Branch money. If you recall, we were using tabs to seal the edges. When I found out we could cut that cost in half by using Scotch® Tape, I switched. Now, in hindsight, it's an additional savings since before, only the top was required to be tabbed. New regulations require not only the top, but two on the leading edge not more than ½ inch from the corner. To be safe, I'm taping five, two on each side besides the top.

So we're still using the Postal Service, our livelihood, only in a more economical way. We, of all organizations, are faced with a double-edged sword when it comes to keeping our members informed when dealing with the Postal Service .

I've considered keeping the previous format and putting the newsletters in envelopes. That would have added approximately 12¢ to each mailed newsletter. Not good since we have about 135 issues being mailed monthly. Using envelopes would add approximately \$16 more per month to our mailing costs. Using legal size paper, folded, put our publication into the flat category. Again, not good. Flat mailing would also add almost \$60 postage per mailing.

When I was assured that this format you are holding will maintain our status as letter-sized, machineable postage rate, stapled in the spine, I started changing the layout immediately.

The back page, consisting of our return address and member mailing address needs to have space on the bottom for the Postal Service to add the bar code for DPS.

(Continued on page 9)

Round 4... It ain't over yet

(Continued from page 28)

According to one instruction form obtained by The Washington Post, UPS employees were asked to write the letters by hand and choose from a half-dozen critiques of FedEx's position. "This bill will eliminate the special treatment given to FedEx and level the playing field for UPS and other companies in the industry," one example reads, according to the instruction form.

"These reports of UPS employees being pressured to write letters to Congress are disturbing," said Lane, the FedEx spokesman. "Any support of our position made to Congress is the result of individual determinations that UPS should not receive the economic bailout they are requesting."

But UPS spokesman Berkley said the allegations were baseless and noted that FedEx has urged its employees to write in support of its position as well. "They've also got a Web site calling this a bailout, and that's not true, so the idea of them making unsubstantiated charges is nothing new," Berkley said.

Kenneth A. Gross, a lobbying law expert at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, said letter-writing campaigns have become "very sophisticated undertakings" and that companies generally characterize the efforts as voluntary and urge employees to write them at home rather than during the work day.

"That way you avoid the allegation that you are deputizing your employees as part of the government relations operation," Gross said.

SOURCE: Washington Post, 08.07.09



"The American labor movement has consistently demonstrated its devotion to the public interest. It is, and has been, good for all America."

John F. Kennedy

Round 3... UPS vs FedEx

(Continued from page 27)

FedEx Express created the air express industry," said company spokesman Maury Lane.

Both companies are major spenders on Capitol Hill. FedEx has spent nearly \$7 million on lobbying through June, while UPS reported spending nearly \$3 million. UPS has also given \$2.4 million in campaign contributions to lawmakers since 2007, while FedEx has contributed about half that; both firms appear to donate evenly to both parties, according to disclosure records.



Atlanta-based UPS, which controls about half of the parcel-shipping market in the United States, has long battled its second-place rival over labor issues. The company and the Teamsters, for example, object to FedEx's strategy of treating ground-shipping drivers as independent contractors, an issue that has made FedEx the target of legal actions by the California attorney general and others. FedEx, which is organized as four separate operations, notes that three of the divisions -- all except its express business -- are governed by the same labor law as UPS.

The legislative fight between the companies captured headlines in Washington last month when Politico's Web site released a letter from the American Conservative Union offering FedEx its political support, including an "aggressive grassroots campaign to stop the legislation in the Senate," in exchange for payments of at least \$2.1 million. After FedEx refused, ACU Chairman David Keene signed on to a letter with other conservative leaders accusing FedEx of mounting a "disinformation campaign" against UPS.

The group said Keene acted on his own, although ACU's logo was on the letter. Keene said in a statement that he remains opposed to applying stricter union rules to FedEx and that the ACU received no money from UPS.

The pro-UPS correspondence was also signed by ACU board member Grover Norquist, head of Americans for Tax Reform, which has received \$200,000 worth of grants from the UPS Foundation since 2005. A Norquist spokesman said his group had taken no position on the legislation and does not intend to do so.

Now FedEx officials are bristling at the UPS letter-writing campaign, pointing to complaints from Scott and other UPS workers. "They are forcing us to write letters at our UPS center," one employee wrote on BrownCafe.com, a Web site independent of UPS. Another user wrote: "My System Manager told us 'this is not an optional activity.' I wrote the letters and still feel dirty."

(Continued on page 29)

"HONEY, I SHRUNK THE POSTAL NOTE!"

(Continued from page 8)

One concession is using 9-point Arial font. I sincerely hope our members and readers enjoy this new format. It certainly is easier to hold. Please, your comments and suggestions are always welcome. Either mail to **Postal Note**, P.O. Box 363, Bay City, MI 48707-0363 or e-mail to editor_br187@yahoo.com and we'll go from there.

Still, no one has come forward to take over this position, of Branch Editor. Perhaps I missed an e-mail? Maybe someone misplaced a letter to the Branch president? As it is, after this issue, two remain — December 2009 and March 2010 — for me to publish.

