

Mail packages from home, get North Pole postmark

Need to mail a package but can't get to the post office? Have packages for the grandchildren that need to arrive by Christmas? Know a little one who would love to receive a letter from Santa?

The U.S. Postal Service has services to help. If you have a computer, an Internet connection and a credit card, you can buy stamps and mail packages without leaving your home or office.

Letters and packages can be sent to Alaska to receive a "North Pole" postmark, year-end holiday newsletters can be sent on-line, and personalized greeting cards can be

made and sent on the Internet, all at usps.com.

Using Click-N-Ship, customers can print labels, calculate shipping rates, find a ZIP code and pay for shipping by credit card.

Those who don't have a scale can order Flat Rate Priority Mail boxes in two sizes. For one price, you can mail anything that fits into the box, as long as it weighs less than 70 pounds.

The boxes can be ordered at no charge from the web site or by calling (800) STAMP-24. You also can request carrier pickup at the web site.

Packages being mailed using postage stamps and weighing 16 ounces or more can be left for the mail carrier to pick up but cannot be deposited into a blue street mail box.

The NetPost CardStore on the web site has a selection of images and suggested greetings; the ability to use your own graphics, artwork and photographs; the ability to write your own message; and the ability to schedule greeting cards to be sent up to a year in advance. Prices include printing and mailing.

To get a North Pole postmark on holiday cards or on letters from Santa Claus to your kids, write the letter and affix proper postage to a sealed envelope addressed to the child or other recipient with the letter enclosed.

Then put that envelope(s) inside a larger envelope or box and mail to North Pole Christmas Postmark, Postmaster, 5400 Mail Trail, Fairbanks, Ala. 99709-9999.

The letters need to arrive in Fairbanks by Thursday, Dec. 15. After putting the North Pole postmark on them, the post office sends the letters to your friends and family.

For those who need counter service, the post office in Goodland is open from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Friday and from 9-10:30 a.m. Saturday.

The Edson Post Office is open 7 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Monday-Friday and 7-8:45 a.m. Saturday.

The Kanorado Post Office is open 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:30-3:30 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8:30-9 a.m. Saturday.

and 12:30-3 p.m. Mountain Time Monday-Friday and 9-10 a.m. Saturday.

• Burlington: 8:30 a.m.-4:45 p.m. Monday-Friday and 10:30 a.m. to noon Saturday.

• St. Francis: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1:30-4:15 p.m. Central Time Monday-Friday and 10-11 a.m. Saturday.

• Bird City: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1:30-4 p.m. Central Time Monday-Friday and 9-10 a.m. Saturday.

• Wallace: 7 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Mountain Time Monday-Friday and 7-8:30 a.m. Saturday.

Choking to get high puts teen in hospital

By Jan Katz Ackerman

Colby Free Press

A choking incident that nearly killed a rural Colby teen prompted Colby Grade School Principal Terrel Harrison to take action.

"A parent gave me an article, and I thought it was good information and thought parents need to be informed," Harrison said Thursday.

He said he sent home with fourth- and fifth-grade students a copy of an article outlining a choking game that is injuring and killing young people.

Oakley student Dustin Splattstoesser, 14, is recovering in a Denver hospital after almost being asphyxiated Oct. 24 playing a game which restricted his airway to create a drug-like high. Splattstoesser is the son of Gary and Kay Splattstoesser.

Thursday, Chance Splattstoesser of Hoxie said the public needs to know about this game. He talked about his brother's progress.

"He's recognizing members of the family and friends, and was able to lift his legs today and was able to stand briefly," Chance Splattstoesser said. "He was able to go outside in a wheelchair and has the tracheotomy out."

Harrison said she, like most of her teachers, didn't know much about the game, referred to as Pass-out, Tingling, Fainting, Space Monkey, Black Hole, Blackout, Knockout, Space Cowboy, Gasp, Rising Sun, Funky Chicken, LAirplaning, Flatliner and Suffocation Roulette. She decided to educate herself.

