

ShopTalk

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Extension 4-6803

So Much Mail, So Little Time

The busy eight-person staff that works in the Northwest Building's Mail Desk processes thousands of letters and hundreds of packages each week for the newspaper's employees, as well as mail for several people you won't find in a Lotus Notes search, including President Bush, Santa Claus and the Washington Wizards.

According to Mail Desk



CARLETHIA PRATT in The Post's back copy room that houses six months of back issues.



The Mail Desk staff includes (front, l-r) **MAURENIA CLARK**, **MARLA BARKLAY**, **TONY JAMES**, (second row, l-r) **KEVIN BRADDOCK**, **CAROL RAWLINGS**, **CARLETHIA PRATT**, and (back row) **HAROLD JONES**. Not pictured is **MATTIE LOCKHART**.

Manager **CAROL RAWLINGS**, The Post's Mail Desk handles an average of 50,000 pieces of incoming mail a week or over 10,000 a day. That number can jump dramatically when departments in the newspaper run reader contests or there has been coverage of news that creates a lot of reader reaction. There are also hundreds of UPS and Fed Ex packages, courier delivered packages, and flower, balloon and cake deliveries. And that doesn't include the flood of outgoing mail generated by The Post including more than 45,000 pieces of out-

going first-class mail each month, hundreds of Airborne Express packages, as well as the approximately 600 materials handled each week by The Post's courier service vendor, Action Courier.

Monday through Saturday, the Post Office delivers two to three hampers of mail to the alley next to the Northwest Building. Since the Unabomber scare a decade ago, each piece of incoming mail is scanned by an X-ray machine. Once the mail is scanned in a small

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Postpourri

The Post's Newspaper in Education (NIE) Department provided area students in grades 4th through 8th with the opportunity to learn about the impact of Hispanic Americans in the United States through a program funded by the Ford Motor Company during Hispanic Heritage Month, Sept. 15 to Oct. 15.

More than 250 teachers requested materials for approximately 11,000 students to use



PHOTO - RUBEN RODRIGUEZ

GARY PALMATIER, an artist in the Marketing Department, judges the submissions to the Newspaper in Education (NIE) *Pride & Power: Hispanic History & Politics* art contest.

the bilingual classroom program "Pride & Power: Hispanic History & Politics." NIE provided teacher guides, activity sheets and tabloid supplements that included biographical information on Hispanic American government leaders and historic figures. The Thursday issue of The Post was delivered to the participating classes to use as a resource for students to look for news and ads involving or impacting Hispanic Americans.

The program concluded with an Hispanic American art contest to illustrate a Hispanic American a student admired or an event in Hispanic American history. Marketing Department artist **GARY PALMATIER**, three local art teachers and a Virginia artist

were judges for the contest which took place on Thursday, Oct. 24 in The Post's 8th floor boardroom.

"Because the program was bilingual, we specifically targeted ESL (English as a second language) teachers with this program," explained **MARGARET KAPLOW**, educational sales and services manager.

Other newspapers participating in the program include the *Detroit News*, the *New York Times*, the *Miami Herald* and the *Denver Post*.

The Northwest Building's community room was

transformed into a hip club, featuring lip shaped couches and the glow of red lights, for the reception honoring the Weekend Section's 25th Anniversary on Thursday, Oct. 25. More than 115 guests attended the event including advertisers, representatives of the local arts community, and past and present Weekend staff.



Weekend Editor **JOYCE JONES** welcomes guests to the reception celebrating the Weekend section's 25th Anniversary.



Brock & Company Executive Chef Daniel Dernetz oversaw the creation of the food display that was part of the 9th floor community room's transformation into a hip club for the Weekend section's 25th Anniversary.

Despite cloudy skies and the recent end to the

sniper threat approximately 300 kids participated in the third Marine Corps Healthy Kids Fun Run presented by The Post on Saturday, Oct. 26. Thirty-five Post employees, retirees, family and friends volunteered at the fun run held along a one-mile stretch of the Marine Corps Marathon course near the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington. The fee for the run was a toy donation for the Marine's Toys for Tots program.

The event is open to kids ages 7 to 12, who run in three

groups according to age. For many of the athletes, the one-mile course was no problem after hours spent running in soccer practice.

Marissa Mizroch, 8, from Bethesda, Md. is a second-year veteran of the Healthy Kids Fun Run. "I did the run with my brother last year and I thought it was fun. I had nothing else to do this morning and I like running and the music they play here," she explained.