My appreciation to those who have made a point to compliment me on my efforts these past six and a half years as Editor of Branch 187's publication. Thank you. With retirement — that light at the end of the Postal Tunnel — in sight, I've decided I'll need to just give it up and take a break. I've been publishing monthly newsletters for 13 years. Though with Bay City, it is a quarterly. I still continue to edit Saginaw Branch 74's **The Informer** until the April 2010 issue. Thank you, all, for this opportunity to be of some service to the Branch.

Route Adjustments and...continued

(Continued from page 5)

wide. Why haven't our wonderful senators asked him why he hired so many vice presidents. But our "labor friendly" senators keep listening to everything the dude keeps feeding them. It makes me sick. Contact your senators and representatives — let them know how you feel.

If you pay your bills online or have autopay, you're screwing your future! I hope and pray that everyone who reads this buys stamps and mails in their bills. This is a no brainer. It is our future. Buy stamps and mail your bills. What makes me sick to my stomach, is the fact that a recent retiree was seen at the UPS Store shipping a box via UPS! I cannot believe this, after working for the Postal Service for many years, this individual used UPS to ship! It is sickening. This was not a UPS return package, it was a personal package. Use our products and preach about our products. It is your paycheck. If you like magazines, go to mags4cheap.com. They have many of your favorite magazine subscriptions at the lowest prices. I recently subscribed to Outdoor Life for \$5 (one year, 12 issues). They have weekly magazine specials. Bring the volume back. Another, catalogs.com is another good website. You can request pretty much any catalog out there. Some catalogs cost a small fee, but many are free. Think about it. If every postal worker added a magazine subscription or received a few more catalogs, the volume would be up. Another no-brainer.

Have a safe summer. Good luck this hunting season and be safe.

In Solidarity, **Matt**

Part IV — Confessions of a Former Station Manager

Written By *Guy Norenberg*, Branch 2902, Simi Valley, CA

Five types of Bad Supervisors

1. The GreedyWeasel



"Watson, take the 2-ton and get that misthrown letter out to City 271. I don't care if it's 40 miles. My bonus is at stake here!"

Description: This supervisor is the kind who wrings his hands at the thought of undeserved bonuses, ill-gained raises and baseless promotions, regardless of what he has to do and who he has to do it to, to get it. He feels he deserves money and sees his counterparts in the private sector making much more than he is. He feels he doesn't need to follow any rules of writ or ethics. He will lie, cheat, steal, and perjure himself to get what he needs. This is the most common sort of bad supervisor.

Handling: Don't deal with this kind of supervisor. Don't call the OIG first for this kind of supervisor either, even if he's falsifying or cheating on the

numbers. Sure it's a crime, what he's doing, but the OIG works for him. Never forget that. What you do is inform your NALC representatives first. Push your NALC representatives to take actions to get him out of the system. Strong continual pressure will move him out the door. This is the most dangerous kind of supervisor, because he is without rehabilitation, his core motivations never change.

2. The Napoleon



"Our numbers look bad because it's those damn carriers' fault. I told them a blizzard shouldn't make any difference!"

Description: This supervisor was born deficient in some area. It's very possible he/she was that kid in school everybody picked on. If he's short, he's loud. If he's tall, he's folding his arms. If female, she's going to show all the men. If he's male, he's going to date all the women. We all know supervisors like this. He wants to stand on your head to assert his dominance. Postal concerns are secondary to his authority. Your concerns are insignificant. You KNOW someone like this one too!

Handling: This one can be rehabilitated. His problem is that he is compensating and lives in

fear that he will be back in school again. The way you break through the eggshell he hides behind is to be kinder to this clown than you would your four-year old. Talk to him like he was a four-year old too, because emotionally, that's where he's operating from. Contact your NALC representative and have meeting, after meeting, after meeting with him until he's talked into submission.

(Continued on page 11)

UPS comes out swinging

(Continued from page 26)

Memphis-based FedEx and the office of Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.) also have received e-mails, telephone calls and letters from UPS employees alleging intimidation by the union or UPS supervisors, according to FedEx officials and an Alexander aide.

Scott Dennis, one of those who contacted FedEx by e-mail, said in an interview that he was working as a part-time loader at a UPS facility in Greensboro, N.C. last month when he says he was pulled into a room with other employees and told to write letters in support of the legislation. Instead, he said, he wrote a letter critical of government intervention and quit in disgust a week later.

"We were expected to toe the line," Dennis said.

The letter-writing campaign is part of a costly and often fierce legislative fight between UPS and FedEx, which together have spent nearly \$10 million on federal lobbying in the first half of the year. The feud captures the prominence of mass mailings, Internet campaigns and other grass-roots efforts to catch the attention of Congress in high stakes disputes, even when they involve relatively arcane regulations.



The focus of the UPS-FedEx conflict is House legislation passed earlier this year that would make it easier to unionize FedEx's lucrative express-air operation, which is currently treated as an airline under labor rules that limit strikes and require unions to organize nationally rather than locally. UPS, by contrast, is treated as a trucking firm, allowing for easier union organizing.

UPS and the union are now concentrating on convincing the Senate to adopt the provision.

"We hope at the end of the day the Senate will see this as a simple issue of fairness," said Ken Hall, head of the Teamsters' package division.

