

Postal rate will soon be going up, unless something is done

By Jerry Reppert

National Newspaper Association
If you still have 34-cent stamps in your drawer unused from 2001, or even 33-cent stamps from 1998, you've noticed that postage has gone up pretty often lately.

Forty-cent stamps are coming, unless we do something now.

The main annoyance for most consumers may be standing in line at the post office to buy 3- and 4-cent stamps to paste on until the old ones are finally used up.

But the pain of the higher postage rates amounts to more than the aggravation of standing in line. It comes through the increased prices that businesses pass on when they mail bank and investment statements, magazines (and, yes, newspapers), utility bills and so forth. It all adds up to bigger bills on your desk.

Like the weather, people complain about higher postage. But no one does much about it.

Soon, though, Congress will have an opportunity to do something.

Steve Haynes, owner of Nor'West Newspapers and regional director for the National Newspaper Association, says that if Congress acts on Senate Bill 380 and House Bill 537, consumers won't have to buy 39 or 40 cent stamps next year. If it doesn't act, another postage increase is assured, says Postmaster General Jack Potter.

The Postal Service discovered in November that one of its major expenses, contributions to retirement funds, will be overpaid by \$71 billion over the next 40 years under current law. That's Billion, with a B. This year's share of pension payments alone is nearly \$3 billion. If that payment has to be made, the Postal Service will be forced to raise rates again in 2004.

The funding for the postal employees' Civil Service Retirement System comes partly from payroll withholding and matching contributions and partly from annual pay-

ments by the postal service. Once the cup is full of payments, benefits are secure. If more is added, the pensioners don't get the money. The Postal Service doesn't get the money back. It is just overflow, going into the federal treasury.

The cup will overflow generously into federal coffers unless Congress changes the law. The federal Office of Personnel Management, Office of Management and Budget and Treasury Department all agree that the payments are too high, but only Congress can stop them.

The two bills, S. 380, sponsored by Sens. Susan Collins (R-ME), and Thomas Carper (R-Del.) and HR 735, sponsored by Reps. John McHugh (R-N.Y.), Henry Waxman, (D-Calif.), Danny Davis, (D-Ill.), and Tom Davis, (R-Va.) would put the payments back into line with need.

A no-brainer, it would seem. So why wouldn't Congress do that? Postal labor unions support the revision; so do most business groups. The National Newspaper Association is part of that fight.

The catch is that the overflow money makes the federal deficit look better on the books. With a deficit soaring over \$200 billion this year, the desire of Congressional budget balancers to hang onto the overflow is understandable. But it still wrong.

The right way to tax Americans for federal programs is through the taxes and fees created through the Congressional debate and vote process, not through an accidental tax on stamps. Unless Congress acts, though, that's what consumers will get. An accidental tax. And a postage increase.

If you agree, you can phone Sen. Pat Roberts (202) 224-4774 or Sen. Sam Brownback at (202) 224-6521 or find their e-mail addresses at "http://www.senate.gov" Ask them to cosponsor S. 380. Reach your Rep. Jerry Moran at 202 225-2715 or by e-mail at "http://www.house.gov". Ask him to cosponsor HR 735.

Screening offered for preschool and kindergarten kids

Cheylin School District will be offering Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten Screenings on Wednesday, March 19, for children from birth to school age. These screenings are required for children who will be attending kindergarten next August, but we also encourage the participation of babies and preschoolers.

