



## Postal service to drop Saturday mail delivery

The U.S. Postal Service, losing business at a rapid clip to e-mail, private delivery services and poor or slow service, and bleeding cash in the recession, now wants to drop Saturday mail delivery to shore up its budget.

The service lost \$3.8 billion last year and claims it can save \$3 billion or more by ending Saturday delivery effective Oct. 1. Post offices and sorting centers would remain open, and mail trucks would make regular runs; only door-to-door delivery would end.

Postmaster General Jack Potter has been pushing for to cut Saturday since last year, but Congress must approve any change in delivery by the government-controlled service. That may not be likely.

But why is the operation in so much trouble? Hasn't it always delivered the mail six days a week?

The answer to the second question is yes, but now its losses are mounting, and the service has run out of places to borrow to cover its deficit. It needs to cut costs, and soon. Cutting a day out of the delivery schedule, allowing a major reduction in the carrier force nationwide, may seem the easiest way to do that.

Experts say the postal budget is 80 percent labor, so any cuts have to come out of people. But postal unions are strong, influential in Washington, and they've negotiated some of the best contracts in the nation.

The average postal worker now reportedly makes \$75,000 a year, with the same pay rates in force in New York as in St. Francis. Average spending per employee is \$81,000 with generous benefits, reportedly about 30 percent more than private competitors.

It's unlikely that postal pay will be cut, and possibly unfair to current workers. However, the service could seek contracts similar to those in other industries which allow firms to hire new workers at more bearable rates.

The service would have lost \$7 billion last year had not Congress given it some breathing room on pensions. And pensions are a big issue. The service is the only government agency required to pay for its retirement benefits up front. Eliminating that rule would put the service in the black, at least for now. Ending Saturday mail would not.

Congress, faced with a potentially unpopular decision to eliminate a delivery day, might finally act on the pension issue. It has avoided doing anything for years, mostly because the money paid into this fund helps hold down the federal deficit - on paper. That is only an accounting issue, but in Washington, that means everything.

Another threat the service uses is to close more small-town post offices and lay off workers. Neither is popular.

Something has to give. Mr. Potter expects first-class mail volume to decline another 37 percent as more bills, letters, payments and documents shift to the Internet. Competitors are closing in on parcel business. The system could run out of cash.

Our view is that management and the unions need to get together, as has happened in autos and other industries, and rewrite their contracts. Congress should change the rules on pensions, because the mail is vital to our economy and our communities.

And we should keep Saturday delivery to maintain mail volume without scaring off even more business. Mailer groups, from newspapers to direct mail and catalog users, agree. They say the savings aren't enough, and the damage potential is great.

The Postal Service just cannot save itself by cutting. It must be free to compete, and that includes better union contracts and an end to unreasonable pension payments, not the end of Saturday mail.

-Steve Haynes

## Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



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My wife and I have joined a new organization. I know, I have to ask myself the question ... where did we find the time and energy to undertake something else in our already hectic lives? However, we took the leap into becoming members.

Oh, you're probably wondering by the second paragraph what group we joined? Well, we are now bona fide morel mushroom hunters.

After our first day looking for the elusive and tasty little guys, we now know what others who have gone before us have discovered. Morels may take a little work to locate, but they are well worth the effort!

We had seen them discussed before on food programs on the television. But it wasn't until my younger brother asked if we had ever hunted them that we started looking.

A local told me she used to find them when the Lilacs bloomed. Lezlie and I knew we were a little early still, as the fragrant branches of the bushes are only now showing tight, small buds. However, to our surprise, we struck gold last Sunday.

Although we are new members to the morel club, I know one written-in-stone law: I can't tell you where we found them. But I can say they are out there!

