

The Mail Of The Species By JONATHAN PHILLIPS

V I T A

When I worked at the *Highlights* office, now and then I would get a letter addressed simply to "J. Phillips, Vanceboro, N.C." Since the post office is right across Main Street and they knew where to find me, this streamlined address was sufficient.

The same is true of most small towns. You can fire off a letter to Betty Joe Doe or Jim Bob Ipock by just putting their name and the name of the room, assuming that Town is a small one like Dover, Cove City, Ernul, or the like.

Although the U.S. Postal Service probably frowns on this sort of thing, trust me—it'll get there.

When I lived a few months in Swansboro, I even mistakenly gave a number of individuals and institutions the wrong post office box number. Even though I wasn't a veteran resident, this presented no problems whatsoever to the Swansboro post office. They got it all to me.

You wouldn't think that could happen in urban America, and more than likely it hardly ever does.

But as Jim Valvano could tell you, miracles do happen.

A friend in California had lost touch of my actual address, but knew I was employed by Rutgers University, and that Rutgers was somewhere in New Jersey.

He was also aware that New Jersey was somewhere in the continental United States.

In what must have been an extraordinary act of faith, he wrote a letter and addressed the envelope thusly:

"Jonathan Phillips, Rutgers Univ., New Jersey, U.S.A."

There are a lot of people in New Jersey. It is, in fact, the most densely-populated state in the union.

There are a lot of people at Rutgers University. Including students, faculty, and staff, the number goes well beyond 100,000.

There are a lot of Rutgers Universities in New Jersey. There are two campuses in Piscataway, three more across the river in New Brunswick, one down in Camden, and one up in Newark. There's a laboratory at Bivalve, another at Cape May, and a field

station at Tuckerton. Throw in a research farm in Fairfield, and you've got a lot of ground to cover.

Given the facts above, the odds of that letter from California ever reaching me probably resemble the odds of the Pulitzer Prize committee reading this column or of Billy Martin coming to coach the West Craven baseball team.

But, as must be obvious by now, I got it. It took five weeks, but one fine morning I checked my mail slot and there it was, with more postal marks and cryptic messages written on it than I've ever seen.

This is all great, but begs a few questions.

For one, how can it sometimes take 10 or more days for a perfectly addressed letter, complete with my building number and nine digits worth of zip code, to get here from North Carolina when USPS can bring off feats such as the one above?

How can an organization that can pick, with just a few weak clues, one person out of the state of New Jersey, fail to get a thank-you note to a specified box down south?

But hey, let's not pick on the post office. They got a tough job, and they do the best they can. Beside, the mistakes they make can provide both amusement and valuable excuses.

As for amusement, what could be more flattering than to receive an engraved invitation to a reception at the United Nations for the new ambassador from Kenya? Though this may sound like more of the hyperbole that has been known to crop up in my writing, we actually got such an invitation.

Alas, I had to work that night and we couldn't go. I wonder to this day what kind of whiskey and finger sandwiches Kenyans are fond of.

As for valuable excuses, where would we all be if we couldn't have said, at various times, things like "the check is in the mail. The postal service must be really slow," or "didn't you get it? The post office must've lost it."

I don't know about you, but a lot of us would be in jail. And I'd rather get my mail erratically on the outside than regularly in the State Pen.

"United Tri-County Senior Citizens, Inc. is again sponsoring the V I T A (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) program for senior Citizens, low-income and handicapped persons, beginning February 8th, at the Senior Centers. This special service will be available at the following center:

Vanceboro Senior Center - Vanceboro, Monday-Friday, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Appointment/Telephone 24-1067.

The tax assistance program will continue until April 13, 1984 and the service provided will be short forms, only. Questions concerning this service may be directed to the Main Office, 919-638-3800, from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Daily.

Valentine Lines

Valentine lines are a message of love,

*Always gentle as a dove,
Valentine colors are pretty to see,
A message of love is meant to be.
Red is for the life giving blood,
White is for righteousness given by
God above,*

*Valentine is a wonderful day.
A special time for you to say,
God loves you and I love you,
We'll love you the whole year
through,*

*Have a Happy Valentine's Day,
and be a blessing to someone along
life's way.*

By REBA MITCHELL

Idleness

By LELA BARROW

In idleness there is no hope. Work is as much a necessity to man as eating and sleeping. One trouble the idle man never realizes he is an idler. They would never admit that they aren't busy. They that do nothing are always doing something that should be left undone—worse than nothing." Thy action determine thy worth—good or bad.

There are young people who do not work, but the country is not proud of them—there are old people who have never worked—They spend 365 days a year idling away time, being miserable and making those around them unhappy. Nobody likes to take up time with them.

A boy, in the neighborhood I grew up in, would not work—he had a brilliant memory—could memorize any thing—was in my class in elementary school—he was an excellent speller—but the laziest person I ever saw. His mind was good, but his body wasn't very good. His eyes were near sighted—his bones were soft—he was healthy—his mother looked after him till she became paralyzed. He was too lazy to give her a drink of water. Waited for his brother to do it. That is "laziest and idliest" together.

The most unhappy of all men is the man who cannot tell what he is going to do; that has got no work cut out for him to do. He has ideas of work, big ideas, he plans to do. He does not have the education, does not have the experience and lastly does not have the money. Work, even if it is menial work, is the grand cure of all the miseries for mankind—honest work which you can do to earn a living.

Epictitus, a humble Greek slave, lame and poor but serenely content wrote: "If a man is unhappy remember that his unhappiness is his own fault; for God has made all men to be happy." People are unhappy because they look inward instead of outward. They worry too much about circumstances they cannot change, or are too lazy or idle to get up and try to change. "Let someone else do it." Happiness is in doing it yourself—not waiting for others.

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Craven Evaluation & Training Center

Mrs. Josh Willey, placement coordinator for Craven Evaluation & Training Center, brought the local Rotary Club up-to-date on the CETC operation at New Bern.

After a fine introduction by Program Chairman George Dimick, Mrs. Willey explained exactly what the job placement person does at the Center—Filling out applications, seeking jobs, and actually doing job interviews, using the latest in video equipment. This equipment allows the client a chance to see themselves in a job interview.

During her presentation, she demonstrated how the job interview is practiced by clients using the video equipment. The volunteers for her demonstration were Mike Morton, Jim Pepper, and Billy Edwards.

Deadline For Articles
and Advertisements
Monday Noon for
Thursday's paper

HIGHLIGHTS

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Christine Hill
Office Manager

Zeno Everette, III
Paste Up

Michael Hodges
Circulation

P.O. Box 404, Main St., Across from the Post Office
Vanceboro, North Carolina, 28586
Phone (919) 244-0780, (919) 244-0508

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