

Editorials & Opinions

Corner Copy

by Mike Austreng, Editor

Being that we write this column pretty much every week of the year, there will always be a chance that there will be someone reading what's written here who won't agree with what we pen.

There are other times we will pick a topic that we may not have the best information for, or our memory doesn't recall certain information correctly, or we may have had misinformation to begin with. As hard as we try to be as accurate as we can, there are times we prove we are human and you know what they say, "to err is human".

A couple weeks ago we mentioned our postal service and the noticeable slow down in delivery - that can't be disputed, because all you have to do is look at the date on the cancellation of the postage and you'll see that a day or two goes by before you receive what used to get to you the very next day on a very, very regular basis.

The other part of that section of this column mentioned the financial problems the postal service is having and we blamed it on pensions. The word pensions is where we goofed, it should have said benefits.

Another part of that column that we didn't know at the time of writing it was that the postal service is apparently the only entity (public or private) that is being required by Congress to completely fund their post employment health benefits and that is what created the financial woes - in 2006 Congress mandated the funding.

If you wish, you can read a letter to the editor following this column that will help explain where the postal service sits financially.

In last week's column, near the end, we spent some time on the subject of our Minnesota Vikings and how disappointed we were in the first game of their season. We also mentioned that we couldn't comment on the second game because this column is written on Friday mornings and the second game wasn't played until Sunday.

Our disappointment at the time was real. It seems to us that every year since we started watching the team not too long after their very first game in 1961 - naturally we don't remem-

ber much about the early years, except to say that we do remember watching Fran Tarkington scrambling all over the field, but we aren't sure if that was his first or second stint with the Vikes. Either way, it was at least 40 years ago - we've listened to the team hype and all the great things that would happen every year, only to be let down year after year.

Then came last Sunday (September 20th). Wow, it was a totally different team that took the field. The very first drive ended in a touchdown and the defense looked a whole lot better too. The Vikes won, but we couldn't comment because the paper goes to press early on Monday morning and we had no time to change what was written.

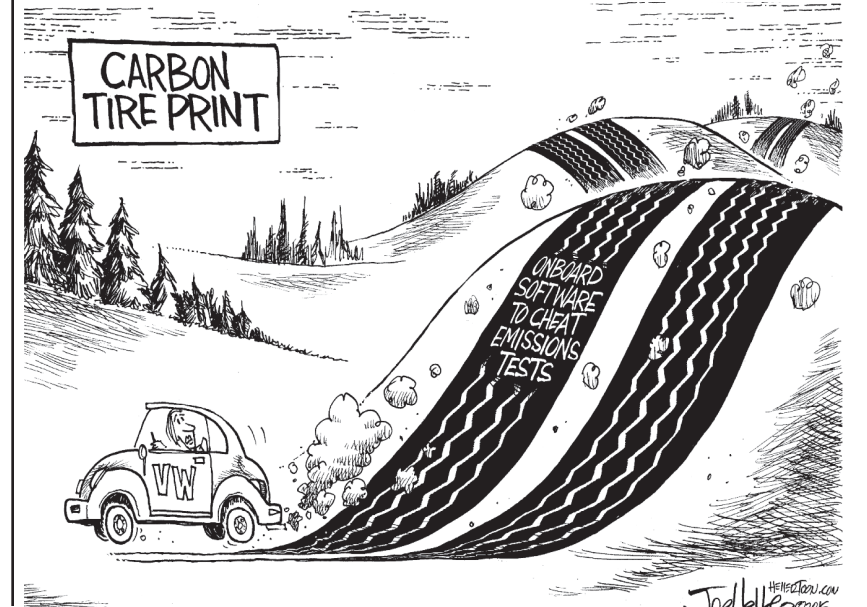
As always, we'll sit down and watch the Vikings play football - more likely a recorded game this time because we will be playing in a golf tournament at Rich-Spring on Sunday (September 27th) - be we'll try to keep from commenting because the delay in our ability to comment on games is going to create nothing but confusion for our readers.

