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20 CENTS

Christmas at the Post Office

Hertford P.O. keeps those cards and letters coming.

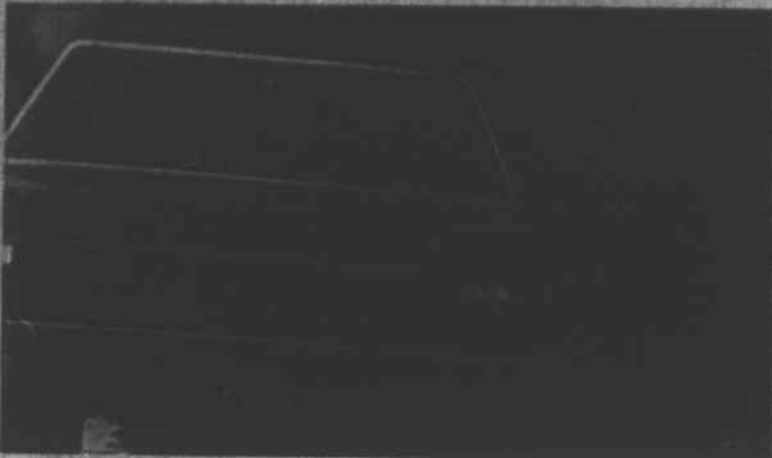
The Christmas rush, a characteristic of most businesses, is doubly true for the U.S. Postal Service.

Getting out the Christmas cards, packages and advertisements — along with the usual load of bills, magazines and junk — keeps the post office working overtime through the month of December.

The Associated Press reports that Christmas mailings are down in the state of North Carolina, and at the Hertford Post Office the situation is no different.

Postmaster Henry Stokes reports that as of last Friday this year's mail is unusually light. In years past, a mailman might be buried underneath that day's deliveries, but this year the carriers have managed to make pretty good time getting out the first class mail, without leaving too much third class mail behind. The sale of stamps is down also.

Stokes chalks it up to a combination of things. Not only has the price of postage increased, but the price of greeting cards is also high. In addition, Stokes thinks the attitudes have changed somewhat.



Ray Haskett delivers mail on Harvey Point road.

"I think people tend to greet people personally rather than send them a card," he said. "There's no reason to send a card to someone you see everyday."

There is another reason also. The Postal Service's drive to get people to mail early has made a difference. It used to be the Christmas mail didn't start coming in until a few days before Christmas, Stokes said. Now it begins to dribble in a few days after Thanksgiving. "People have

generally been very cooperative in mailing early," Stokes said.

But they're not ready to take it easy yet. The last few days before Christmas are still heavy, and the light load so far may be the calm before the storm.

Associated Press notes that although the mail is light, the sales of Christmas cards is heavier than in past years. The cause of the light mail may just be procrastination. It appears that many people spent last weekend writing cards.

If the post office does get buried this week, it may be hard for cards to reach their destination by Christmas.

Stokes said that mail delivered within about 200-300 miles of Hertford should still get there the next day, but farther out than that and the letters might not get there by Christmas Eve, the last delivery day before Christmas.

The windows at the Hertford Post Office will open on Christmas Eve from 9-11 a.m., closed from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., and opened again from 2-5 p.m. There will be no deliveries or window service on Christmas Day. Normal hours and duties will resume December 26.



Mailmen in the Hertford routes before hitting the Post Office case their street.



Catching snowflakes

A student in Julia Bryant's first and second grade class at Perquimans Central Gram-

mer School takes time out from a class project to enjoy snow flakes on black card-board to study their shapes. Bryant's class was collecting last Friday's brief snowfall.

HEATHER LEICESTER AGE 4
 DEAR SANTA,
 I HAVE BEEN A GOOD
 GERL PLEASE BRING ME
 RUBICKS CUBE A RECORD PLAYER,
 RUB-A-DUB DOLLY AND A FLAG.
 I'LL LEAVE YOU SOME COOKIES

Dear Santa...

Heather Leicester's letter to Santa from Perquimans County, see page five.

(Continued on page three)

Hertford women revives local PTA

The Parent-Teacher's Association, long a silent organization in this part of the state, is prepared to make its voice heard once again.

Mary White of Hertford, district director of the PTA, spelled out her plans for the Albemarle-area PTAs at a meeting of district representatives in Elizabeth City last Wednesday.

With her was Meetta Lampert, field representative for the North Carolina PTA. During an interview before the meeting, they spoke of the work the local PTA hopes to accomplish in the near future.

Though it is often thought of as a kind of milk-and-cookies social club, the PTA is in fact involved in child-related issues on many levels.

As Lampert explained, the PTA has

worked in three main areas of child

and school issues. One is a program of encouraging and training parent volunteers to work as tutors and teacher's aids.

Another is to initiate programs for parents, teachers and students on such problems as drug and alcohol abuse, adolescent sexuality, and school discipline.

The third area is working as a legislative advocate — a lobbyist — to promote laws for increased teacher's pay, for smaller class sizes, against tuition tax credits, and other school issues.

For years the Albemarle area hasn't had a strong PTA, due in part to racial issues, administrative neglect, and plain disinterest. But White hopes she can stir new interest

in the organization. Last Wednesday's meeting was her first step in making a change.

District 14, for which White is director, has nearly 21,000 members in eight Albemarle counties. In recent years their voice has been drowned out by larger, better organized PTAs in the Piedmont area of the state.

White believes the problem was there wasn't enough push, and where the push was applied it was misplaced.

"We weren't doing our job," she said of local PTA leaders. "We didn't give them the information to let them know what's going on. And sometimes they'd get the information, but they didn't know how to use it."

This week

Dwayne Parks of Hertford, suffering from cancer, is prepared for a very joyous Christmas. Turn to page three.

Weather

Fair and cold through Thursday, highs in the upper 30s and lows in the low 20s.



Merry Christmas

