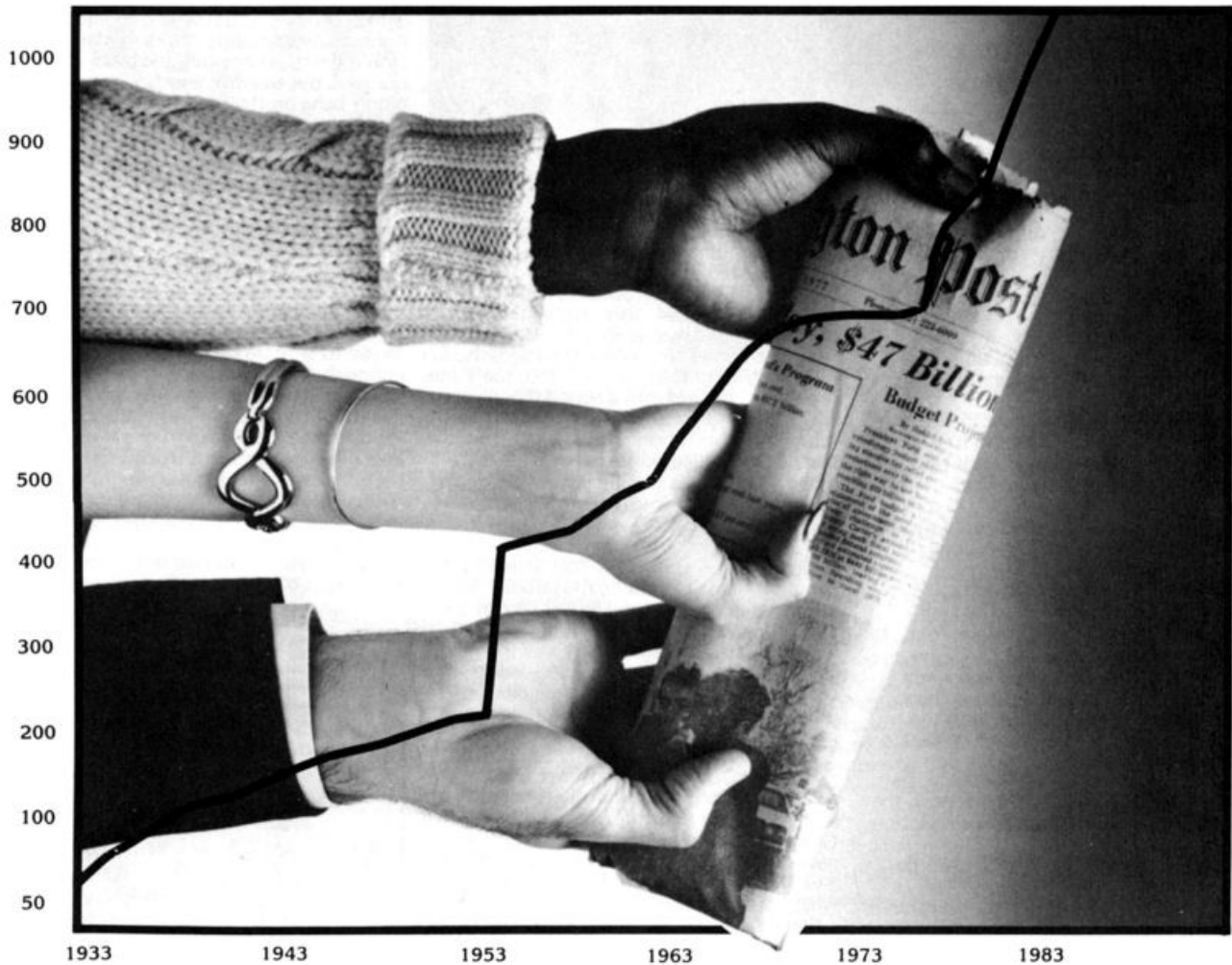


1,000,000 SUNDAY CIRCULATION



One million Sunday circulation.

There are Post veterans in every department who remember when Post Sunday circulation was half that, and when the Post was a perennial runner-up—or worse—among the city's newspapers.