With the risk of sounding like a broken record, we'll say one more time that summer has gone too fast and it's hard to believe next week is October.

It's not that we don't like fall. We like the changing color of area trees, we like the cooler nights and days, we like that fishing gets better, we like the time we spend hunting, we like the time we spend on the bike looking at the tree colors all over the state - it's what follows that gets harder and harder to enjoy. COLD winter.

We won't complain about the snow because we actually enjoy clearing our driveway and the few other parking lots and driveways we do, because we have a blower with a cab and heat, so it isn't like it's a lot of work and even on the coldest days we stay pretty comfortable. It's just that the winter months seem to drag on while the summer months zip right by.

We remember a long time ago when someone older than us told us that if we thought summers were short then, wait until we're older because they'll seem to go by even faster - man, was that person right! And you know



what? There's not a thing we can do about it. If we moved too far south there wouldn't be much change of seasons and we'd probably grow pretty tired of the same old thing every day.

One good thing about the four seasons we enjoy here is that there is always something to look forward to and nothing gets real boring. We'll keep trying to look on the bright side.

Have A Good Week!

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,
The U.S. Postal Service, which is based in the Constitution, helps unify this vast nation while delivering daily to 153 million homes and businesses. It's the largest civilian employer of veterans and is annually rated by the public as the most trusted federal agency.

And yet, there's a lot of misinformation out there about the Postal Service.

Some folks assert, for example, that it loses billions of dollars a year because the growth of the Internet has led to lower mail volumes, taxpayers are on the hook for this, and so cuts need to be made - such as slowing the mail, ending Saturday deliveries or replacing door-to-door delivery with neighborhood cluster boxes.

Fortunately, none of that is true.

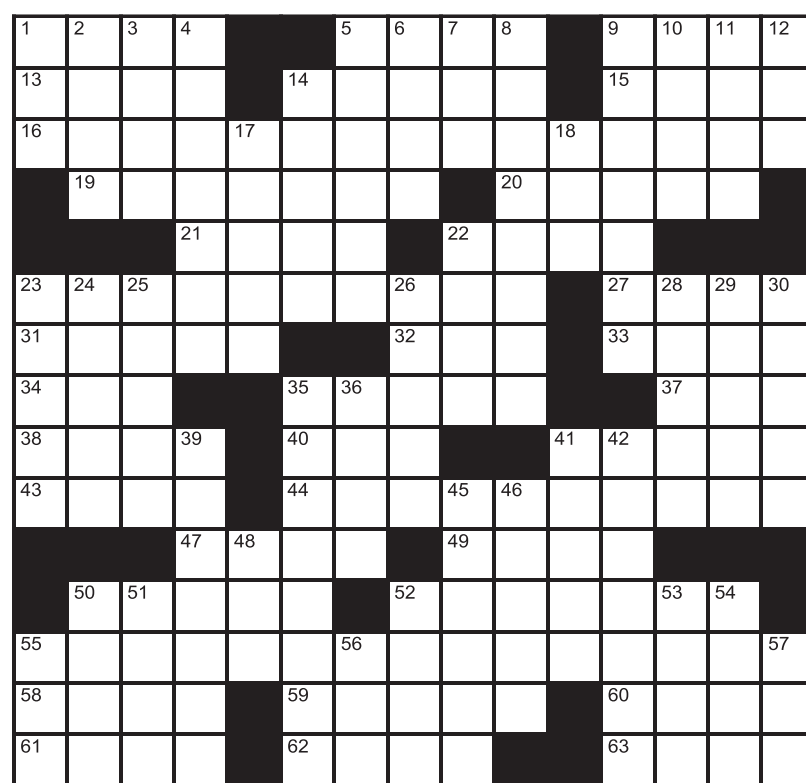
Let's look at the facts. Postal Service operations are profitable, and increasingly so. Through the first three quarters of Fiscal Year 2015, earned revenue exceeds business expenses by \$1.2 billion. (The Postal Service funds itself through the sale of stamps and other products, not through taxpayer dollars.)