FedEx has responded with an aggressive public-relations campaign of its own that includes a Web site, <http://www.brownbailout.com>, that mocks UPS as another wealthy corporation seeking a federal rescue. FedEx founder and chief executive Frederick W. Smith, who was mentioned last year as a potential Cabinet nominee by GOP presidential candidate John McCain (Ariz.), says the legislation would cripple his company by leaving it open to disruptive strikes.

"FedEx Express remains committed to putting our customers first and making sure Congress doesn't change the legal framework that is the basis on which

(Continued on page 28)

In Congress, In Advertising, Using the Mail, too FedEx, UPS duke it out

Written By Dan Eggen

In an increasingly bitter Washington battle between the nation's two largest shipping companies, some unionized UPS workers say they are being forced to write letters to their lawmakers in support of more stringent labor rules for arch rival FedEx.

Officials with UPS and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, which represents 240,000 UPS drivers, acknowledge that the company has paid for workers' time to pen many of the letters and has supplied the envelopes, paper and stamps needed to mail thousands of them to Congress. UPS spokesman Malcolm Berkley said the effort was "totally voluntary, and any allegations to the contrary are ridiculous."

But Internet sites dedicated to UPS-related discussions feature dozens of accounts from anonymous employees who in recent weeks have said they were forced to write the letters or felt they would be punished for not doing so. Such tactics could run afoul of both labor laws and lobbying disclosure requirements, according to legal experts.



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Eye on the Postal Service, continued

(Continued from page 15)

Ruben isn't around. He came home to find all the mail for his six-flat thrown on the floor of the vestibule. Iwao, 87, said he had to take it upon himself to sort the mail and deliver it door to door.

When Ruben is on duty, all the mail goes into the mailboxes where it belongs, everyone said, and Ruben always makes it a point to ask if they have any outgoing mail they'd like him to take.

He rings the doorbell for those who want to be alerted when he's made his delivery and makes sure he gets a forwarding address for any long-term house guests before they leave.

"He goes out of his way to do whatever he can for people," Stewart said.

In the process, he's become a trusted member of the neighborhood who even attends the annual block party, where he serves as the announcer for the raffle, though he lives on the other side of town.

And THAT, Big Blue Bird, is what it is all about!

Confession, continued

(Continued from page 10)

Then, he will still be your boss, but happier in the role of what he will see as being a compassionate person. EVERY TIME HE PIPES UP, SURROUND HIM with kind words and reassurances. Use the parent-to-four-year old technique until he calms down...not sarcastically, but to ease his childish fears. He will come around.

3. The Office Sweetheart



"We're have nine open routes today, Mister Williams. Could you please come in and carry after your stress test today?"

Description: Oh, we all have these too. Passive. Overly polite. They will listen and love and show how much they care; but, for the life of them, they cannot get you a single rubber band when you need a dozen. They are completely ineffective to support your needs. You wonder how such mushy fluffy marshmallows ever got into management? Well, everybody likes them until somebody needs something to really get done, then we realize there is no leader on the floor, but rather more of a Coffee Carrying Counselor. This is no good as we want to do our routes and have a good leader handle all the BS we don't get paid to take care of for him.

Handling: This person may not have the spine of a jellyfish or the guts to be a captain of any team, so what do we do? One cannot be taught courage. One cannot learn toughness. One needs to have it in them to do the job OR be within a carrier team that runs them. Use caution with this one, as his fears (as many as there may be behind the kissing of everybody's fanny he meets)... his fears rule his world. He hates it but is too afraid to be strong for you and stick to it. This person cannot be rehabilitated.

4. The Politician



"My postmaster is like the second coming — he's the savior of the Postal Service — and I'm his right-hand man on the workroom floor."

Description: This is my favorite of all bad supervisor types. I had a supervisor, who became a postmaster, now up in the higher echelons of postal management, who is the consummate politician. I love this guy to death, no matter how many times the schmuck stabbed me in the back. He reads "Machiavelli" like I read "Sun Tsu". (Google the names). Everything that this kind of supervisor does is so wishy-washy that you will NEVER know where he's coming from or what HIS opinion truly is! Signs of this kind of bad supervisor are that he finishes sentences for you, overly praises those with power over him, and his viewpoints blow with the wind of favor wherever it might go. This kind will do you in and you will never know it. He will disavow any participation in anything wrong and blame all he does on all around him who do

(Continued on page 12)

Confession, continued

(Continued from page 11)
not have power.

Handling: HANDLE WITH CARE. You may run this kind of supervisor and be his boss. Manage him through your power bases. YOU MUST PLAY POLITICS WITH THIS ONE. 'Nuff said.

5. The Complaining Carl



"What do you mean you didn't promote him because of his low I.Q.? Since when has stupidity kept someone from becoming a postal supervisor?"

Description: He whines. He cries. He frowns. He doesn't like it. The cup is always half empty. He is a dark cloud on your horizon even on a sunny day. His wife beats him. Her husband never takes her out for dinner. Instead of "How are you today?" he says, "Hey, Chief! Volume sucks don't it?" to start you off with a negative tone. He's a downer because that's how he feels and he wants you down too. He is not a fighter. He is not a positive leader. He's a sulking sloth. Perhaps he got into management because he was a rehab and they wanted to stop his whining about nixies. Maybe he got into management because his boss was a Complaining Carl too and they hit it off? Likely he

got into management because he would tell how bad everything is and what he would do differently, but he doesn't. Either way, this Carl needs some serious help.