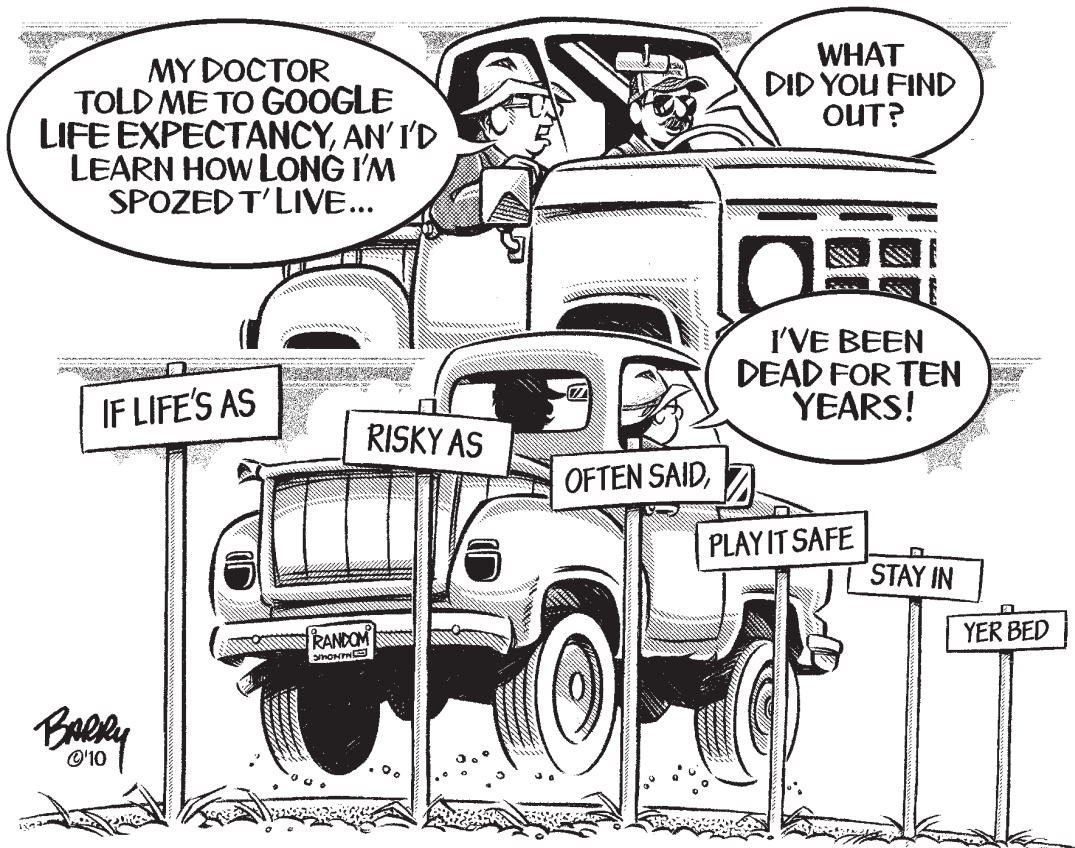
The other news is that they

won't last long. These gifts of the spring don't seem to have a big window. So we will be drying and freezing the treasures that aren't eaten immediately.

Speaking of eating, you have to experience them for yourselves. So far I have cooked them in a bit of butter, with only a little salt and pepper added. To me, they have a taste like an oyster and Lezlie thinks they are like "a little bit of heaven."

I invite you to join up. Morels are missile shaped with distinctive porous caps. The easiest way to know what to look for is the find a picture of them on the Internet. Care should be taken as not every wild mushroom is edible.

Then get to hunting! Morel Hunters International is still taking applications.



## News From the Past

### 10 years ago - 2000

Two St. Francis wrestlers won championships at the Northwest Kansas League Wrestling Tournament held in Hoxie. Jason Barnhart was the winner of the 189 pound bracket and Jon Zwegardt won the 275 pound weight class.

The St. Francis Board of Education received a gift of \$10,500 from the family of Carl and Mildred Sperry to be used for scholarships. Mr. Sperry was formerly the superintendent of the St. Francis schools.

Jon Zwegardt, Shrine Bowl nominee, was presented with his invitation to play by Shrine Club member Jim Milliken at an Indian basketball game.

King and Queen of the 2000 Sweetheart Dance were Bob Rainbolt and Tasha Rogers.

Valentine King and Queen at the Good Samaritan Village were Vern Collins and Virgie Rogers.

Danielle McFarland won the Cheyenne County Spelling Bee. She is a St. Francis seventh grader. Placing second was Jessica Jordan, a St. Francis sixth grader.

Ryan Unger, a student of Palmer Chiropractic College in Davenport, Iowa, will soon begin his internship with Dr. Douglas Fair at Fair Chiropractic Clinics in Oberlin and St. Francis.

Five St. Francis wrestlers traveled to the State Wrestling Tournament including Jon Zwegardt, Tyler Lampe, Jason Barnhart, Wes Cooper and Brian Holzwarth.

### 40 years ago - 1970

Cheyenne County received the August Lauterbach Memo-

rial Trophy at the Scout Leader and Eagle recognition banquet. The trophy is presented annually to the county in the Buffalo Bill District which carries out the best Scouting program. Scoutmasters Norman Dorsch of Bird City and John Henry of St. Francis accepted the award.

Ronnie Schlittenhardt flew his first solo flight this year on his 16th birthday. Two years have passed since Ronnie turned 14 and flew a plane for the first time in his life as he was legally old enough then to fly dual with an instructor. John Grace was his flying instructor.