Across

1. Hosiery
5. Enlivens, with "up"
9. Goya's "Duchess of ____"
13. Ashtabula's lake
14. Iraqi port
15. "High" time
16. Mailed travel souvenir (2 wds)
19. Shrewdly
20. Peter, Paul or Mary
21. Biblical shepherd
22. Soave, e.g.
23. Before closer inspection (2 wds)
27. Finger, in a way
31. Equestrian
32. Balaam's mount
33. Angry, with "off"
34. A pint, maybe
35. Cleanser brand
37. Dust remover
38. Warm, so to speak
40. "___ to Billie Joe"
41. Hotel offering
43. MacLachlan of "Twin Peaks"
44. Stiff and unnatural quality
47. Bandy words
49. ___-Altaic languages
50. Idaho, e.g.
52. Those who frighten
55. California geologic fracture (3 wds)
58. Connive
59. Singer Lenya
60. ___ gin fizz
61. Pimples
62. Affirmative votes
63. Axed

Down

1. Energy
2. ___ acid, a product of protein metabolism
3. Flexible mineral
4. Term of endearment (2 wds)
5. Spanish dish
6. Catch a glimpse of
7. Ace



8. Most impertinent
9. Very old
10. Advance
11. Granulated diamond
12. "Go on ..."
14. Succinct
17. Open, in a way
18. "The Joy Luck Club" author
22. Cheeky
23. Mischievous trick
24. Life of ___, 1940s radio show
25. Archetype
26. Small part in a movie
28. Cliffside dwelling
29. Butchers' offerings
30. Barely beats
35. Lacking courage
36. Aroma
39. Say again or in a new way
41. Eat or drink rapidly
42. Loose
45. Gold coins formerly used in Italy
46. Clear, as a disk
48. Ballpoint, e.g.
50. After-bath powder
51. Soon, to a bard
52. "La Scala di ___" (Rossini opera)
53. Be a monarch
54. Lento
55. Marienbad, for one
56. ___ v. Wade
57. Big ___ Conference

ANSWERS ON PAGE 18

That's ahead of the figures at this point last year. The Postal Service ended fiscal 2014 with a \$1.4 billion operating profit, which in turn was better than 2013.

Why the improving picture? After falling sharply during the worst recession in 80 years, mail revenue is stabilizing amid a gradually improving economy. Meanwhile, as people in Cold Spring and Minneapolis and elsewhere shop online, package revenue is skyrocketing, making the Internet a net positive and auguring well for the future.

There is red ink at the Postal Service, but it has nothing to do with the mail or the Internet or with normal business expenses. Rather, it stems from Washington politics. In 2006, a lame-duck Congress mandated that the Postal Service pre-fund future retiree health benefits. No other public agency or private company in the country has to pre-fund for even one year; the Postal Service must pre-fund 75 years into the future and pay for it all over a decade. That \$5.6 billion annual charge is the red ink.

The onerous and unfair pre-funding mandate created an artificial 'crisis' at the Postal Service - leading to the closing of post offices and mail-processing plants that has slowed the mail in rural areas, small towns and communities in general throughout the country.

Pre-funding is a political

problem that lawmakers created - and that they can and should address. Not only is the Postal Service critical to our economy and our recovery by facilitating commerce and offering businesses and residents universal and efficient service, it also is the centerpiece of a \$1.3 trillion national mailing industry that employs 7.5 million Americans in the private sector - including 171,077 in Minnesota.

If Congress fixes the pre-funding problem while strengthening the now-profitable postal net-

works, the Postal Service can continue to provide Americans and their businesses with the industrial world's most-affordable delivery network.

Fredric Rolando, president of the National Association of Letter Carriers, Washington D.C.

