

POSTAL NEWS

No. 9/2008

**Formulated by UNI-Japan Post in cooperation with UNI-Apro,
ASPEK Indonesia and SPPI**

- 1. Postal savings bank lands in Shanghai. Jan 18, 2008.**
- 2. Postal Pointers. Jan 17, 2008.**
- 3. Retailer to offer postal services. Jan 18, 2008.**
- 4. TNT posties set to explode monopoly. Jan 19, 2008.**
- 5. Postal Service is in business to make money. Jan 20, 2008.**
- 6. Study Finds Postal Service Gets No Edge. Jan 18, 2008.**
- 7. Uncertain Future: U.S. Postal Service want to sell landmark office in downtown Boone; public comments invited. Jan 19, 2008.**
- 8. Postal Service changes mind, looks for new post office site. Jan 17, 2008.**

1. Postal savings bank lands in Shanghai

By Zou Qi and Yang Jian 2008-1-18

Change font size:

CHINA Postal Savings Bank opened its first provincial branch in Shanghai today, offering a full range of financial services. It now has 22 outlets at the provincial level across the country.

The branch will work jointly with the city's 444 post office outlets. The lender has 387 ATM machines and 5.4 billion yuan (US\$744.90 million) in client savings accounts in the city. Fifty of its post office outlets accept US dollar savings business.

The branch plans to expand foreign exchange services to include currencies such as the euro, yen and pound.

The postal savings bank, now China's fifth largest commercial bank in terms of deposits, completed registration on March 6 and launched its headquarters in Beijing on March 20 with registered capital of 20 billion yuan.

The bank is a spinoff from the China Postal Bureau and received approval from the China Banking Regulatory Commission in December 2006.

The central government wanted to separate the bureau's banking business from its postal operations to prevent corruption and fraud.

The bank is expected to focus on retailing and intermediary businesses mainly in rural areas, where two thirds of its outlets are based.

The China Postal Bureau started taking deposits in 1986. It has more than 352 billion yuan in assets, 260 million account holders and 70 million debit card holders.

2. Postal Pointers

by Mitch Greene
Palouse Postmaster

Flat-Rate packaging makes shipping easy

Thanks to flat-rate packaging from the U.S. Postal Service, shipping things has never been easier!

Priority Mail service-one of the best values in the shipping industry- offers flat-rate shipping containers at no extra charge. The flat-rate envelope is just right for important reports and documents. Flat-rate boxes come in two convenient sizes:

11-7/8 inches x 3-3/8 inches x 13-5/8 inches (great for garments, board games, books and other relatively thin items).

11 inches x 8-1/2 inches x 5-1/2 inches (ideal for shoes, model cars and taller items).

Along with the free packaging, you get Priority Mail service00two-to-three day delivery, on average, to any destination in the United States. Go online and you can print labels and pay for postage quickly and conveniently using Click-N-Ship. Why not save gas, too, by arranging for your package to be picked up the next business day at your home or office at no extra charge using Carrier Pickup online notification.

And best of all, for as much as you can properly secure in any of the containers, there will be just one shipping price-and you know what it is up front.

To get your Priority Mail flat-rate envelopes and boxes or find out more about the valuable service, visit your local Post Office or go online to www.usps.com.

[This is part of the January 17, 2008 edition of The Latah Eagle.]

Posted on Fri, Jan. 18, 2008

3. Retailer to offer postal services

Brunswick store won't function as mail-pickup site
By Jason M. Rodriguez - The Sun News

CALABASH, N.C. --

The nearly new Calabash Ace Hardware will provide postal services to southeastern Brunswick County customers as early as spring, the U.S. Postal Service said Thursday.

Area town officials and a U.S. congressman are calling it the first hurdle to the ultimate goal of getting a full-service postal station.

The hardware store, 9030 Beach Drive in Calabash, opened in April 2007 and was named this week as the contract postal unit. It will be a full-service unit, offering a full line of postal products and services, including postage stamps, Express Mail service, Priority Mail service, special services, packaging products and more, according to a news release.

"It's a great location," said USPS spokeswoman Enola Rice. "It fit our requirements for the appropriate space needed, parking, security and had very attractive hours."

When opened, which may occur as early as the end of March or beginning of April, the postal service will be available Monday through Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In late November, Calabash lost its post office because of a contract dispute. Building owner Peggy May said she requested more money for staff, but was denied. Full service was temporarily shifted to the South Brunswick Post Office in Ocean Isle Beach, about six miles away from the former Calabash location.