### 50 years ago - 1960

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Bunjes of St. Francis are one of five farm couples in the state of Kansas to be named as Master Farmers/Master Farm Homemakers.

Balanced Farming and Family Living Awards were presented at the Farmer Institute in St. Francis to Mr. and Mrs. Charley Deyle, Benkelman, and Mr. and Mrs. Gus Zwegardt of St. Francis. The awards were presented by Charles F. Hixon, president of the St. Francis Chamber of Commerce.

M.M. Erickson of Bird City was elected to his third term as chairman of the Cheyenne County Commissioners. Other board members are August Zwegardt and Weaver Lindsten of St. Francis.

Little Alan Schlepp has the honor of being the first baby born in the Cheyenne County Hospital in 1960. Alan is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard A. Schlepp. Alan is also wel-

comed home by his sister, Patricia, 5, and the twins, Marcia and Michael 3.

The area received 15-inches of snow from Jan. 14 to the 18th. Following the heavy snow storm was a cold wave that dropped temperatures to 11 degrees below zero.

### 100 years ago - 1910

Axtell, Reynolds and Harman moved their stock of clothing into the west rooms of the Egan building the first of the week to make room for Bennett Anderson's stock of harnesses. This gives the boys a better location and they are nicely situated.

O.C. Blackburn shipped another carload of Cheyenne County horses to the Pennsylvania market Tuesday.

William McCullum will have a big public sale at his farm on Feb. 18.

Superintendent Nelle Maxson has been visiting schools on the east side this week.

C.W. Lawless has resigned his position in the Smull store and for the first time in about 12 years is taking a rest.

The Ramblers met with Mrs. F.L. Schields Wednesday afternoon and a very pleasant and profitable meeting is reported.

Mail order houses are flooding the country with their literature. Just in so far as these houses are patronized so is the trade of local merchants injured, and that involves injury to the town in which they do business.

While attending the recent Implement Dealers Convention at Kansas City, the dealers to this territory formed a little association of their own and decided to have at least one banquet each year.

## Corrections

The Saint Francis Herald will correct or clarify any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at 332-3162 to report errors. We believe that news stories should be fair and factual, and appreciate your calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

**GOD SAYS**  
I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.  
Psalms 121:1-3

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**Church of Christ**  
332-2380, Pars. 332-3424  
502 W. Spencer  
Norman Morrow - Minister  
Bible Class 11 a.m.  
Morning Worship 10 a.m.  
Wed. Bible Study 7 p.m.

**St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church**  
625 S. River • 332-2680  
Fr. Roger Meitl  
Sunday Mass 11:00 a.m.  
Weekday Mass 8 a.m.  
Confessions Sat. 4-4:30

**First Baptist Church**  
2nd & Scott • 332-3921  
J.W. Glidewell, Pastor  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Evening Service 6:30 p.m.,  
Wed. AWANA Club  
6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

**Salem Lutheran Church**  
332-3002  
Pastor Chris Farmer  
Sunday School 10 a.m.  
Morning Worship 11 a.m.  
Communion 3rd Sunday

**St. Francis Community Church**  
332-3150  
204 N. Quincy Street  
www.sfccfamily.com  
Pastor: David Butler  
Sunday School 9:15 a.m.  
Worship Service 10:30 a.m.  
Potluck & Communion -  
Every 2nd Sunday  
Wednesday Bible Study 7 p.m.

**United Methodist Church**  
Church Office 332-2292,  
Church 332-2254,  
512 S. Scott  
Pastor Morita Truman  
Early Bird Service 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.

**Solid Rock Baptist Church**  
412 S. Denison  
Welcomes You!  
Pastor Allen Coon  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30  
Prayer Meeting, Wed  
7:30 p.m.

**Peace Lutheran Church, AFLC**  
202 N. College  
Pastor Ken Hart  
332-2928 Pars. 332-2312  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.  
Worship 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday Eve. Bible Study 7 p.m.  
Communion 1st Sunday  
of the Month

**Seventh-Day Adventist Church**  
785-890-5718 • 3rd & Adams  
Pastor Jerry Nowack  
Sabbath School 9:30  
Morning Worship 10:45

**First Christian Church**  
Pastor Jeff Landers  
332-2956 • 118 E. Webster  
Bible Fellowship 9:15 a.m.  
Church Service 10:15 a.m.

**St. Francis Equity**

**Saint Francis Herald**

**Knodel Funeral Home**  
202 S. Benton • St. Francis  
785-332-3131

*Praise the Lord*