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		1	6		
7			2		
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Community Calendar

Wed., Sept. 30 - CentraCare Health - Paynesville invites you to attend a Lunch & Learn presentation from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Speakers will be Jane Monson and Todd Lemke, CentraCare Health, who will cover the topic of: Health Care Home: Is it right for you? Lunch & Learn is free, open to the public and no rsvp is necessary. A sack lunch and beverage will be provided. Enter door #19 located in the CCH-Paynesville hospital parking lot-presentation held in the Blakely Room. For questions contact DuDonne Andrie, Community Relations at 243-7903.

Thurs. & Fri., Oct. 1 & 2 - St. John the Baptist Parish, Collegeville Rummage Sale Thursday, October 1 from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Friday, October 2 from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the Parish Center on Fruit Farm Road, just west of St. John's University Campus.

Fri., Oct. 2 - St. John the Baptist Church of Collegeville Oktoberfest, German Dinner & Silent Auction Fundraiser. From 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. at St. John's Parish Center. 14241 Fruit Farm Road, St. Joseph - just west of St. John's University Campus.

Sat., Oct. 3 - St. John's Catholic Church 31st Annual Craft Fair, Swanville from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. 70+ exhibitors. Other attractions include cake walk, bake sale, country store and hot lunch served all day.

Sat., Oct. 3 - St. Martin Fire Department-Relief Association Fundraiser 36th Annual BBQ Ham Supper. Serving from 4:00 to 8:30 p.m. Live music by Dirt Road Prophets from 8:30 p.m. - 12:30 a.m. at St. Martin Parish Hall. No admission charge, meal tickets available at St. Martin businesses and from all firefighters.

Sat., Oct. 3 - 2015 Eden Valley-Watkins DECA 5K Color Run. Registration closes Thursday, September 24. 9:45 a.m. - Registration begins at Eden Valley Elementary School. 10:45 a.m. - Registration ends. 11:00 a.m. - 5K begins at Thielen Construction.

Sat., Oct. 3 - Evening for Life Banquet at Rockville Parish Center. 5:30pm Mass, 6:30pm Social, 6:45 Dinner. Speaker Mary Jo Ruhland. Spiritual adoption plus entertainment and door prizes. Sponsored by three local MCCL Chapters: Cold Spring/St. Nicholas, Richmond and Rockville area.

Sun., Oct. 4 - Sunday Brunch at Sts. Peter and Paul Parish Center in Richmond. Serving from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Fri., Oct. 9 - Swedish Meatball Dinner, 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at St. Boniface Parish Center, 501 Main Street, Cold Spring. Tickets available from members or at Peace Lutheran Church 1000 Red River Ave. N., Cold Spring.

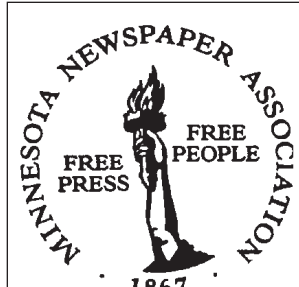
Sat., Oct. 10 - Koronis Nite Owls, Paynesville, will have Fall Colors Square Dance with Abe Maier calling from 7:30 to 10:00 at the Paynesville Elementary School. Mainstream dancing will begin at 7:30 and PLUS tips done during the dance. A pot luck lunch will follow the dance.

Sun., Oct. 11 - Euchre Party in Basement of St. James Church of Jacobs Prairie at 7:00 p.m. Lunch will be served. Door prizes given. Any cancellations will be announced on KASM and WJON radio stations.

Sat., Oct. 17 - St. Wendelin Parish, Luxemburg is sponsoring a roast beef supper from 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. at Mary Hall. Event also includes a raffle.

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Letters: This page is open to readers and can be used to provide a forum for comments on subjects of current and general interest. All letters to the editor must be signed and must include the writer's address and telephone number. Libelous letters will not be published. The Record reserves the right to edit all letters. Opinions expressed on this page do not necessarily represent those of the Record and its staff. News Articles, Classified and Display Advertising Deadline: Thursday at 3:00 p.m. to ensure placement in the following Tuesday's newspaper.



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