Handling: HE needs a hand on his shoulder as often as possible. NO NOT LITERALLY. Touching your supervisor might give him or her the wrong impression. Either you'll be up on charges for assault or they may want to date you. Both are not what you're looking for. What I mean, is that instead of grabbing him by his jowls and saying "It's gonna be fine, ya doofus!", you need to look him in the eyes and flood him with positive words about the world, even if you feel differently. Buy this idiot a coffee or place a flower on his desk. The jerk needs it.

In your life's work experience, you may feel these five bad supervisors are not exclusive to the Postal Service. You're right! These five exist in all businesses. So you may wonder, "What is a good supervisor like?" Well, that's up to you. What motivates you? What would you like to see? For me, I'd like to see someone who likes their job, is positive, reliable, and can handle pressure... because I give a lot of pressure. Those listed as being beyond rehabilitation, should be let go. We don't need any crooks or marshmallows in the Postal Service. I don't want my wallet stolen and don't want to deliver my own dog letters. Supervisors need to be able to do the job. Before we RIF the good ones, we should weed the bad ones out.

What do YOU think?

(Continued on page 13)

Going Part-Time Into Retirement

(Continued from page 24)

ment System to phase into retirement by working part-time.

Under current rules folks under the CSRS plan, about 20 percent of the federal workforce, who go part-time in their high-3 average salary period often take a big pension hit. Their annuities are based on their high-3 year average salary and going part-time can drag that down.

But the House version of the Defense Authorization bill would correct a congressional oversight (from the mid-1980s) by allowing CSRS people who go part time to have their high-3 based on their "deemed full-time" salary, rather than their actual (reduced pay) salary for working part-time.

Under the House proposal (which is not in the Senate version of the Defense bill) an employee earning \$80,000 a year working full-time, who went to making \$40,000 part-time, would have his/her high-3 based on the higher, "deemed full-time rate" salary of \$80,000.

Backers say the proposed change, which is really to correct an error Congress made years ago, would be a win-win for the government. They note that 60 percent of the workforce will be eligible to retire in the next 10 years. They say that letting the been-there-done-that CSRS workers phase out by going part-time would give them more time to work with newcomers. That, they say, would make for a smoother transition.

Benefits strategist John Elliott talked about the part-time correction plan, on the For Your Benefit radio show. It's sponsored by the National Institute of Transition Planning.

Elliott explained the history of the part-time glitch, in detail, how it happened and what it does to the annuity of full-time CSRS workers when they go part time. Also what the proposed "fix", if Congress approves it, would mean to CSRS employees. If you missed the show, no problem because...

The radio show has been archived on our website!

<http://www.federalnewsradio.com/index.php?nid=143&sid=1728309>

Listen to it for more detail on the part-time proposal, the FERS sick leave credit plan and, from host Bob Leins, a tutorial on how the new Roth option will work in your TSP.

SOURCE: FedNewsRadio, 08.05.09



Spread the news

If you hear from a member who has not received this issue of *Postal Note*, please inform one of the Branch officers.

Going Part-Time Into Retirement

Written By Mike Causey

For a lot of people who have been working a long time, the thought of going cold turkey into retirement can be intimidating. Even scary.



Financial planners, when they do pre-retirement counseling for a married couple, are fond of telling the wife that after retirement she will have "half the income and twice the husband." It is a sobering thought indeed!

As they approach retirement, many people say they want to do it. But gradually. Maybe by scaling back to two or three days a week or otherwise working less than a 40 hour week.

The problem of going part-time, for many working feds, is that it would cost them a lot of money in future retirement benefits.

Unless...

One of the less controversial pro-fed perks Congress will take up next month would, if approved, permit working feds who are under the Civil Service Retirement-
(Continued on page 25)

USPS to pay managers for environmental performance, continued

(Continued from page 23)
households."

In years past, the Postal Service has implemented projects designed to save about 750 billion BTU's. One of those projects, called the 21-day Challenge, focuses on simple things employees can do to save energy.

"If you're leaving a room, make sure you turn out the lights," said Pulcrano. When you're leaving work, "make sure you turn off your computer monitor. If you've got a number of appliances in your operating area, then put them on switches so that you can turn them off at night."

The agency has also put more attention on printing. Pulcrano said the Postal Service has converted nearly 6,000 machines to automatically use black ink. And by default, the printers now print on two sides.

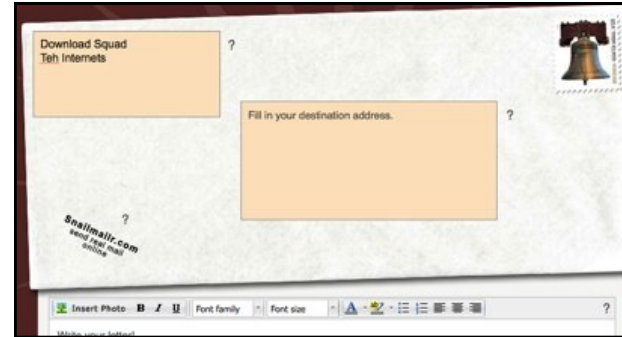
"Just that alone is going to save us probably about \$10 million."