Mac Steffen, 9, from Burke, Va. came to the run with fellow cub scouts from his den. "I thought it was fun



Healthy Kids Fun Run volunteers **AURORA GONZALEZ**, Circulation; **LUCI CHAFFIER**, Accounting; **GAYLE GIGER**, Public Relations, and **MILENE PURDY**, Accounting, at the event's registration booth.

and long, too," he noted after the race. "But I'd like to do it again next year."



Ned the Newshound poses with Marines in period costumes at the Iwo Jima Memorial in Arlington, Va., where the Healthy Kids Fun Run took place on Saturday, Oct. 26.



HAROLD JONES checks names and departments while separating interoffice mail.

building located in the alley, it is brought into the building and up to the Mail Desk on the third floor. In the Mail Desk office each piece of mail is hand stamped to indicate it has been scanned.

“Once we get the mail, it takes at least another hour and a half for us to scan it through the X-ray machine,” explained Rawlings. “If anything looks suspicious, we call Security.”

During the Anthrax scare last year, the mail was also sent to an outside facility for testing and then held in another holding room across the alley where it would sit covered in plastic until tests results returned saying it was Anthrax free. A year later, the Anthrax scare continues to impact the newspaper’s incoming and outgoing mail. Since the Brentwood Facility is still closed, the mail for the District comes into the Capitol Heights and Upper Marlboro Post Office facilities, then is sent to a facility on V Street in Northeast D.C. According to Rawlings, this means that the mail delivery to The Post has been between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. Only then can the Mail Desk begin processing the mail going to each department.

“The Newsroom gets

about 75 percent of the mail that comes in, although 35 percent of that is junk mail. We can also average about two to three carts of books that have been sent to Book World,” said Rawlings.

Meanwhile, on the first



MARLA BARKLAY accepts mail at the mail desk located at the I Street entrance to the Northwest Building.

floor by the L Street entrance, **MARLA BARKLAY** is accepting and recording a constant stream of courier delivered packages and letters, other letters and packages that are delivered by businesses and readers, as well as flowers and other personal deliveries for

staff. “I like the flower deliveries because I get to enjoy them before they get picked up,” comments Barklay.

The first floor Mail Desk is also the home base for Action Courier, The Post’s courier service vendor. The Action Courier staff responsible for making sure Post packages arrive down the street or across the region on time, includes manager Cheryl Eubanks, Lorenzo Hall, and James LaFane.

The workday begins early in the Mail Desk office.

TONY JAMES arrives at 7 a.m. to sort approximately 150 out of town and local newspapers and delivers them to the Advertising Department and the vice presidents. He also shares responsibilities with **KEVIN BRADDOCK** for scanning and sorting the incoming mail. **HAROLD JONES** will make three runs during the day to each department picking up and deliver-

MATTIE LOCKHART handles coding and adding postage to each piece of outgoing mail, as well as the outgoing Airborne Express letters and packages. **MAURENIA CLARK** is Rawlings assistant, managing the workflow in the office or taking over someone’s job if they are sick or on vacation. Clark and **CARLETHIA PRATT** are also responsible for training administrative staff on the Airborne online service.

In addition to several other duties, Pratt also manages the back copy room, which holds 6 months of back copies of The Post. She processes internal requests for back issues as well as requests from readers who want a copy of the paper published on the day a baby was born, or as a souvenir of a news event. According to Pratt, the most requested issue is the Business section’s annual report on the top 200 local businesses.

To keep up with the steady flow of The Post’s mail, the staff will often work into the night or come in on a Saturday.

ing mail and sorting it when it gets to the Mail Desk. Braddock makes a final 4 p.m. run to the Executive, Corporate and Advertising departments. All outgoing mail for that day must be processed and waiting outside in the alley for a 5 p.m. pick up by the Post Office.

POST SCRIPTS



In November 1983, The Post launched its weekly national edition tabloid. In her biography, Katharine Graham notes that she had heard the idea of a national weekly edition discussed since the early years following her father Eugene Meyer's purchase of The Post in 1933. "It was never feasible to undertake a truly national daily edition, but this weekly tabloid of selected Post articles on politics and government satisfies many people's desire to follow The Post's political reporting." In 2002, the National Weekly has a profitable niche business serving approximately 50,000 highly educated subscribers across the country.

During the six-month celebration of the 125th Anniversary, ShopTalk will take a look back at the events and people that shaped the history of the newspaper.