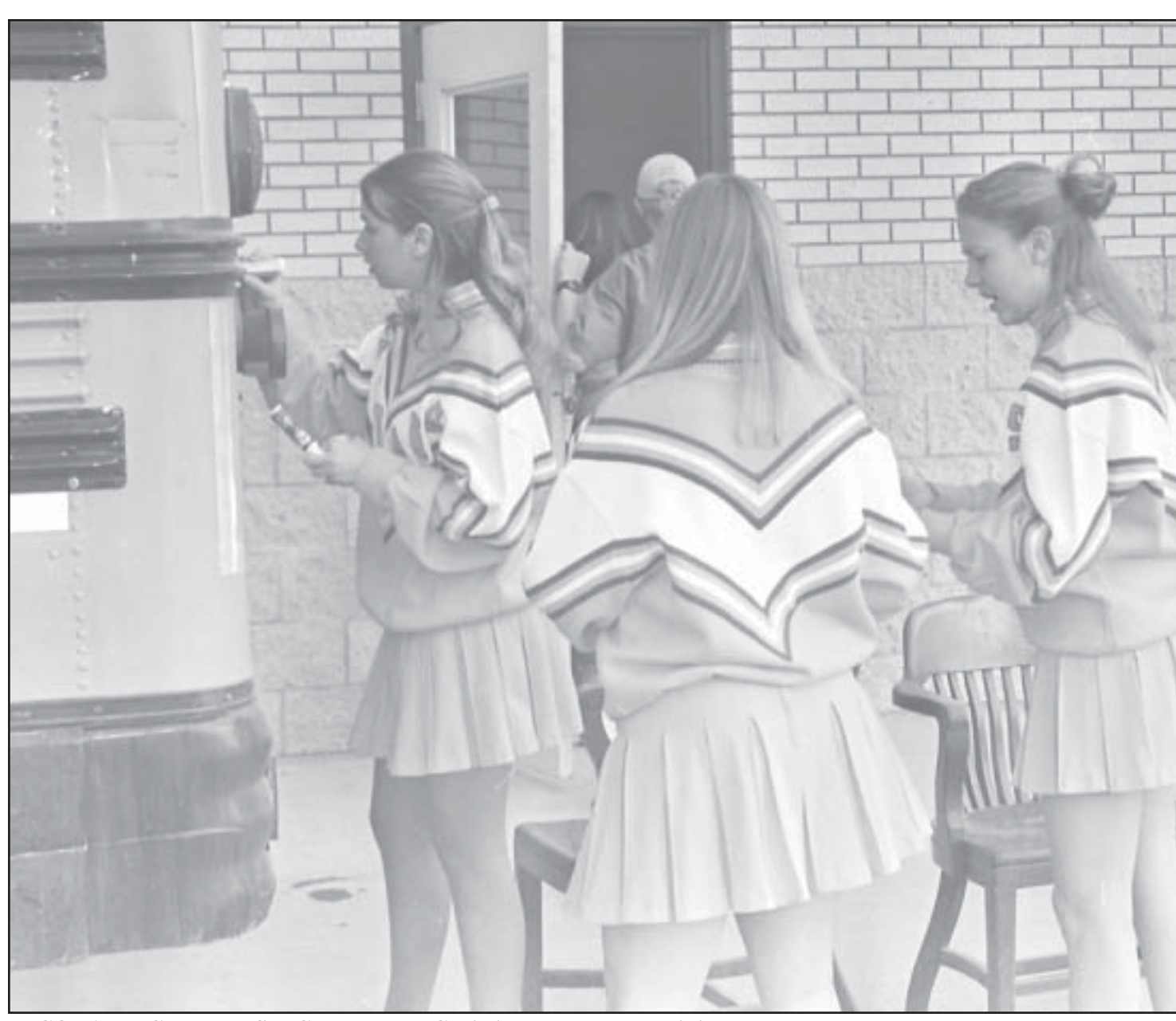
Hearing, vision, and developmental skills will be screened. Parents are the primary and most influential teachers their children will ever have and these screenings will help parents discover their child's developmental stage and how best to encourage their ever changing skills. They also help the school dis-

tricts plan and prepare for future students in order to try to offer the best educational experience.

The St. Francis School District offers screenings in the fall of the year while Cheylin offers them in the spring. If you were unable to attend the fall screening or are new to the county you are welcome to bring your child to the Bird City site which will be the Methodist Church.

The screenings are free but appointments are needed and can be made by calling the Cheylin Elementary School secretary at 785-734-2351.

If you have questions you may call Judy Sager at the same number.



DECORATING THE BUS—Cheerleaders Christina Zwegardt, Heidi Rohweder and Kelsey Dunn decorate the bus before the boys left to go wrestling.
Herald staff photo by Lezlie Hilt

Students achieve standard of excellence

Thirty-seven students from the St. Francis schools were recognized recently for having attained the Standard of Excellence on the year 2002 Kansas State Assessments, taken in various subject areas in grades fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, 10th and 11th. Each of the students received a certificate of recognition from the state board of education for their accomplishments.