For the six months ended March 31, 1983, the Post's Sunday circulation reached an all-time high of 1,005,468, according to figures submitted to the Audit Bureau of Circulations.

The figure, subject to audit, places the

Post sixth in Sunday circulation among the nation's newspapers, trailing only the New York Times, the New York Daily News, the Los Angeles Times, the Chicago Tribune and the Philadelphia Inquirer.

Promotion ads announcing the circulation milestone have already appeared in the Post and in trade journals such as Advertising Age, Ad Week, and Madison Avenue.

The Circulation Department celebrated the event yesterday with a party at the Indian Springs Country Club. Each distributor re-

ceived a pewter tray inscribed with the Post's logo and the words, "One Million Sundays, 1983."

Many current and past Post employees can take credit for the achievement, which was probably beyond even Eugene Meyer's wildest dreams when he bought the Post at a bankruptcy auction in June 1933. At the time, the paper's circulation was sagging as badly as its ledger sheets.

With a daily circulation of 54,476 and a
(CIRCULATION, continued on next page)



Service Desk staffers take subscriber phone calls in their quarters, located on the fourth floor of the National Theatre building (1948).

Sunday figure of 62,522, the Post stood dead last among five highly competitive newspapers.

The morning Herald and evening Times were also losing money, but boasted circulation which far exceeded the Post's. The gossipy afternoon tabloid, the Daily News, had a staunch following, though it too, was in the red.

The only money-making paper in Washington was the Star, which carried most of the largest advertisers and enjoyed wide readership among affluent Washingtonians. There was doubt that all five newspapers in a metropolitan area of only 600,000 could survive and there was no reason to believe one of them would be the Post.

Meyer learned quickly how competitive Washington newspapers were. The rival Herald immediately sought to claim four of the Post's comics mainstays—Dick Tracy, Gasoline Alley, Winnie Winkle, and Andy Gump—on grounds that Meyer's purchase of the paper voided its contract with the New York News-Chicago Tribune syndicate which distributed them.

The Post could ill afford to surrender the comics without a struggle. Then as now, the funny pages were among the best circulation boosters.

A two-year struggle between the two papers over the right to publish these comics went as far as the Supreme Court. It refused to hear the case, saving the comics for the Post.

The Post spent \$50,000 in a circulation drive in Meyer's first years of ownership. But the number of turnovers in the subscriber rolls each year—100,000—nearly matched the total circulation figures.

One of Meyer's early complaints was that "We could not get circulation because we did not have advertising, and we could not get advertising because we did not have circulation." To remedy that hard fact of newspaperdom, Meyer ordered a survey of the Post and its competition. Every page was analyzed to determine reader appeal or lack

of it. The findings became an indispensable guide in building the type of newspaper that people wanted to read.

By 1938, Sunday circulation had nearly doubled, to 106,931; daily circulation stood at 104,992, and was neck-and-neck with the afternoon Times and morning Herald, though still well behind the Star. In 1939, the Times and Herald merged into a round-the-clock operation, and wrested the circulation lead (though not advertising supremacy) from the Star. The Post lagged far behind; Meyer noted, "the Star is first in advertising, the Times-Herald first in circulation, and the Post first in deficits."

A 20,000 boost in Sunday circulation came in 1941-42 when the Post acquired distribution rights to Parade, the popular Sunday supplement (and still a mainstay of the Sunday paper). World War II, and a resulting newspaper shortage, nearly saw those gains go for naught; the Post decided to conserve newsprint by restricting circulation rather than cutting the amount of advertising it accepted.

With the end of the war, the baby boom swept the nation. Housing developments sprang up locally in previously rural areas such as Fairfax County, Rockville and Prince George's County. Under the direction of new Circulation head HARRY GLADSTEIN—who brought some needed stability to what had been a rather chaotic department—the Post pursued an aggressive policy of establishing a newspaper presence in Washington's new, and growing, suburbs.

"We were hungry, we were aggressive," recalled assistant president JACK PATTERSON, who served as assistant to Gladstein in the postwar years. "We anticipated a large move to the suburbs. And it was expensive to cope with because the areas weren't heavily populated and we had to cover them by motor routes. But it was worth it to establish the Post in the new areas.