Rice said the postal service sent out six solicitation letters to area businesses and several of them were interested. She said the USPS then made site visits and chose Ace Hardware.

Tommy Reeves, co-owner of the store, said when USPS officials approached them, it didn't take long for them to realize the 23,000-square-foot store was an ideal location.

"It's a great service to our community, there's plenty of parking, we have automatic sliding doors and restrooms and we're handicapped accessible," Reeves said. "They also really liked our hours. I'm sure it's going to drive some store traffic, too."

Reeves said the location of the postal services will be at the rear of the store.

Though customers in the 28467 ZIP code will be able to send packages and buy stamps from the new Ace Hardware location, they will not be able to pick up mail. That is a concern for Carolina Shores commissioner John Russo, who is charged with bringing that service to the 28467 ZIP code, which includes Carolina Shores, Calabash and their surrounding area.

"It's not what we're looking for and I'm getting ready to send them a letter to tell them just that," said Russo, who is a retired postal worker that worked for May part-time in the former Calabash post office. "It's a stop gap, but it's definitely not what we're looking for. Fifteen hundred square feet in the corner of some store is not a post office."

Russo has led the local charge in securing signatures to catch the attention of the U.S. Postal Service and area legislators. So far, he has about 900 signatures on a petition asking the post office to find a way to bring back all services to the growing area.

Several copies of Russo's petition have been circulating in recent weeks and will be available at places such as town hall and area property owner associations' offices until the end of the month, he said.

The South Brunswick Post Office has seven employees who work directly with the 28467 ZIP code, Russo said. That ZIP code covers both towns and their surrounding areas.

Rice said it's "not unusual" for a community to lead a petition drive when a post office closes its doors.

"We feel the [Ace Hardware location] is going to take care of the community," Rice said, adding the petition will not go unnoticed. "We'll review it and take it into consideration, but if there are residents out there that want their mail delivered to their door, they should speak to a manager or supervisor at the South Brunswick office."

U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre, D-N.C., said the news of the postal service opening at the Ace Hardware location is welcome, but called it the "first hurdle."

"The next objective is to get a long-term solution," he said from Washington Thursday. "Our office is already working with postal officials to achieve that."

McIntyre said he has been in contact with Russo, Carolina Shores Mayor Steve Selby and Calabash Mayor Anthony Clemmons to assure them that his office will continue to push for a full-service post office.

"We know there is a great interest in this and a great need," he said. "There is no doubt that we need to have a full-service postal station and that is the ultimate goal." Contact JASON M. RODRIGUEZ at 910-754-9868 or jrodriguez@thesunnews.com.

000

4. TNT posties set to explode monopoly

Scottish streets considered for trial challenge by Royal Mail rival

By Nathalie Thomas

A FLEET of orange-uniformed TNT postmen will soon take on the Royal Mail on the streets of Scotland, the boss of the private postal operator has hinted.

Nick Wells, chief executive of TNT Post, told Scotland on Sunday that the company was gearing up to launch trials of its first "end-to-end" service, where items are picked up, sorted and delivered by TNT staff without any involvement from the Royal Mail.

He gave his clearest indication yet that some of the locations, which the company has so far refused to confirm, are likely to be in Scotland.

"We're going to deliver an end-to-end delivery to carry out the final mile of addressed mail," he said. "You could find there will be orange postmen on the streets of Scotland."

Although a number of private operators have entered the UK postal market since it was opened up to full competition in February 2006, Royal Mail continues to dominate what is referred to in the trade as the "final mile" – the actual delivery of letters and parcels to individual addresses by postmen.

Since its launch in Britain in 2003, Dutch company TNT Post has seized a 9% share of the market, yet it still has to rely on Royal Mail for the final leg of deliveries, effectively handing business back to its competitor.

Wells said: "Last year we handled over 1.8 billion items, but we give all of that back to Royal Mail. Royal Mail still do the end-to-end. We're Royal Mail's biggest client."

It is understood that TNT Post is planning to launch its own end-to-end service early this year in order to reduce the amount of business it hands back to its rival.

Although Wells refused to disclose locations and timings of the end-to-end pilots for competitive reasons, he said TNT Post has been building up a sizeable business in Coatbridge, Glasgow, over the past 18 months.

"Since we started in Scotland we've got about 250 customers," he said. "It's quite a vibrant area with lots of customers."

The company has been targeting businesses in the central belt in particular, launching the PremierSortFlex service for businesses that send more than 250 letters and parcels a day. Corporate clients include Bank of Scotland.

