

from our viewpoint...

## Will cutting service save post office?

The United State Postal Service has suggested dropping Saturday delivery as a way to stem the tide of red ink the mail delivery system is facing because of the recession and a continuing decline in first class mail.

The United States Postal Service is an independent agency of the United States government responsible for providing mail delivery, and was authorized by the United States Constitution.

Postal services existed on American territory before the United States was established. The U.S. Post Office's first Postmaster General was Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia in 1775 by decree of the Second Continental Congress. The Post Office Department was created in 1792 as part of the United States Cabinet, then was transformed into its current form in 1970 under the Postal Reorganization Act.

Franklin visited nearly all the post offices in the colonies and introduced many improvements into the service. He established new postal routes and shortened others. Postal carriers delivered newspapers he felt were important to hold the country together.

The Postal Reorganization Act of 1970 abolished the United States Post Office Department and created the United States Postal Service, a corporation-like independent agency with an official monopoly on the delivery of mail in the United States. The law was signed by President Richard Nixon on Aug. 12, 1970.

Since its reorganization into an independent organization, the post office has been trying to become self-sufficient and has not directly received taxpayer-dollars since the early 1980s.

On Jan. 28, 2009, Postmaster General John E. Potter testified before the Senate that if the Postal Service is not able to readjust their payment of retiree health benefits the postal service would be forced to consider cutting delivery to five days per week. However, the universal service obligation and six day delivery are included in language within appropriations legislation, so a reduction in service would require Congress to pass a new law.

Patrick Donahoe, the nation's deputy postmaster general, said the postal service is on track to lose more than \$7 billion this year. The Postal Service plans to save more than \$3 billion per year by cutting mail delivery to five days a week.

He said Saturday delivery is a fixed cost and 18 percent of the total delivery time. He said cutting Saturday is worth \$300 million a month in savings.

Across the pond the Royal Mail in the United Kingdom is in similar straits, and was forced this month to raise the cost for first and second class stamps to 63 cents for first class and 49 cents for second class. That is about 20 cents higher than first class postage in the United States. The Royal Mail price is among the lowest in Europe where the average cost of a first class stamp is \$1.27.

The Royal Mail was the first mail system over 350 years ago, and it was reorganized into a public corporation in 1969. It was recently reorganized and made into an independent public corporation that is wholly owned by the English government.

What Americans must decide is whether keeping Saturday delivery of mail is worth a higher postal rate or if we feel the rates are high enough we may have to accept the loss of the sixth day of delivery.

We do not like the idea of losing Saturday delivery, but we are not sure we are ready to pay 63 cents for a stamp. If the postal service is allowed to cut Saturday, we expect the cost of stamps will continue to rise because of other economic conditions and probably more drops in the number of pieces of mail to be delivered. — *Tom Betz*

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## Many good reasons for today's thumbs up

### THUMBS UP...

"To Northwest Tech, for stepping up into the iPad world."-(e-mail); "To Jade Herl and Ashley Archer, for being named Honorable Mention in the All-State Class 3A basketball ranks. You made our town and school proud."-(by telephone); "To the unsung heroes of the annual Slice of Life Golf Tournament and Benefit Auction, for all you do behind the scenes. It would never happen without you all."-(e-mail); "To the Goodland High School Science Olympiad Team, on your great showing at state in Wichita!"-(the gang at *The Star-News*); "To the responsible parties, for the new paint job on the pavement south of the K27-US24 intersection. Super!"-(td); "To the young man with a big heart, for recognizing the need to help this older lady stay on her feet in the face of strong winds this past week."-(by conversation).

To render a salute, please e-mail [tad1@st-tel.net](mailto:tad1@st-tel.net), call 890-2475, mail to *The Star-News* at 1205 Main, or drop it off at the office or put it in our drop box. Thanks, and remember there is no charge.

-td-

I watched in awe Friday morning as channel 3 (the Deuce/Denver), asked people lined up to see the Colorado Rockies' game, to sing our national anthem. The half dozen or so taking a shot at it all failed. Granted, if they had asked those people to recite it instead, I could understand the hit and miss; there is a big difference.



