



## Going west with mail could be a big mistake

If the U.S. Postal Service decides to ship our mail to Denver for sorting, sending it back a couple of days later, it'll be a huge mistake for several reasons, but most of all because the service has not taken into account either the weather or where our mail goes.

The service claims it will save a whopping \$14,000 by hauling mail from the Colby postal area to Denver, where it would be routed through massive machines, sorted down to delivery "walk sequence" and sent back out, ready for carriers to take on their routes.

The paltry amount is mostly because our mail is being sorted in Salina already, or most of it. Today, postal workers at each office are supposed to separate the "local" mail, for their town and for the 677 ZIP code area, before sending the rest off.

In-town and area mail is kept here and delivered overnight, according to postal custom. Under the new plan, though, the service wants to send every letter to Denver for sorting. That will cut out the cost of separating the mail, get carriers out of the office an hour or two earlier so they can deliver to more homes and end the traditions of next-day service for letter mail.

There's real money in eventually reducing the number of carriers, of course, but the real driver for this change is the chance for the service to use its expensive sorting machines up to 20 hours a day, rather than five or six.

Today, these machines must be run on the overnight shift, just six or seven hours a night. They start up as trucks bring mail in during the evening and must finish in time for trucks to go out and

carriers to get their mail in early morning. If the service gives up the goal of overnight delivery, though, the machines can run day and night.

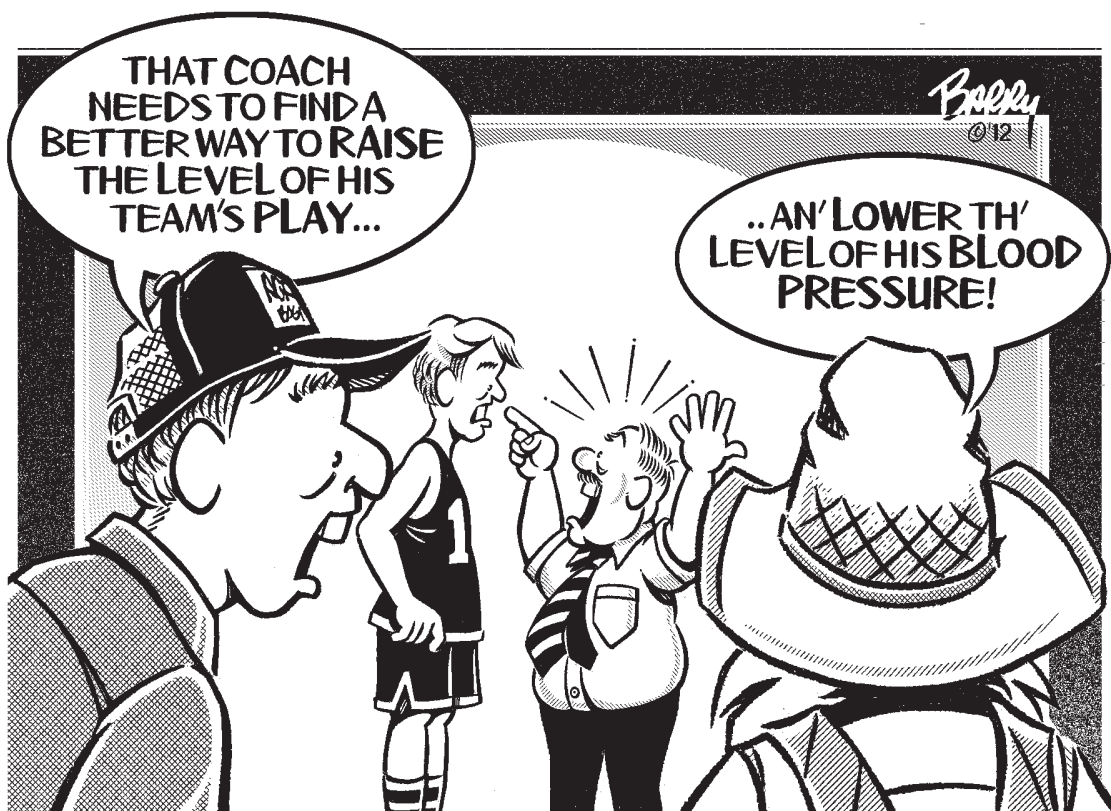
Whether that is a good idea is another thing. Most people who've heard this plan believe the service is shooting itself in the foot by lowering service standards. The loss of business could easily exceed the savings as banks and other businesses flee the mails for internet billing and payment. The Postal Service seems to feel that business will be lost anyway.

Sending in-town mail out for sorting defies logic, though. It's mostly collected in separate bins, so the cost of sorting it shouldn't be much. Nor should the cost of sorting it out to routes. The price in lost goodwill could be much more.

In any event, northwest Kansas mail should not be sent to Denver. If it has to be sorted someplace, send it east to Wichita. It's nearly 50 miles farther, yes, but the weather is much better. Interstate 70 is closed several times each winter west of Goodland - sometimes for days - but rarely east of there.

Add to that the fact that most of us do a lot more business between here and Kansas City than in Denver, and it's easy to see sending the mail east would be more efficient.

We'd rather see the Postal Service re-evaluate this whole scheme, which is now on a six-month hold to give Congress time to help the service avoid bankruptcy. But if something has to be done, let's hope our letters will move east, not out into the howling blizzards of the plains west of here. - Steve Haynes



COACHING ISN'T JUST A JOB - IT'S AN EMOTION...

## Reader says Sainty is not dying

### Letters to the Editor

St. Francis is not dying!! Out of curiosity, and with the help of a couple of people, I sat down and made a list of young people who live in St. Francis. Many on the list left here after high school to get additional education and have returned with professional degrees, Bachelor's or Associate degrees, or certifications in various fields. They have chosen to return to St. Francis to live and work.