"We knew the explosion would continue and we'd be able eventually to go to a walk-

ing (carrier) route. And when the Star and the Daily News and the Times-Herald moved in, we were already there."

The Post's Suburban Circulation division expanded to cover a 75-mile radius from downtown. As a morning paper, Patterson explained, the Post had a decided logistical advantage over its afternoon competition. "We could drive 75 miles in the early morning and avoid traffic," he noted. "If their trucks left at 3 p.m. on the same trip, people would be going to bed by the time they got the paper!"

HENRY FRICKE, the department's recently-retired night Circulation manager, broke in during those years as a distributor covering an area of Northeast Washington and Prince George's County "that would be about 20 distributorships now," he laughed. Fricke recalled competing with Times-Herald counterparts over squatter's rights to new housing tracks in Maryland. "We'd see them working the block and pull our guys out to work another one, so we didn't bang on the door right after they did," he said.

JIM DAVIS, now the Post's Circulation Administration director, recalled one veteran distributor who "used to have parades through new developments, with all the carriers marching down the street at once" selling papers.

In those early postwar days, distributing the Post was quite a different operation than it is today. The old Post headquarters on E Street had little room for distributors' trucks to pick up papers as they were bundled. In fact, with a circulation of less than 200,000 and an average paper size of 24 pages, there was really no need for distributors to have trucks at all. The Post hired independent truckers at rock-bottom rates to haul papers to "drop points" around the city, where distributors would drive to pick up their allotted bundles.

"Distributors operated out of their cars then; most of us had station wagons that

(CIRCULATION, continued on next page)

(CIRCULATION, from page 2)

we took the back seat out of," recalled Davis, who began in 1950 as a summer relief driver in Virginia. "I can remember one distributor who drove up Connecticut Avenue in a car with the back seat out, the trunk open, and papers all the way up the trunk and on the roof. He just sat 'em up there, didn't tie 'em. It says a lot for the nice pavement on Connecticut Avenue!"

The late 1940s may have been the heyday of subscriber solicitation efforts. The Post had its eye on cracking the elusive 200,000 subscriber mark. "Over the Line in '49" became the department's slogan. Meyer noted that "(business manager) Charles Corson keeps after me so continually to bring in new subscriptions that I solicit almost every stranger I meet," and he encouraged all employees to do the same.

Distributors who had arisen at 4 a.m. to pick up newspapers habitually worked until after 8 p.m. shepherding their carriers (called newsboys then) on door-to-door recruitment campaigns. The prizes for successful newsboys were plentiful: trips to Atlantic City, tickets to pro football games, and the chance to earn "Lucky Bucks" and redeem them for catalog items.

By 1950, television had arrived, and with it a circulation-boosting breakthrough: TV Week, a fold-in section in the Sunday paper. Another arrival, equally appreciated by Post staffers, was the newspaper's new quarters on L Street. Circulation was growing more quickly than any other newspaper in the city--largely at the expense of the Times-Herald--and additional press capacity, mailroom and loading dock space was sorely needed. "We thought that building was going to serve our needs for the next 30 years," recalled Patterson.

Little did anyone suspect how soon the new building would be overtaxed. On March 17, 1954, Eugene Meyer bought the Times-Herald after three hectic days of negotiations with its owner, Col.



The Times-Herald purchase on March 17, 1954 put The Post in first place among Washington dailies. Publisher **PHILIP L. GRAHAM** and chairman of the board **EUGENE MEYER** review the first copy of the combined newspapers.



Circulation promotion efforts peaked in the late 1940s. These Circulation employees were mailing out information to carriers about the Junior Ambassador carrier program. The winners got a free trip to Italy.

Robert H. McCormick.

There remains no more important date in Post history. Literally overnight, the Post's subscriber rolls doubled, as did the size of the paper. And Circulation was faced with the massive prospect of delivering it.

The Post immediately absorbed nearly all of the Times-Herald's circulation department: managers, clerks, distributors, newsboys and trucks. Davis, who like most distributors hustled down to L Street directly after hearing the news of Meyer's purchase, recalls seeing "mass confusion, at first." Patterson remembered "looking out the window and seeing all those jitneys heading to pick up papers. And I thought, 'Oh, my God!'"