Students being recognized for their performance on the state assessments include:
Fourth grade: Mathematics — Garrett Knorr, Terrence Lamb, Trent Raile, Dale Northrup, Clint Tharp, Drew Zwegardt.
Fifth grade: Reading — Jonathon Finley, Elizabeth Gienger, Alex Jordan, Sam Sowers, Matthew Whitmore; Writing — Alex Jordan, Elizabeth Gienger.
Seventh grade: Mathematics — Amy Hilt, Zach Mills, Russell Rogers, Alecia Zimbelman.

Eighth grade: Reading — Ashley Dowgwillo, McKenzie Grace, Samantha Marin, Ally Reichert; Writing — David Clark, McKenzie Grace, Samantha Marin, Sheryl Miller, Gabe Smull.
Eleventh grade: Reading — Heather Culwell, Dallas Walz, Jennifer Weems, Dennon Zimbelman; Writing — Samantha Coates, Marcus Dodd, Amber Feikert, Jessica Flemming, Gina Frohlich, Kari Gienger, Heidi Rohweder, Dallas Walz, Jennifer Weems, Tyler Wolters, Nate Wright and Dennon Zimbelman.

A statement from the Kansas State Department of Education said, "These students can take pride in meeting such a high standard of academic performance. Their accomplishment also reflects well on the efforts of their teachers and their school."
Statewide, 14.8 percent of the students met the Standard of Excellence in reading at grade five, 8.6

percent of students met the standard at grade eight, and 10.1 percent of the students achieved the standard at grade 11. In mathematics, 17.8 percent of the students attained the Standard of Excellence at grade fourth, 14.1 percent of students met the standard at grade seven, and 12.9 percent of students met the standard at grade 10. At grade five in writing, 11.3 percent of students met the Standard of Excellence, while 12.8 per-

cent of students attained that standard in grade eight writing and 15.0 percent in grade 11 writing.

"Congratulations to the St. Francis students and teachers for another very good performance on the Kansas Assessment," said St. Francis Superintendent Carl Werner. "Every time we look at scores on various standardized tests, St. Francis students continue to do well."

Introducing

Gunner Scott Upson

A baby boy, Gunner Scott, was born to Blake and Courtney Upson of Syracuse, on Feb. 20, 2003, at the Kearny County Hospital, Lakin. Gunner weighed 7 pounds, 4 ounces and was 20-inches long. To welcome him home are his brothers, Gabriel, Garrett and Pierce. Grandparents are Karen and Brad

Beard of Syracuse, Bill and Kathy Nelson of Phoenix, Ariz., Joan and Jacques Molleker of Larned, and Ron Upson of Beaver City, Neb. Great-grandparents are the late Amil Stunkel and Marguerite Stunkel.



Bowling News

Monday Mixed League 10/15

Team standings: Captian Hooks Fine Dining, 25-19; Z-Tubing, 24.5-19.5; Bandel Home Center, 24-20; Hooks Auction & Realty, 20.5-23.5; Cueballs 19-25; Krien Pharmacy, 19-25

High game (handicap): Rich Grace 253, Bob Hankins 222, Randy Johnson 212; Judy Gienger

224, Erica Harlan 209, Pam Hook 204

High series (handicap): Gienger 607, Hankins 584, Kathy Bexley 566; Grace 666, Kelley Faylor 587, Kale Zimbelman 580



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785-626-3211

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Cheyenne County Hospital - P.M.
210 W. 1st • 332-2104

Thur., March 20
Atwood - A.M.
Colby - P.M.
CSMC, 175 S. Range
462-3332
CMC, 100 E. College Dr.
462-7511

Fri., March 21
Atwood - All Day

SOUTHWEST NEBRASKA ANGUS ASSOCIATION
39TH ANNUAL SPRING

NEW DATE: FRIDAY, MARCH 14, 2003

23 TOP AI SIRES REPRESENTED



Papa Universe • Leachman Right Time • Fame • VRD Plowman • Fullback • Bando 5175 • Rockin D Ambush
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Ely Angus, Roger, Karen & Jim Ely, McCook, NE
Limestone Angus, Gary Hoffman, Lebanon, NE
Logan Angus, Bob Logan, McCook, NE
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