My list was divided into 20-30 year olds and 30-40 year olds and there were over 200 on the two lists. Almost half of the 200 were under 30 years of age! Not knowing everyone, the list was not inclusive.

Several on the lists are not natives. All are gainfully employed and many are already taking on leadership roles and becoming actively involved in community affairs and organizations. As more of these young people get established I have faith that they will do their part

in helping to sustain the viability of this small rural town.

Lately our attention has been on long-term care and the needs of senior citizens. The thought was that St. Francis was becoming a retirement community as many have moved to St. Francis from "the city" to escape the masses. They chose St. Francis because of its peace and quiet and the quality health care services available. It seems we are striking a balance in generations. What a thankful revelation that is to me.

All the efforts to sustain, maintain and improve our infra structure, hospital, schools, nursing home, medical clinic, senior center, businesses, fire department, EMT's, band shell/park, carnival/county fair, ball parks, roadside park, swimming pool, movie theater, community foundation, churches,

scouts, 4-H, Awanas, River Walk/Keller Pond, museum...are not in vain. The future will continue to be a cross-section of generations living in St. Francis enjoying a unique and wonderful life style.

We owe tremendous gratitude to those who have gone before, and given back to the community their time and resources, and to those currently working tirelessly to keep "it" all going. It appears by my lists that there are many to come on whom we can rely to carry on - with new, progressive, fresh ideas and young energy.

We should be proud to call St. Francis home and be thankful young people are returning. We need to think positively, and progressively, and continue working together for the benefit of all.

Lea Keller  
St. Francis

## Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



Sometimes a football fan has to tread lightly around these parts.

Despite the fact that we live less than 200 miles from Sports Authority Field, this is not officially "Bronco Country." Some people here bleed for the Chiefs over there, a state away, in Missouri.

But my hope is there are enough readers out there who can appreciate Tim Tebow's latest Mile High Miracle.

Yes the Pittsburgh Steelers came into Denver with many players banged up and bruised from a long and physical season. However few gave the Broncos much of a

chance to be in the playoff game.

After failing to show up for their last three games on the regular schedule it was easy to count them out.

Fortunately over the years the stadiums a few blocks to the west of the Colorado Capitol Building have been home to some magical endings.

I've been witness to the teams of the 1960s to 1980s that had several outstanding players but little team success. Then came John Elway and the salad days with two NFL Lombardi trophies in the 1990s.

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Recently the Broncos have had some dry spells. So it brings a follower hope to see the boys in orange make a little post season noise again.

Will Tebow and the team find a way to overcome unimaginable odds in New England next week? Who knows. But it will sure be fun to watch.

At least for those of us out here in "almost" Bronco Country.

## Book Review

Book review from the St. Francis Public Library

### Cross Roads

By Fern Michaels

Its been a year and a half since the women of the Sisterhood received their presidential pardons, but the freedom they craved has come at a high price. The impossibly lucrative positions handed out to them by the mysterious Global Securities company have turned out to be golden handcuffs-scattering them around the world, cutting off communication, and leaving them in miserable isolation. They desperately miss the closeness and camaraderie they once shared, and the thrill of the missions they ac-

complished together. Suddenly, the only thing that matters is getting back to the States and reuniting the Sisterhood.

It's a deliriously happy homecoming at the old Virginia farmhouse as Myra and Annie welcome their precious flock one by one. The last to return to the flock are Nikki and Kathryn, who joined up in London and are making the final leg of the trip back to Washington D.C. together. But the moment their private jet hits cruising altitude, it appears they've flown

right into a trap. For their few fellow passengers are not ordinary travelers-they're an elite group of Interpol agents who urgently need the Sisterhood's help.

Now the ladies face a stark choice: resume their vigilante status for one of their most hazardous assignments yet, or try to outwit a group of powerful adversaries willing to use truly desperate measures. This time, everything is in the balance-their lives, their friendship, and the freedom they fought so hard to gain...

## Honor Roll

New and renewed Herald subscriptions: Harold Nolan, St. Francis; Tom Roelfs, St. Francis; Katie Willers, Souix Falls, S.D.; Fred Isernhagen, Centennial, Colo.; Toby Dirks, St. Francis; Shirley Straub, Sharon Springs.

**GOD SAYS**  
But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.  
Matthew 12:36

# The Saint Francis Herald

(USPS 475-960)

A Century of Service to Cheyenne County

P.O. Box 1050, St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050

Published each Thursday by Haynes Publishing Co., 310 W. Washington, St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050. Entered as periodicals matter at the post office at St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050, and at additional offices.

Official newspaper of Cheyenne County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, Colorado Press Association and Inland Press Association.

Subscriptions: One year \$38 (tax included) in Cheyenne and adjacent counties; \$42 (tax included) elsewhere in Kansas; \$48 elsewhere in the U.S. Foreign subscriptions, \$28 extra per year (except APO/FPO). POSTMASTER: Send change of address to Box 1050, St. Francis, Kan. 67756-1050



## Nor'West Newspapers

8:30 a.m. - noon - 1:00-5:00 p.m.

Monday - Friday

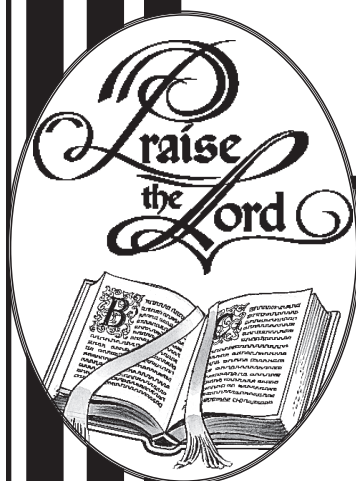
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