"I've told my educators to get with it and learn about it," Harrison said. "It's scary, and we need to be educated and aware about what's

out there."

Keying words, she said, such as choking or fainting game into an Internet search engine will bring up information about deaths of kids across the nation.

"We watch the children so closely, but I'm more concerned about what's happening outside of school," Harrison said. "As a parent, I'd want to know what's going on across the nation."

Harrison said students have not been gathered together to talk about the game because she wants parents to talk with their children about it.

"I believe this is something that needs to come from home," she said.

Dr. Darren Matchell of Colby agrees.

Matchell said parents who think their children may be playing the game need to watch for signs of headaches, bloodshot eyes, marks on the neck, small red dots on the skin around the eyes and mouth and isolation behind closed doors.

He said teens, and preteens often choose this non-drug form of creating a high, and if taken too far, the game can cause stroke, brain damage, heart attack, spastic paralysis or seizures.

"The game usually causes an euphoria when something is used that cuts off the blood supply to the brain," Matchell said. "When the blood flow is restored, it's like waking up from a dream."

Matchell said young boys often use the games to lead to asphyxiophilia, a form of restriction of airway leading to sexual excitement.

"All these games are dangerous because they can cause loss of blood to the brain," Matchell said.

Woman injured in rolling pickup



A small pickup left the road south of the bridge over the Smokey Hill River on K-27 about 9:30 a.m. Monday and rolled, sending a 20-year-old woman to the Goodland Regional Medical Center with an injury to her left leg. Highway Patrol Troopers Bryan

Wilson and Brian Horney handled the accident with the help of the Sherman County Sheriff's Department.

Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

How can you tell whether offers, requests for donations are legitimate or scams?

Dear Attorney General Kline: For the past several months I have received a variety of business offers and requests for charitable donations, and it's becoming more and more difficult for me to decide which of these are actually legitimate. What are the best ways to determine which ones are on the up-and-up?



phill kline

• attorney general

you say you are?" It's easy to pretend to be someone else on the telephone, on the Internet or when going door-to-door. Unless people can prove they are who they say they are or are with the

line at www.give.org. If the charity seeking a donation does not appear on these sites and is otherwise unknown to you, be wary of entrusting it with your money.

Asking these pertinent questions can help you avoid being bullied or stampeded into making a purchase

or donation you may regret later.

Attorney General Phillip Kline offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the details have been changed, the cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints or ques-

tions. For information or to file a complaint, write Attorney General Phillip Kline, Consumer Protection Division, 120 SW 10th Ave., Second Floor, Topeka, Kan. 66612, or call the toll-free Consumer Hotline, 1-800-432-2310.

money-back guarantee is difficult to enforce from afar.

4. "Why can't I think about this overnight?" Offers valid for "one day only" ask you to make an impulse purchase before you can compare prices or ask family and friends for advice. This is almost always the hallmark of a bad deal.

5. "Can I have that in writing?" A reputable merchant will gladly put any terms offered in writing. Whether it involves a real estate transaction, auto repairs or business agreements, written terms protect both parties. Take the time to read the fine print and ask for an explanation if you do not understand.

6. "How do I know you are who

business or charity they claim to represent, you should assume they are scam artists.

7. "Why do you need that information?" You would not give a complete stranger the key to your house, so do not give a complete stranger the "keys" to your identity — your checking account, credit card account or Social Security numbers.

8. "What will you do with my donation?" You can see what the Kansas Secretary of State reports on charities by calling 785-296-4565 or visiting www.kscharitycheck.org on-line. The Better Business Bureau also maintains a national database on-

Classified ads work! 899-2338

10th Annual
"We Did It" Craft Fair
Nov. 19, 2005
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Goodland UFW
824 Main, Goodland Kan.
FREE ADMISSION

For more information contact Judy Stroup 785-673-9715.

The Officers, Directors and Staff of the First National Bank would like to thank

Charlene Fritsch

For her 38 years of service. Enjoy your retirement!

First National Bank
www.fnb.com
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