SOURCE: FederalNewsRadio.com 08.05.09

Snailmail: send US mail from the web

Written by Jay Hathaway (RSS feed) Aug 16, 2009 at 10:00AM

Email is a convenient way to communicate, but some correspondence requires the extra effort of a printed letter. With Snailmailr, though, printed letters don't actually take a whole lot of effort. Just enter an address, type up to four pages, and pay \$1, and your letter will be printed and mailed for you. Does it still count as more personal than email when you don't have to leave your computer to do it?



Snailmailr costs a little bit more than a stamp, but saves you the time of picking up stamps or printing them yourself. Including the cost of envelope and paper, \$1 is a pretty reasonable price to pay. There's a little bit of an extra cost, though, if you

don't want to be tacky: you can remove the Snailmailr logo from your envelope for an extra 15 cents. Everything else about Snailmailr looks good: they allow color images in letters, and they address environmental concerns by using recycled paper and buying carbon offsets.

Confession, continued

(Continued from page 12)

Be well!

Guy Nohrenberg, Letter Carrier, Simi Valley, CA

Feel free to write me at tindad@sbcglobal.net or say something intelligent in the blogs for this article. The summer discount should bring volumes up a bit. We will recover from this recession. Priority Mail is the best deal in the shipping business and Intelligent Mail will bring volume up even more in November. Advocate the United States Postal Service, because it represents YOU! Remember, we've seen this all before. Buy an "oldtimer" a cup of coffee and he'll tell you.



USPS Management Says:
"Just because it's STUPID
doesn't mean we won't do it."



A Look at Postal News behind the Scenes Eye on the Postal Service

Written By Joseph Scarzhoni

DON'T KNOW IF ANY OF "M'EYE" readers, who "Eye'm" assuming' are all fellow letter carriers have had this problem so take note. Our routes in "M'Eye" office have recently been adjusted as per the MIARAP (Modified Interim Alternate Route Adjustment Process) and just the second week into the changes, we all have new MSP scans. That in itself is no problem. Hey, if Big Blue Bird wants me to waste time zappin' barcodes in mail boxes, fine with The "Eye".

But on the second day of the new MSP scan points, one of "M'Eye" customers yanked off the barcode from their mailbox. "Eye" told my stupidvisor but apparently he's deaf. 'Cause two days after, he gets in "M'Eye" face and says I deliberately missed the scan two days runnin'! WTF!. "Eye" told him and he says, "Yeah, I know but District don't see that as an excuse."

Oh, no? So what am "Eye" sposed to do, draw little lines in the mailbox with "M'Eye" pen and scan that? "Eye" told him that, exactly. He looks at me like The "Eye" grew another head. He says its District pushin' the buttons on this issue. No, kiddin'? Who's runnin' this outfit? No wonder it's sinkin' like the Titanic! What did Forest Gump say? *"Stupid is as stupid does."* Or something like that.

Back to the real reason I pen this column...

IN THE VOLUNTEER STATE — Tennessee — former "relief" posthole master, Joan Pearson, 52 was indicted by a Federal Grand Jury in Franklin County for allegedly embezzlin' \$3,000 of Big Blue Bird money orders while she was in charge of the Vina Posthole Office.

Pearson resigned last November shortly after the investigation began about her alleged indiscretion. Pearson did say she planned on returnin' the money but she got caught before she could do that.

No trial date has been set but, she could get up to 10 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000.

Baretta used to say, *"If you can't do the time, don't do the crime."* But as always, an indictment is not a conviction and Pearson is innocent until proven guilty.

Maybe The "Eye" is dense or something' but, what's so important about jeopardizing' your job, your livelihood, for just a few thousand dollars when you'd make hundreds of times more than that in the long run?

Jeesh.

IN THE "WINDY CITY", ChiTown, people on Mark Ruben's route are up in arms over his imminent dismissal after 25 years workin' for Big Blue Bird.

USPS staffing down 5.7% from last year

Reports filed with the Postal regulatory Commission show that as of July 17, the US Postal Service has reduced its field staff by 5.7%, or 37,454 employees from the same period last year. (All numbers cited refer to actual employees on the rolls, not authorized positions).



The largest reductions among bargaining unit employees, as in the past, have come in the clerk craft, which lost 16,023 employees, or 8.1%. City carriers were down by 5.2%, or 11,135 employees. The smaller mail handler craft lost 2,829, or 5% of its members. Career rural carriers, who are compensated on an evaluation basis, and generally earn significantly less than their city counterparts, lost just 974 employees, or 1.4%.

Supervisors, managers and administrative staffing in the field was reduced by 3,468 employees, or 8.4%. Headquarters lost 88 staff, or 3.1%.

The bad news for the USPS is that the complement reductions so far have not translated to any significant cost reductions. Thanks to salary and benefit increases, the USPS has paid out almost exactly the same amount in base salaries and benefits this year as it did in 2008. The \$1 billion the agency has managed to save in compensation costs this year has come entirely from reductions in overtime. Sustaining that level of savings solely from overtime in the future will be difficult if not impossible.

This entry was posted on Thursday, August 13th, 2009 at 6:54 am.

USPS to pay managers for environmental performance

Written By Ruben Gomez

Raises for managers at the United States Postal Service next year will depend, in part, on how well the service is doing with the environment.