### tom dreiling

- time out with td

But singing it shouldn't be that much of a problem. Of course I think the pressure of being live on camera might have had something to do with the result. Give it a try next time you are showering to begin the day.

-td-

The snow is 'crap' item in the last column brought these brief comments:

"I too was offended by the radio announcer who thought the snow was 'crap'; he went on to say that he wished we had received hail rather than snow. What a stupid remark from someone living in western Kansas! Thank you for speaking out on the subject as I am still 'burning' over his comments."

"Like it or not, there still is a First Amendment. And you should know that better than anybody."

"Yes, Mr. Radio Announcer Guy, there is a world of difference between Wichita, Kansas and Goodland, Kansas. You apparently didn't do your homework."

"The young man needs a smack on the seat."

"Next time it hails, we should all grab a handful and bombard him as he leaves the

## I thought he knew her name

There's an old newspaper adage that goes, if your mother says she loves you, check it out.

I'm adding a corollary to that, if your husband says he knows his granddaughter's name, check it out.

I was telling everyone in three towns that our granddaughter was to be named Taylor Morgan Blake.

Her parents had started out with the normal 5,000 or so names, pared it down to only a couple of hundred and then worked their way carefully to Taylor Morgan for their daughter, who was supposed to be born on or about April 1.

Taylor had other ideas. She came March 7. Her Mom called to say she and hubby were on their way to the hospital, and her sister made the phone call to Mom and Dad announcing the birth.

It was Sunday and I was in a bit of a state of shock. The photo, sent from oldest daughter's cell phone of her new niece, was not good enough to use in the paper. So I put off doing the announcement for a week.

During that time Steve, who had taken the



### cynthia haynes

- open season

call that he was a grandfather, convinced me that I was wrong. The baby's name was Taylor Madison.

OK, I figured. That was an easy mistake to make. Neither name is attached to any family name or anyone I know, so I probably just got it mixed up.

What I failed to do was call her mom and dad to check the story. I assumed my husband knew what he was talking about.

Assume is a dirty word in journalism.

Journalists take it apart and say that to assume is to make an ass out of u and me.

So true.

I put the birth announcement together and Steve checked it over, changing the city where the paternal grandparents live from Chicago to suburban Naperville. He even checked with the

station, then see which he likes best — snow or hail!"

Your comments are always solicited. Keep them brief; if they are too long they must go as a signed letter to the editor. Address your comments as detailed in the Thumbs Up section of this column. Thanks!

-td-

I was surfing the channels earlier Saturday and came across a bull sale on RFD-TV (ch.83) taking place in North Dakota. First time I've watched one of those. Very interesting and they were going for \$6,500-\$7,500 during the time I was watching. No bull.

-td-

Congrats to one of my favorite golfers, Phil Mickelson, winner of the Masters. This was one of the finest Green Jacket tournaments I've ever watched. Phil was on a mission and he completed it beautifully. The downside, unfortunately, will be the media attention not on Phil's win, but Tiger Woods' loss. They never seem to get it right.

-td-

Have a good evening! And if you haven't done anything with your 2010 Census Form, please do so today. Save yourself a real headache that'll be coming your way if you fail to abide by the law that governs the every 10-year population count. You will be doing your community and county a big favor. Thanks, in advance.

new parents to make sure that was correct.

He obviously did not check the rest of the story.

So a week after she was born, the story ran in both Oberlin and Colby that we had a new granddaughter, Taylor Madison Blake.

Oohs.

And you thought that we only misspelled your kid's name?

What worries me now is the problem that seems to hit now and then. It seems that sometimes when you make a mistake on someone, you can never get anything right about them again.

There are some very nice people around here whom, every time we put them in the paper, I cringe. No matter how hard we try, we never seem to be able to get it right. Names are misspelled, ages come out wrong, pictures are misidentified, they are said to play baseball instead of basketball. You name it.

So, I guess there's only one thing to do. Make Steve write the social notes about our amazing and talented grandchild forever after.

They may not be right, but at least I'll have someone to blame.

## Letter Policy

The Goodland Star-News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, and must include a telephone number and a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters will be rejected, as will letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with address and phone numbers, by e-mail to: [star.news@nw-kansas.com](mailto:star.news@nw-kansas.com).