HEALTH CENTER NEWS

Under stress? The Northwest Health Center has two weekly programs to help employees cope with stress. On Mondays, an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) representative is available to meet with employees in the Health Center from 2 to 6 p.m. Please call 1-800-765-0770 to make an appointment.

Seated massages are also available every Wednesday from 11:20 a.m. to 1 p.m. and every Thursday from 12:20 to 4:20 p.m. The cost for the massage is \$1 per minute, or a minimum of \$10 for 10 minutes. To make a reservation for a massage or for more information, call the Health Center at x4-7192. The Health Center is located on the second floor, outside the cafeteria.



CREDIT UNION NEWS

CommonWealth One Federal Credit Union Members have free access to their accounts at www.cofcu.org. The online service offers convenient 24/7 access to check balances and transfer funds as well as free E-Statements.

For a two-minute demonstration, visit Colby at the Commonwealth One desk off the 15th Street lobby of the Northwest Building (behind the elevators) or call him at x4- 4994.

MISS AN ISSUE OF SHOPTALK?

Back issues of ShopTalk are available on *IntraNED*. Click on the ShopTalk link on the left-hand side of the *IntraNED* home page and you can find back copies of ShopTalk in color, dating back to Sept. 2001. If you have any questions about the back issues, call Lisa Connors, ShopTalk editor, at x4-6803.



MARKETPLACE

FOR RENT: Chevy Chase, D.C. house, 3 BR, 2 BA, LR w/fireplace, A/C, large deck, quiet street, near excellent schools, \$2,500. Call Bob at x4-7479 or (202) 244-3380.

FOR SALE: Coffee table with glass top and wrought iron base. Medium sized. Only a year old; looks like new. \$90/OBO. Lisa Rein, X4-3227 or (202)243-0130.

HOUSESITTER: Going on vacation? Or how about a quick get-away? Housesitter available and reliable. References available. Please call Niki at (301) 526-2989.

FOR SALE: Three tickets to Redskins v. Cowboys game in Dallas on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 28. Cost \$75 each, asking \$60 each. Call Levi at (301) 423-0628.

FOR SALE: 1998 Chevrolet Cavalier, 4 cylinder, automatic, AC, power windows, cruise, air bags, ABS, stereo, well maintained, gently driven by original owner, 45,000 miles, \$5,800. Call Av at x4-7734 or (202) 244-8785,

FOR SALE: Recaro seat, driver's side, black, excellent for long commutes, sport-performance driving, or everyday use. It has inflatable lumbar support & all the features of a luxury car seat. Almost new, only 2 months of use. Will fit any car, truck or SUV. New \$900, will sell for \$500. Please call Enrique at x 4-6195 or at (202) 362-7128.

FOR SALE: 1999 Black Audi A6 Sedan with dark burgundy leather interior. 45K miles. Well maintained, in great condition. Moving overseas. Must sell, \$22K. Call Diana at (571) 633-0877, or x4-6694.

ISO MALE ROOMMATE: 3 level townhouse, 3 BR, 3.5 BA, finished basement, patio, quiet community, located in Mitchellville, Md., \$650 per month includes utilities. Available immed. Call Cedric at (301) 350-9006.

FOR SALE: Furniture, 3 piece set (sofa, loveseat and chair), cream with pastel colors, \$70/OBO. Also 3 piece set (coffee table and two end tables with drawer), cherry, \$40/OBO. Call Pete at x4-7652 or (301) 774-2537.

FOR SALE: Absolutely perfect, 36" round, Solid oak pedestal table, beautifully grained. With 2 matching solid oak chairs. Pristine condition. Must sell. \$225 for all 3 pieces. Rita, x4-7088 or (301) 564-1414.

FREE! FREE!: Ads in marketplace are free to employees of The Washington Post. Join thousands of satisfied customers who have bought and sold through Marketplace. The deadline is Friday at noon for the next Thursday's issue of ShopTalk. Send your ad with your extension and home phone number via e-mail to ShopTalk, or fax to x4-4963.

MARKETPLACE DEADLINE: Noon Fridays. Please include your name, extension and home phone number. **ADS ARE FOR POST EMPLOYEES ONLY.** Send ads to Shop Talk, 7th floor, or call x4-6803. To send ads via fax dial x4-4963; via e-mail send to **shoptalk**. Ads run two issues unless otherwise requested. One ad per employee, please.

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