That sustainability office at USPS tells FederalNewsRadio that they are adding new pay-for-performance indicators to measure how well managers and supervisors meet goals for energy and fuel usage.

The goal is to save money and green the cash-strapped Postal Service.

"Our facilities group has been involved in conducting energy audits of our largest energy-consuming buildings, and they've identified a little more than two trillion BTU's of potential energy reductions," said Sam Pulcrano, Vice President for Sustainability. "That's basically the equivalent of about 62,000 U.S.

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USPS seeks new business, continued

(Continued from page 21)

as closing postal facilities and moving from six- to five-day-a-week mail delivery.

Potter testified in support of the Senate bill, saying that if Congress doesn't act in time, the Postal Service will skip some or all of the pre- payments for retiree health benefits. He expressed optimism that the Postal Service will be able to ramp up the payments in five years' time, helped in part by cost-cutting efforts.

Eliminating Saturday delivery service would save \$3.3 billion a year and savings would kick in immediately, Potter told the Senate panel. Just 11% of mail is delivered on Saturday and many businesses are closed then, said Potter, making it a good choice as the Postal Service pushes to curtail carrier delivery to five days a week.



In another cost-cutting move, the Postal Service has a list of about 675 postal facilities that could be closed, chiefly in cities and suburbs. Potter played down alternatives such as a big increase in postal rates, saying that would "drive mail away," further depressing revenue.

Sen. Joseph Lieberman, I-Conn., said lawmakers aren't happy about closing post offices or going to five-day-a-week mail delivery, but may have to accept such changes to keep the Postal Service afloat. He predicted the full Senate would likely act on the postal bill, S.1507, when it returns in September.

Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, supported giving short-term relief to the Postal Service but questioned whether it would be financially stable enough after five years to make the requisite retiree health fund payments. She also questioned the Postal Service plan to enter non-postal business, noting past forays "had very little success."

Phillip Herr, the Government Accountability Office's director of physical infrastructure issues, told the panel that the bill is "a short-term fix," and suggested lawmakers demand longer-term restructuring of the Postal Service that would put it on a sounder financial footing. He said the Postal Service has 50% excess capacity in mail processing facilities and suggested it use early retirement incentives to streamline its workforce and cut labor costs.

Prospects for the Senate bill could be clouded by opposition from postal labor unions, which object to a mandatory arbitration provision. Union officials testified Thursday that although they support the bill's goals, they believe the arbitration provision undercuts the collective bargaining process, and they vowed to oppose the bill unless the provision is stripped from it.

SOURCE: Dow Jones Newswires, 08.07.09

Eye on the Postal Service, continued

(Continued from page 14)

Seems, Ruben was fired because he left his mail cart unattended while deliverin' mail on his route.

Well, shoot, The "Eye" remembers our mailman, Stanley, when The "Eye" was but a "Wink" of a kid. He, too, used a mail cart. He used to let it roll way up the sidewalk while he climbed stairs and delivered mail on porches. The cart would roll, roll, and slowly come to a stop — three, four, sometimes five houses down. Sometimes Stanley would talk to a neighbor or two. And his cart would just sit there — unattended. Oh, yeah, and Stanley would come by twice a day. Gives alls 'y'all an idea of The "Eye's" age, eh?

Never in "M'Eye" imagination would The "Eye" ever guess "Eye'd" be workin' for the reincarnation of the old Post Office Department when "Eye" grew up.

So, back to Ruben...his customers on his route in Chicago demonstrated outside the Posthole Office in support of "their" mailman. That is soooo wonderful, donchathink?

"He's a great mailman. He's the eyes and ears of the neighborhood. When he's not here, everything falls apart," protest organizer Joy Noven offered in explanation of what motivated them.

Noven and her neighbors gush over a mailman who they say greets everyone by name, who will alert them if one of the elderly residents on his route hasn't emptied their mailbox, and most important of all, makes sure everyone gets all their mail -- and only their own mail.

I thought the days of the mailman knowing his customers -- and vice-versa -- were behind us. But the people on Ruben's route describe him as a throwback to the time when the Postal Service was still a beloved institution, not an object of scorn.

That makes it all the more ironic in their view that he would be fired from the 4850 N. Broadway branch that's been derided for decades for its poor service.

"We're the consumers of the service they're providing. He's to us the greatest thing about the post office in our area," said Emily Stewart, one of a half-dozen neighbors to scurry over to Noven's home at a moment's notice on Monday afternoon, despite the rain, to explain why they support Ruben.

Some people make it a habit to inform the post office when they'll be on vacation to put a temporary stop to the mail, but the folks on Ruben's route says he warns them when he'll be on vacation -- so that they'll be better prepared for all the delivery screw-ups during his absence.

Micho Iwao said Monday's mail delivery was typical of what happens when

(Continued on page 26)

Residents of retirement home remember a different day Age in which letters are old-fashioned takes toll on Postal Service

Written By Joe Burris

As the U.S. Postal Service considers closing hundreds of post offices nationwide to save money, one question looms, especially for those 25 and younger: Who'd notice?



During her freshman year at the University of Richmond, Kaitlyn McDowell enjoyed receiving the occasional letter with a care package from younger cousins.

Beyond that, though, the 19-year-old from Ellicott City mostly corresponds by e-mail, text messaging and social networking, like many of her generation.