In 1954-55, the Post's Sunday circulation soared from 203,561 to 410,185. Daily circulation nearly doubled as well, to 380,624.

The Post was now the only surviving morning newspaper in Washington, with a circulation which--after years of struggling to catch the Star--now exceeded it by 50 percent.

The hard part, everyone knew, would be holding onto the Times-Herald subscribers. And though it hardly seemed possible that the liberal, morning Post could entice readers of the right-wing Republican Times-Herald, that's exactly what happened.

The Post kept nearly all of its rival's features to prevent subscribers from switching to the Star or Daily News. Studies later showed that the Post retained 180,000 of the 253,000 daily Times-Herald subscribers who didn't also get the Post, and 200,000 of 250,000 Sunday subscribers. The Star, by contrast, picked up only 8,000.

"We didn't expect to hold as many as we did, certainly," commented Patterson. And the strain on the Post's production facilities was tremendous. Fricke remembers "guys getting back from their routes, getting a few hours of sleep on the bundles in the

Mailroom, then heading back out with more." The Times-Herald presses, six blocks away on H Street, were quickly put into service and had to be used for more than seven years.

"One of the really strange things about the purchase was that no matter how well we did running the presses, we couldn't handle the load in the Mailroom," recalled Patterson. "There simply wasn't enough room for the papers!"

To help solve that dilemma, a huge chute was built extending from the third-floor mailroom windows to the southwest corner of the L Street parking lot, enabling papers to be stacked there to await delivery trucks. According to Patterson, however, the chute was only minutes into its first night of service when the rains came. "It was like the Keystone Cops, with everybody running around to find mailing wrappers, anything we could put our hands on, to cover them up!"

Later, a platform and roof protected the papers, and the "bandstand," as it was called, remained in service until it was razed in 1958.

With the Post established as the only morning paper in Washington, effort was concentrated on providing a better alternative to "the good, gray Star." To pump up Saturday circulation--traditionally one of the paper's weakest sales days--the Real Estate section was moved from Sunday to Saturday. In 1961 American Weekly, the Sunday supplement inherited from the Times-Herald, was replaced with Potomac (later renamed The Washington Post Magazine). A new, full-color TV Channels helped boost Sunday circulation over 65,000 in the three years after its introduction.

The 1960s brought the Capital Beltway to the metropolitan area and further expanded the Post's reach into the suburbs. It also may have begun to widen the gap between daily and Sunday circulation.

"The Beltway meant that people had to

(CIRCULATION, continued on next page)



Circulation Administration director **JIM DAVIS** displays an old carrier bag he used when in the field.

leave for work earlier than they did before, when they had to live closer to downtown," commented **FRANK MANZON**, now the Post's Circulation director. "It also gave people more mobility. And because they weren't at home as much as they had been, and had less reading time in the morning, the daily paper wasn't quite as important to them."

By the late 1970s, the Post's circulation growth was once again threatening to exceed production capacity.

With the opening of the Springfield Plant in October 1980, most Virginia distributors could pick up their bundles without traveling across the Potomac.

The opening of the new plant came just in time to help the Post cope with an unexpected crisis: the closing of the Star in August 1981. The closing caught everyone at the Post by surprise. One immediate result: tens of thousands of new subscriber orders per day during August and September. "It was a madhouse," commented **DICK EYCHNER**, then Circulation Service manager. "Between vacation stops and starts in

August and the beginning of the fall promotion campaign, it was already going to be the busiest time of the year."

As was the case in 1954, the Post's challenge was to hold onto as many Star subscribers as possible. And once again, the effort was largely successful.