However, Wells said the company had no plans to support the struggling Post Office network in Scotland, which will see up to 30 branches closed or downgraded this year.

Postcomm, the postal services regulator, recently urged private companies such as TNT Post, DHL and UBS to strike deals with the Post Office network over undelivered mail.

Sir Nigel Stapleton, chairman of Postcomm, said private operators could leave undelivered mail for customers to collect at post offices, rather than forcing them to trudge out to remote out-of-town depots.

But Wells said: "At the moment I think we're prevented from doing so by the contracts between Royal Mail and the Post Office. We therefore haven't looked too closely at that."

The full article contains 508 words and appears in Scotland On Sunday newspaper.
Last Updated: 19 January 2008 4:57 PM

000

5. Postal Service is in business to make money

Vicki Lee Parker | McClatchy Newspapers
January 20, 2008

The U.S. Postal Service is probably the last place consumers think they have to be on guard against aggressive pricing and overcharging.

That's what Jason Savage, a Raleigh, N.C., entrepreneur, thought until a recent trip to a local post office.

Savage went there to mail a musical card. He was charged \$1.30 for the 1.3-ounce envelope, which he considered too high.

When he called customer service to complain, he got conflicting information.

One person told him he should have been charged \$1.14; another said 97 cents.

Curious, I took a similar card to the post office in downtown Raleigh and was charged 58 cents. David Partenheimer, spokesman for the USPS, said he couldn't explain why Savage was quoted different prices.

"I never questioned their rates before," Savage said. "I always used the U.S. post office, because I felt I was getting the best price, and their service was just as quick as anyone else."

Something Savage and many others forget is that the U.S. Postal Service is a business, not a civil agency whose sole purpose is to serve us.

It stopped receiving federal funding 1971 and has struggled since to strike a balance between being a quasi-federal agency and a major corporation.

As a federal agency, it is under a mandate to provide mail service to all U.S. residents, even if that means keeping an office open in a remote area that serves just a few people.

But as a for-profit corporation, it has to make money, even as it contends with increasing competition from overnight delivery companies and other mail-services businesses.

To generate new streams of revenue, the Postal Service has added services, including package tracking and overnight delivery. It also has beefed up its sales strategies, promoting higher-priced services over more economical choices.

For example, tell the clerk you want to send a package, and the first price you'll be quoted is the highest -- overnight delivery.

You often have to ask if there is a less expensive option.

"It's more up-selling than leaving out information," said Carl Walton, spokesman for the Postal Service in Greensboro, N.C.

"The purpose is to offer the best and fastest service possible," he said. "If that service is \$27, we are going to quote that first."

But after his experience with the envelope, Savage worries that more people will be overcharged.

I have no problem with the Postal Service acting as a making-money business. But savvy consumers need to treat it that way: Ask for the lowest price, and always shop around.

Vicki Lee Parker can be reached at vparker@newsobserver.com.

000

6. Study Finds Postal Service Gets No Edge

By RANDOLPH E. SCHMID – Jan 18, 2008

WASHINGTON (AP) — After listening to complaints that being part of government gives the Postal Service a competitive advantage, Congress directed the Federal Trade Commission to investigate.

Turns out, just the opposite is true.

Yes, there are advantages to being part of the government, but they are outweighed by limitations and restrictions on government agencies, the FTC found.

Indeed, federally imposed restraints on the post office's operations increase its costs to provide competitive products by an estimated \$330 million to \$782 million a year, the FTC said.

At the same time, the post office's benefits from being part of government help it by an estimated \$39 million to \$117 million a year, according to the study.

Congress called for the study in the new law governing postal operations signed by President Bush in December 2006. The agency's competitors have long claimed they are at a disadvantage because the post office doesn't have to pay state and local taxes, for example.

That's true, and there are other advantages, the FTC said, but they are more than balanced by the disadvantages.

Advantages for the post office include:

- _Immunity from state and local taxes.
- _Limits on lawsuits against government agencies.
- _Exemptions from many state and local zoning and land use rules.
- _Ability to borrow from federal funds.

Drawbacks for the post office include:

- _Labor law restrictions, including inability to reduce fringe benefits.
- _Higher retirement benefit costs than private firms.
- _The obligation to serve everyone in the country six days a week.
- _Restrictions on closing post offices and other facilities.
- _Pricing subject to review by an independent commission.
- _Requirements to fly mail to rural locations in Alaska.
- _Restraints on investing.