"It's easier. You don't have to go through the trouble of getting stamps, writing the letter, sealing it and taking it to the post office," said McDowell.

The paperless preferences of McDowell and her peers reflect a generational shift from a time when letter writing was a preferred form of communication. It's one of the reasons the U.S. Postal Service, which has projected a net loss of more than \$7 billion at the end of this fiscal year, is considering closing hundreds of post offices.

The postal service says that third-quarter mail volume is down 7 billion pieces, or 14 percent, compared with a year ago - the largest consecutive third-quarter drop in total volume since 1971. To offset the resulting budget crunch, officials are also considering discontinuing Saturday deliveries and eliminating some classes of stamps. They say that some collection boxes are already being removed from city streets, in part because they contain just 25 or fewer pieces of mail within a given period.

Yet for many twentysomethings and teens who have grown up on digital media, post offices and collection boxes are about as vital as pay phones.

That's a sharp contrast from an assembled group of residents of the Oak Crest Village retirement community in Parkville. These senior citizens can remember when everyone wrote letters and looked forward to receiving them.

One Oak Crest Village resident, Thomas Foster, co-wrote three mathematics
(Continued on page 17)

US Postal Service Seeks OK To Enter New Lines Of Business

Written By Judith Burns

WASHINGTON -(Dow Jones)- The U.S. Postal Service is seeking permission from Congress to enter new lines of business, hoping to boost revenue at a time when traditional mail volumes are posting double-digit losses, putting the Postal Service into a deep financial hole.

A green light from lawmakers could allow 30,000 post offices to offer banking and insurance products, renew drivers' licenses or sell pre-paid cellular telephone service, offsetting hits from the recession and a shift to electronic bill payment.



"We cannot just sell stamps in those outlets," U.S. Postmaster General John Potter said at a Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs subcommittee hearing Thursday.



While Potter stressed that the Postal Service hasn't spent a nickel exploring alternative businesses, he said it would do so if lawmakers lift a ban on non-postal business.



"I think we'd be prepared very quickly to test it," Potter told reporters after the hearing, saying, "there have been enough people knocking on our door," that the Postal Service would have plenty of options to choose from.



Sales of pre-paid cellular telephone service are one of the ideas that have been pitched, according to Potter, who declined to name the firm or firms that made the pitch.

In addition to looking for new sources of revenue, the Postal Service is aiming to cut costs and obtain short-term relief from a \$5.8 billion health-care bill that comes due Sept. 30.

The postal service expects to post a loss of more than \$7 billion this year and probably won't have enough cash on hand to cover the hefty pre-payment for retiree health benefits. Congress is looking to provide relief by increasing the Postal Service's borrowing authority and temporarily lowering retiree health pre-payments.

Sen. Thomas Carper, D-Del., chair of the Senate postal subcommittee and sponsor of a bill to ease the Postal Service's cash crunch, said he wants to give the Postal Service "breathing room" as it considers longer-term changes such

(Continued on page 22)

Postal Service on boycott list**Fox Runs House Ads to Fill Empty Slots in Glenn Beck Boycott***Written By Jim Edwards*

The advertiser pullout from Glenn Beck's Fox News Channel show has gone from a trickle to a torrent, and Fox has been reduced to running "house" ads, spots for its own partner properties for which it may or may not receive revenue.



According to the NY Daily News, these companies have stopped their ads on Beck: WalMart, GMAC Financial Services (Ally Bank), Best Buy, CVS and Travelocity. Tribble notes that Allergan and Broadview Security have also joined the boycott. Companies that previously yanked ads from Beck include: ConAgra, Roche, Sanofi-Aventis, RadioShack, Geico, Men's Wearhouse, State Farm, Sargento, LexisNexis, Procter & Gamble, Progressive Insurance and S.C. Johnson.

The boycott was started by ColorofChange.com after Beck's statement on Fox & Friends that Obama has:



"... a deep-seeded hatred for white people ... I'm not saying he doesn't like white people, I'm saying he has a problem. This guy is, I believe, a racist."

Advertisers remaining on the show — and thus on the boycott hit list — are: Honda, General Electric, Farmers Insurance, Office Depot, Nestlé (Gerber), Red Lobster, the **U.S. Postal Service**, and Wyeth.

Fox has repeatedly noted that the advertisers have moved elsewhere on Fox, so revenue is not affected. The Daily News reported that airtime on Beck is being filled by these companies: The Wall Street Journal, DirecTV, Honda and Oprah Winfrey's Oxygen Channel.

The DN failed to note that, with the exception of Honda, all of those brands have been in business before with Fox parent News Corp. That's a sign that Beck is actually hurting for revenue. As BNET noted previously, it is unlikely that Fox is making up the revenue with higher prices for moved ads elsewhere in its time-slots.

SOURCE: Business Net.com (BNET.com) 8.18.09

BARCODES EVERYWHERE!

But where did it all start? The first product to have a bar code was Wrigley's gum.

**Old-fashioned, continued**

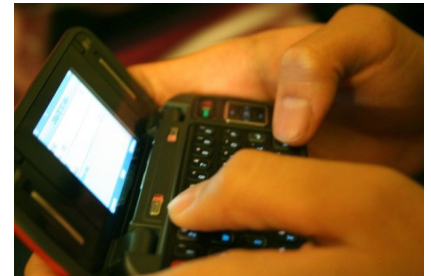
(Continued from page 16)

textbooks, each 350 pages long, that were written by hand and mailed to a publishing company in New York.