Circulation Service received some badly-needed new equipment when a modern 64-terminal computerized system replaced a telephone-and paper-bound system. For the first time, service representatives could have quick access to callers' complaint and service records. Computerization also helped distributors monitor service in their areas more efficiently than ever before. With additional staffers hired from the ranks of former Star circulation employees and a minimal expansion of the Post's distributor and carrier forces, the Post boosted its Sunday circulation by more than 140,000 to 986,024. Daily circulation rose in kind to 760,950. Distributors worked nearly round-the-clock in the days following the Star's demise; Circulation Service hours were greatly expanded. **JOE HARABURDA**,

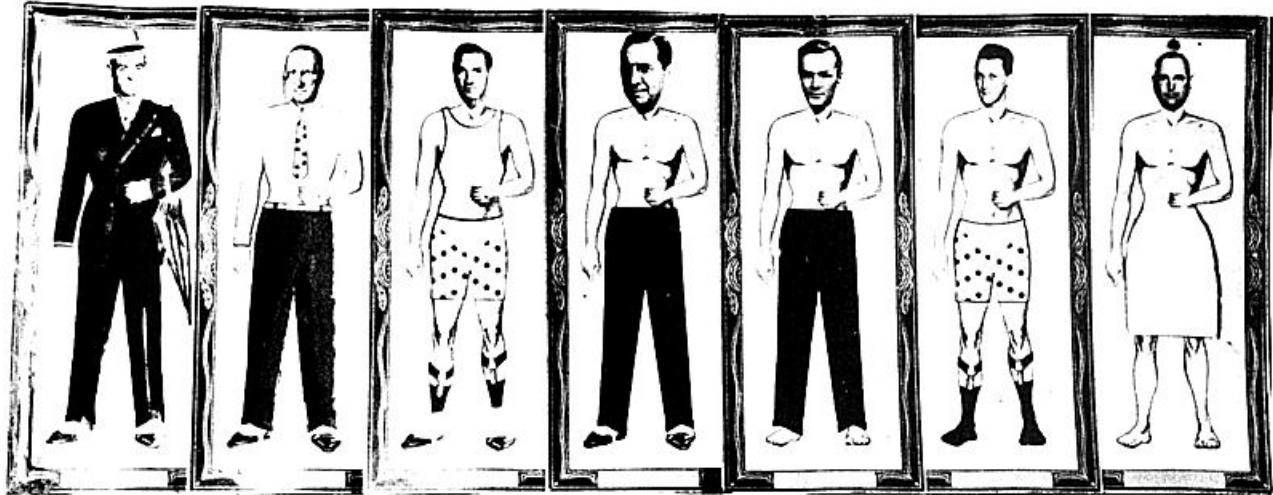
then the Post's vice president/Circulation, called it "a phenomenal effort on the part of all concerned."

Since then, other challenges to the Post have arisen: USA Today, and the suburban Journal newspapers (which quickly moved from weekly to daily publication) have sought to fill the gap left by the Star. Even the Baltimore Sun, the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal have expanded home delivery and street sales operations.

"We're hardly a morning monopoly, like people tend to think," pointed out Manzon. Daily sales, in fact, have declined about 13,000 copies for the six-month period ended March 31, 1983--the first decline since 1976. Post president **TOM FERGUSON** attributed the falloff to "a deliberate decision to reduce circulation outside the Washington-Maryland-Virginia area, some impact from USA Today, and economic conditions."

Asked what Circulation is planning for the rest of 1983 to hold onto its one million Sunday and nearly 750,000 daily readers, Manzon has a ready response: "The same thing we did to get them--keep pushing!"

Random Stops Along the Route



Delivering hundreds of thousands of newspapers to subscribers in the middle of the night is an unusual occupation, Lord knows. Sometimes it gets even more unusual, as the following tales attest:

This picture displays one of the in-house sales contests for Circulation managers and supervisors in the 1940s and early '50s: "nudist" contests. Sort of a strip poker in reverse, the game awarded items of clothing to painted figures of contestants. The more they matched or exceeded their weekly sales quotas, the better-dressed they got.

Longtime Circulation Service supervisor **JANE MacNEIL** recalled for a 1948 ShopTalk the time she received a call from a man who had missed his delivery and wanted (as subscribers still do) to let the Post know about it.

Circulation Service responded quickly to his request for a special delivery. So she was surprised to get another call from the man the following day, reporting that his special delivery copy sailed right through his open window and landed on his breakfast table--without even spilling his coffee!

One oddity of Circulation days of yore was the appearance of a "Mystery Man," a supervisor in disguise who had carriers looking anxiously over their shoulders for a while around 1950. Each night he'd follow a few Post carriers on their appointed rounds, handing certificates good for \$1 to carriers who took the time to tuck papers neatly behind screen doors or otherwise give distinguished customer service.