000

Saturday, January 19, 2008

7. Uncertain Future: U.S. Postal Service want to sell landmark office in downtown Boone; public comments invited

By Monte Mitchell

Bob Hite was walking into the Boone Post Office this week when he stopped to read the notice on the front door:

“The U.S. Postal Service is selling the US Post Office, downtown station building at 689 West King Street, Boone, North Carolina.”

Hite and his friend Paula Ransom asked a clerk about it. She handed him a copy of the notice, and said she didn’t have any answers.

“I hate to see them do that,” Hite told her.

The 1938 Colonial Revival stone building is a landmark in downtown Boone, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The notice has caused a stir since going up Jan. 11.

Enola Rice, a spokeswoman for the Postal Service, said that the agency uses just a small portion of the building and that’s why it wants to sell, with a decision expected by about mid-March.

“We’re going through a process of exploring our options,” she said.

The Postal Service could sell the building, then lease the space it needs and continue operations there, or it may move to another location downtown. Boone has another post office in the commercial corridor on U.S. 321 on the other side of town.

“We want to keep service downtown, that’s what we’d like to see happen, but we have to explore every option,” Rice said.

The Postal Service’s property-management section will appraise the building. It doesn’t know a sales price yet and haven’t listed the property with a broker.

A public-comment period extends through Jan. 28.

Hite and Ransom both said they would like to see the downtown post office stay as it is, especially given how bad Boone’s traffic is.

They both work at Appalachian State University, and said that the downtown post office is within walking distance for them and for people at downtown businesses. Hite lives in a rural area, and likes the security of getting mail at the post office.

On Thursday, the Boone Town Council passed a resolution opposing the sale of the post-office building and the loss of downtown postal service.

“We’re working real hard on making this a walkable city,” Mayor Loretta Clawson said.

On Tuesday, Watauga County commissioners will consider their own resolution asking that the post office keep its operations there. Both resolutions ask that the historic building be preserved.

The building was a Works Progress Administration project. Inside, Daniel Boone gazes out from a mural created in 1938 by artist Alan Tompkins.

Both the town and county vow to maintain the building and provide post-office space if the building is offered as a gift.

Tuesdae Rice, the director of the Downtown Boone Development Association (and no relation to the Postal Service spokeswoman), said that the postal service needs to stay downtown and the building should be protected.

“It’s a very important building for the downtown, and something the town, its citizens, the business community, ASU and the county would all like to see preserved,” she said.

Renee Early, the environmental-review coordinator with the State Historic Preservation Office, said that federal preservation law requires that the sale of a federally owned historic building not adversely affect the building. Typically, protective covenants are attached to the deed.

“A developer could purchase it, but a developer could not tear it down or put anything on it,” Early said.

■ Monte Mitchell can be reached in Wilkesboro at 336-667-5691 or at mmitchell@wsjournal.com.

000

Last modified 1/17/2008 - 9:52 pm
Originally created 011908

8. Postal Service changes mind, looks for new post office site

By CAREN BURMEISTER, Shorelines

After announcing its long-sought site for a new Beaches post office last year, the U.S. Postal Service now says the Jacksonville Beach location is unsuitable and will start a new search.

The Postal Service will update the City Council Tuesday on its new search.

The council meeting starts at 7 p.m. at City Hall at 11 Third St. N.

In March, the agency announced it had chosen a site at 1316 Beach Blvd. for the new post office and said the new facility would open this year.

But the Postal Service recently determined the shopping center lacks adequate dock space, clearance and a way to install security fencing at the site, according to a Dec. 17 letter from Jacqueline Hollinger, the North Florida District manager of operations and programs.

The lease for the current post office at 318 Third St. N. in Jacksonville Beach will expire in May 2009. Beach United Methodist Church bought the four-decades-old mail facility in late 2003 as part of its effort to expand and add parking.

The Postal Service has re-advertised for a new site and today is the deadline for those proposals. It's seeking a site east of the Intracoastal Waterway between Seagate Avenue and Butler Boulevard with 4,800 square feet for retail space, 5,000 square feet for the carrier annex and 9,000 square feet for the station. It also needs room for 85 parking spaces.

During the last search, the Postal Service also considered a location in Neptune Beach.

Agency officials said they want to keep a postal presence in Jacksonville Beach.

"However, we have been unsuccessful in finding a suitable location that will accommodate our delivery, retail and customer needs," Hollinger said.

000

Collected by Chairul Anwar, Bandung, Indonesia.

E-mail address : chairulanwar49@operamail.com, uyungchairul@plasa.com.