When asked how many communicate through social networking services such as Facebook, only a few of the senior citizens raised their hands. A few turned to their neighbors and asked, "What is that?"

That generation gap in correspondence has been a blow to the postal industry. Officials say the decline can be traced to everything from the telephone industry's deregulation, which made calls cheaper, to more women leading busier lives outside the home, to consumers doing more business online.

Nancy Pope, historian for the National Postal Museum in Washington, said that these days, most people enjoy receiving a letter for special occasions. For all other correspondence, they prefer digital media.



"I don't see letter writing headed for extinction because I see enough people in their 20s and 30s rediscover the love for writing," said Pope, "but there's no way the Postal Service is going to create a budget based on twentysomethings rediscovering writing letters."

Ironically, the National Postal Museum is housed in the old City Post Office building, which served as one of Washington's primary postal facilities from 1914 to 1986 (it still houses a small post office).

Martin Kasey, 25, of Baltimore said that some of his friends still treasure letter writing, but he doesn't share in their passion.

"I wrote home to my parents from camp; that was it," he said.

McDowell, who says she writes a letter about once a month, says, "I would definitely miss Saturday mail, but I wouldn't miss having a post office."

Some educators say that because the digital medium is preferred, the letters young people do write show that they never learned to differentiate between the formal and personal, the colloquial and standard.

"One of my complaints is not teaching young people about writing e-mails appropriately," said Laurie Henry, assistant professor of early adolescent literacy at the University of Kentucky. "They're taking text messages and

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Old-fashioned, continued

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applying an e-mail format. Formal and informal online communication should look like a letter."

Handwriting specialists argue that as more people chose typing over penning correspondence, they undermined business skills such as writing in cursive and folding a letter.

"You can't always depend on technology. You want the communication that suits the communication purpose," said Jan Z. Olsen, founder of Handwriting Without Tears, a curriculum-based program in Cabin John that teaches students and educators handwriting skills. "There are places where texting is the best way or using a phone is best or e-mails are best."

Handwriting Without Tears involved its students nationwide in the letter-writing process earlier this year by sending 35,000 letters to new President Barack Obama. Olsen said that her company has flourished as schools abandoned letter writing.

Most of the seniors at Oak Crest Village say that they enjoy getting handwritten letters from grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Still, they notice how times have changed.

Gene Foster said he's observed that high school kids who volunteer at Oak Crest Village hold their pencils the way one would hold a stirring spoon - inside the fingers of a clenched fist. Thomas Foster (no relation) said that while attending Baltimore Polytechnic Institute, he was taught that most writing done by hand was called lettering.

"Printing was a mechanical process done by a printing press," he said, adding that back then, cursive writing was called longhand.



Jane Awalt said that people used to take more pride in their penmanship. Nancy Leggiadro said that these days most everyone uses the letter ending "Sincerely"; years ago, they used such phrases as "Warmest Regards."

Stephanie Sterling, 29, of Charles Village, is already trying to instill a passion for letter writing in her two-year-old daughter, Chase. She places her daughter's drawings in stamped, addressed envelopes and sends them to friends and family.

"I do a terrible job with thank-you cards and

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Old-fashioned, continued

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Christmas cards," said Sterling, "but I can see her keeping it up through high school. Everyone likes to get mail."

One of the more popular letter-writing practices for kids through the years has been writing a letter to Santa Claus with requests for Christmas. These days, perform a Web search on writing letters to Santa, and the first site that comes up is Emailsanta.com.

But handwritten missives to the North Pole haven't gone out of fashion, according to Todd Alhart, a spokesman for General Electric. For years, workers at the company's Schenectady plant have volunteered to write back to kids who address their Christmas letters to the 12345 ZIP code.

The numbers of actual letters addressed to Santa, Alhart says, "remain strong."

SOURCE: THE BALTIMORE SUN, 08.07.09

\$2.4 Billion Quarterly Loss for USPS

Written By Ed O'Keefe

The U.S. Postal Service lost \$2.4 billion during its third quarter and forecasts a \$7 billion year-end loss, according to figures released Wednesday. Mail volume has dropped 12.6 percent so far this year, adding to a sharp decline in volume thanks to the economic recession that began in 2007 and Americans' wider use of the Internet.



On average, the Postal Service now delivers 4.1 pieces of mail to each address, down from 5.9 pieces in 2000. That decline has contributed to losses in 11 of the last 12 fiscal quarters, according to the new figures released by the service.

"The Postal Service does not want to do anything that would disrupt this economy. Over a trillion dollars moves through the mail in any given year and we are a hub of an industry that employs some 8 million Americans. We have no intention of doing anything that would disrupt the flow of mail," he said.

The Postal Service has taken several steps to reduce costs in recent years, including salary and hiring freezes and cuts to its workforce and mail routes. USPS now employs 630,000 career employees, down from a peak of 802,000 in 1999. More than 12,000 city carrier routes have been cut and consolidated with others since 2000.

SOURCE: The Washington Post, 08.05.09