He also left notes for carriers who were late picking up their newspapers.

In February 1952 the Post expanded the number of "zone supervisors"--the counterpart of today's zone managers--from five to 15 to improve service. But not one wanted to work in "zone 13." So it was left out and zone 16 added in its place.

The Times-Herald purchase created some initial confusion sorting out carrier routes for Post and Times-Herald staffers--and more than its share among readers, too.

One tale concerned a longtime Times-Herald subscriber who had evidently gotten used to the paper's odd typography (picked up from the Chicago Tribune) which mandated "phonetic" spellings for words: "fotograf" for photograph, "burocrat" for bureaucrat, and so on.

Shortly after the Post bought the paper in March 1954, she called to cancel her subscription. When asked why, she replied huffily, "I just don't like the way you spell!"

One of the city distributors recalled the time when he rang a doorbell and began his sales pitch for the Post and Times-Herald to the woman who answered.

No sooner had he spoken "The Washington Post--" than she cut him off icily. "Stop right there!" she said. "We already take a paper, we like it, and we wouldn't dream of changing."

"Which one do you take?" asked the distributor.

"The Times-Herald," she replied.

The distributor folded his tents and left well enough alone.

The purchase of the Times-Herald vaulted the Post into the circulation lead among Washington's papers for the first time, but carrier efforts to sell new subscriptions continued unabated. Sometimes, though, things got a little out of hand, as when Mr. and Mrs. Donald Perrine of Takoma Park came home from work to find a mysterious scrap of paper tacked to their door, reading: "I will be here tomorrow afternoon. Call JU 9----- if you are going away."

They called, discovered they knew no one at the listed number and called the cops.

A detective's investigation led him to a 9-year-old neighbor, who quickly confessed. "He said he was just helping his older brother solicit subscriptions to the Post and Times-Herald and just wanted to give the Perrines a chance to subscribe," the detective later explained.

After due consideration, the Perrines signed up.

Circulation's carriers (*nee* "newsboys") have been the backbone of the Post's delivery operations since day one, and the Post has always found new and inventive ways to reward their sales efforts. Football games, trips to New York City, "chalk talks" by famous comics artists like Ham Fisher (of "Joe Palooka" fame) and "Lucky Bucks" (coupons redeemable for free gifts) have been popular sales incentives in years past.

Circulation Administration director **JIM DAVIS** recalls one time when a trip to New York City went awry. "We went up there quite often, and one year a travel agency--which shall remain nameless--listed in their itinerary a nice restaurant a couple of blocks from our hotel for breakfast," Davis recalled. "When we got there, there was no restaurant at all--just a four-story hole in the ground!

"I was kind of curious, so I asked around, thinking we had the address wrong," he added. "But it was the right one. And it turned out the restaurant hadn't been there for at least six months!"

POST SCRIPTS

SPRING SURPRISES--Display Advertising's PEGGY BUTTRILL took a leave of absence recently to have her first child, but not before friends from Display and Classified Advertising took over the sixth-floor conference room to give her presents. Pictured with Buttrill and her new stroller are, from left, GERRI MARMER, RON CASTNER, LING LING WOO, BOB SANTORO, RANDY ROYEN, MARTY KADY, JUDY WISE, BUD HUMPHRIES and VIC STONE.

Circulation Service manager EVELYN LASSITER was in the cafeteria briefing service rep JESSICA FITZGERALD on what to expect while Lassiter took a few days off to become Mrs. Evelyn Wright. The coffee hadn't cooled before an "urgent call" summoned her back to the department--and a 20-foot-long buffet table filled with food. "You all go ahead and eat," said Lassiter, who excused herself to dry a few tears. A few minutes later she returned to receive a \$145 gift certificate from Garfinckel's, courtesy of the coworkers she laughingly called a "department of sneaks!"



HEALTH HINTS--Dr. David Borenstein, staff rheumatologist at George Washington University Medical Center, will give an "Arthritis Update" on new findings and treatments for the disease at 12:45 today, May 12, in Data Processing's large conference room, seventh floor. A question and answer session will follow. Check your bulletin board for information on additional meetings for afternoon and late-night shifts.

