

## Your Postal Podcast 51st Edition Transcript – August 2012

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**Richard Watkins:** Welcome to *Your Postal Podcast*. This is Richard Watkins of U.S. Postal Service Corporate Communications. In this August twenty-twelve edition, you'll hear about a lucky dog who's a firm believer in one of the Postal Service's latest products, and we'll talk with two postal employees who decided to "carry on" after making the transition from Mail Processing to Delivery operations.

**Watkins:** Mail has been used to promote business, keep long distance love alive, and to facilitate commerce. But there's a new use for the mail, and David Rupert is here to tell us about how one couple used our service to fetch Fido.

### **Lost Dog Segment**

**David Rupert:** Tampa, FL, customers Robert and Deborah Ray, along with their three dogs, were headed home through Ashburn, GA, when they were involved in a traffic accident. In the confusion, one of the Rays' dogs, Norma Jean was lost. They knew the general vicinity where the dog had run to, but a street-by-street search yielded no sign. Sadly, the couple and their two dogs returned home.

Luckily, a few days later, they got in touch with Plains, GA, Postmaster Lori McDonough.

**Lori McDonough:** They just wanted to know what they could do to help locate their dog and my first thought was Every Door Direct Mail. So, when I told them they could do a mailing that would blanket just that particular area, that particular route, they were willing to start with that.

**Rupert:** The process was easy – even from a distance.

**McDonough:** I worked them over the phone and I asked them to fax me their complete copy of their piece that they were going to do with Every Door Direct mail and they took it up that very next day to the Post Office and had it mailed out.

**Rupert:** The couple sent out 670 pieces of mail, saturating the neighborhood the dog was last seen. Right away, sightings and tips started coming in.

**McDonough:** They had enough tips that allowed them to make a trip back up there.

**Rupert:** The couple returned to the area where the dog had been sighted and began searching. On the 10th day after the dog ran away, he was found.

And just how much did the mailing cost them?

**McDonough:** It was \$97.15.

**Rupert:** Was that a good deal for the couple?

**McDonough:** Yes. Especially, the fact they found their dog. They were elated.

**Rupert:** The biggest selling point for Every Door Direct Mail, according to McDonough, is its ease and simplicity.

**McDonough:** I think Every Door Direct Mail is very easy. It's a simple program. Every Door Direct Mail – the startup takes about three minutes to get all your information in, to get yourself started. And the program is very user friendly. The local Post Offices all know how to do it and can be of assistance if they need help with the processing of it. I just think it's a great program. It's one of the best things to come around the Post Office in a long time.

**Rupert:** She has sold Every Door Direct mail now to her church, a car dealership, and even to a teenager starting a lawn service. But the most important thing is to find out what Norma Jean, the rescued canine, has to say.

**McDonough:** If Norma Jean could talk, and find her way home, she would suggest Every Door Direct Mail.

### **Sioux City Carrier Segment**

**Watkins:** A year ago, the Postal Service announced that by October 2011, mail sorting operations at the Sioux City, IA, Mail Processing facility -- or P&DF -- would be consolidated with the processing facility in Sioux Falls, SD. That meant that many of the Sioux City P&DF employees who wanted to stay with the Postal Service and continue to live in the Sioux City area had to consider their options. One option was for Mail Processing employees to transfer to city letter carrier positions. Long-time Sioux City Mail Processing employees Bob Myer and Michelle Glant made the switch to city carrier last year, and talked about the transition.

**Michelle Glant:** The biggest change, definitely; going from nights to days. Working days has been wonderful. It was tough at first, adjusting to a new job, but I've definitely been able to adjust to the new hours. I have split days off now, but, working days, that doesn't seem to be so bad. I get to spend a lot more time with my family, working days. I'm up when they're up and I'm home at night with them in the evenings.

**Watkins:** City Carrier Bob Myer says that preparing to deliver the mail on his route was his biggest initial challenge.

**Bob Myer:** A lot of it was dealing with challenges of organizing, you know, the route, casing the route and having things organized before you even deliver the first piece of mail.

**Watkins:** And what about delivering the mail during this summer's record-setting heat?

**Myer:** It was a shock to the system. We weren't prepared for it, and at the end of the day, I never realized that the deeper into the afternoon you get, the warmer it is. You couple that with fatigue, it's tough by the end of the day. But I'm getting conditioned to it now, but yeah, initially it was very challenging.

**Watkins:** Sioux City Postmaster Lori Slater-Trautwein says she's proud of the employees who made the transition.

**Lori Slater-Trautwein:** As I look at these employees that became carriers, I see them make great efforts in doing their job day-in and day-out, getting the mail delivered and making the change -- and with the right attitude and the right approach. They know that things have changed for their lives and they also know that things will continue to change as our company continues to evolve. But I really admire the fact that they've made the effort and they continue to do everything they can to give service to our customers.

### **News Roundup Segment**

**Watkins:** And now, here's a look at recent postal headlines.

On Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>, the Postal Service released a statement saying that, without congressional action, it would not make two retiree health benefits pre-payments. The statement reads as follows:

"The U.S. Postal Service will not make mandated prefunding retiree health benefit payments to the Treasury of \$5.5 billion due Aug. 1st, 2012, or the \$5.6 billion payment due Sept. 30th, absent legislation enacted by Congress. This action will have no material effect on the operations of the Postal Service. We will fully fund our operations, including our obligation to provide universal postal services to the American people. We will continue to deliver the mail, pay our employees and suppliers and meet our other financial obligations. Postal Service retirees and employees will also continue to receive their health benefits. Our customers can be confident in the continued regular operations of the Postal Service.

"The Postal Service continues to implement its strategic plan. However, comprehensive postal legislation is needed to return the Postal Service to long-term financial stability. We remain hopeful that such legislation can be enacted during the current Congress. The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations."

In other news, the best deal in shipping just added a bit more cushion as the Postal Service has introduced the first Express Mail Padded Flat Rate Envelope. The new envelope measures 9 1/2-by-12 1/2 inches and can be ordered exclusively online and free of charge at usps.com. It's ideal for sending merchandise that requires a little extra padding to almost anywhere in the country – overnight. It retails for \$18.95; \$17.75 for commercial or online customers.

The new product builds on the success of the Priority Mail Padded Flat Rate Envelope, which rapidly became a hit with e-commerce shippers looking for a lightweight fulfillment option. The padded envelope has become USPS's second most popular shipping product, next to Priority Mail Regional Rate Boxes.

**Watkins:** Thanks for listening to *Your Postal Podcast*. Now we'd like to hear from you. One lucky listener who posts a comment about this month's podcast on the *Your Postal Podcast* webpage will be selected to receive an *1862 Civil War Commemorative Folio*, which includes a sheet of stamps, a collectible "Behind the Designs" card featuring both color and standard black postmarks, and more. The winner will be selected at random from all qualifying comments posted by Aug. 31st. Our congratulations go out to Phyllis

Isaacs of Dallas, Texas, who posted a comment about July's podcast and has won a *Miles Davis & Edith Piaf Commemorative Stamp Folio*.

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