Short films discussing high blood pressure and its treatment will be shown on Monday, May 16 and Thursday May 29 in the same conference room. A short question and answer session will follow.

Springfield's Health Center will be holding a health fair on Wednesday, May 18 in the conference room from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. to midnight.

There will be information on a variety of health care subjects as well as screening for hypertension, diabetes and oral and colonic cancers.

Refreshments will be provided. For information call ANN MILLER, x6511.

PLEASE HELP--Newsroom Centrex operator ARLENE WINFIELD had barely returned from maternity leave when she suffered a massive heart attack. She is home now and resting comfortably, but it will be a while before she is able to work. A fund to help support Winfield and her two children during her convalescence has been established.

Post employees who would like to contribute should contact MARIELLE RICHARD-ARCHER in Research, x7155.

MARKETPLACE

PUPPIES (2)--5 months old, one brown, one black, looking for good home. Call George, x6019 before noon.

CAR POOL--Wish to form/join car or van pool from Burke/West Springfield area to 15th St. building. I work 9 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Please call 425-4835 nights and weekends.

WRITING DESK--Italian provincial. Finished on back. Good phone desk, beautiful. \$125. Call Peggy, x7771 days until 5:15 or 868-1379 evenings and weekends.

POST REDSKINS BOOKS--Anyone with extra copies for sale? Call Rosa, 223-1776 or x7595.

PORSCHE--1975 hardtop convertible. Steel gray with black stripes. AM/FM radio. Good mechanical condition, needs body work. \$1500 firm. Call Wayne, 334-7027 days, (703) 582-6938 evenings.

1974 GREMLIN--A new fuel filter and carburetor will take this car out of my driveway and into your heart. Good basic transportation; only 66,000 miles. \$300. Call 362-0020.

HOUSE FOR RENT--Split level in Rockville/Gaithersburg area with 3 bedrooms, living room, dining room, den (convertible to 4th bedroom), family room and rec room. Half acre in quiet neighborhood. For information, appointment call Dan Santucci, x7652 or x7653.

WORLD CLASS--Espresso/cappuccino machine by Pavoni. Excellent condition, \$125. Call 483-4483.

LOST--One ladies' watch, black band, tan face. Reward, call Anne, x7585.

FOR SALE--Genuine Hoosier pine kitchen cabinet for sale. With original flour sifter, cutting board, bread safe. Needs to be repainted or stripped but otherwise excellent. \$200 firm. Call Linda Wheeler, x7380 or x6815.

SOFA--In two 5½-foot sections. Banana-shaped, gold velvet. \$295/best offer. Call Jeanneane, x7798 from 2:30-10 p.m. or 354-5020 other times.

TENNIS RACQUETS (2)--Wilson and Spalding, both wood frame. Good condition. \$25 each or best offer. Call Juan, x7174.

OCEAN CITY--"Sea Watch" condo with all amenities. 2 bedroom, 2 baths. Overlooking ocean. Available June 5 through summer. \$475/week (and up). Call 829-1739 evenings or x7954 from 9-5.

IRELAND BOUND--Would like any maps, tips on seeing the country as it should be seen--on a budget. Call Lou, x 6216.

OCEAN CITY CONDO--2-bedroom, 2-bath, air conditioning. 94th St. on the bay! Seasonal rental from 5/14-9/15, \$3800 + electric for the summer. For additional information call R. Schiff at 345-6521 evenings.

MATTRESS--Queen-sized platform bed mattress. Foam, \$35 or best offer. Call Barbara, x6808.

MG MIDGET--For sale. Excellent condition. \$2000/best offer. Call Jacki, x6578.

CONDO FOR SALE--At Landmark. 2 bedrooms, pool, newly-decorated. No money down, no closing costs. Call Joe, x7740 days or 256-6346 at home.

Marketplace listings must be placed by noon on the Friday preceding publication date, and must contain the name and extension of the person placing the ad (though not necessarily for publication). Call x6803 or send your ad to ShopTalk, seventh floor. All ads will run twice unless otherwise requested.