



# MAIL MATTERS NEWSLETTER

Compliments of Mail Unlimited, Winter Park, FL

Fall 2003

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Creative types - express yourselves!  
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## ZIP Code Turns 40

WASHINGTON - The ZIP code, that series of numbers we are all so familiar with, just marked it's 40th birthday in July.

Thanks to technology associated with the ZIP code, the cost of mailing a First-Class letter today, when adjusted for inflation and taxpayer subsidies, is the same as it was in 1963 when a First-Class stamp was five cents.

Mr. ZIP, the little stick figure character who used a letter and satchel to coax Americans into using ZIP Codes to move the mail faster and more efficiently, took his mission seriously. Within a year of his introduction, between a third and a half of America was using ZIP Codes. Today, virtually everyone uses ZIP Codes.

*...anyone can tell you what  
NASA stands for but how  
many people know that ZIP  
is an acronym for Zoning  
Improvement Plan?*

"Mr. ZIP helped to usher in the age of high technology," explained Postal Historian Meg Ausman. "He helped make the business of conducting commerce in America through the mail more efficient, reliable and cost-effective."

In 1963, the five-cent First-Class stamp only covered 80 percent of its own costs,

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## Postal Rates Frozen Until 2006!

After a dizzying and damaging three postal rate hikes in 18 months, you could almost hear mailers breathing a collective sigh of relief on April 23. That was the day President Bush signed the Postal Civil Service Retirement System Funding Reform Act of 2003, guaranteeing a freeze on postal rates for at least three years.

A financial review last fall uncovered that funding for a postal retirement plan was in far better shape than previously thought. Postmaster General Jack Potter said the review indicated that the postal service's liability to the account was \$5 billion, not the \$32 billion previously thought!

However, the contributions to the fund could not be reduced without an act of Congress authorizing such a move. "Without that legislative change, we will be

*continued on page 2*

## Did You Know....

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 141 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$65 billion, it is the world's leading provider of mail and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world's mail volume-some 203 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year and serves 7 million customers each day at its 40,000 retail locations nationwide.

### MAIL MATTERS

A quarterly publication of

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## Postage Rates *continued from page 1*

required to provide the Treasury with the higher level of funding in the coming years, which would necessitate a rate increase in 2004" Potter said.

Sure seemed like a no-brainer, but it wasn't as clear cut as it sounded since the change would, on paper, add to the federal budget deficit. But in the end, the bill sailed through both chambers, passing unanimously in the House and the Senate before being signed into law by the President.

"While consumers won't miss their almost annual trip to the post office for new stamps, this bill is especially important to those nonprofit organizations struggling to raise funds or disseminate information in this slumping economy," said Neal Denton, executive director of the Alliance for Nonprofit Mailers. Indeed, all mailers welcome this news.

## Mail Pushes the Envelope

Pizza-shaped mail? How about donuts ... or motorcycles?

These are just some of the items that will soon make their way to mailboxes near you. Well, replicas of them, that is. On August 10, the United States Postal Service launched Customized MarketMail™ (CMM), an advertising mail product recognizable from others by their eye-catching, novel shapes.

These distinctly different, literally-outside-the-box-shaped pieces will set their senders apart by visually communicating those mailers' products and services. The local ice cream parlor may appear all the more inviting to a potential customer who holds a model of the real treat that awaits.

"In the battle for audience attention, Customized MarketMail will allow business mailers to differentiate their products in the mailstream," said Nick Barranca, Vice President of Product Development for the Postal Service. "Within certain size, weight, and thickness limitations, Customized MarketMail can be virtually any shape and

design the mailer desires. CMM will let advertisers put their creativity to work, designing their mail pieces to deliver high impact, demand attention, and generate greater response rates."

As its name implies, Customized MarketMail must be prepared and mailed in special ways. Business mailers must have or obtain a Standard Mail permit, send a minimum of 200 pieces per mailing, but not necessarily per destination delivery unit, and dropship or deliver them to the ultimate destination facilities for handling. The postage rates for these distinctive mail pieces will be 57.4 cents for Regular Standard Mail, and 46 cents for Nonprofit Standard Mail. Sending individual pieces or depositing them in mail or collection boxes is not permitted. Mail pieces may be up to 12 inches high by 15 inches long by ¾ of an inch thick and weigh up to 3.3 ounces.

To learn more about the technical requirements for sending Customized MarketMail, log on to [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com), keywords Postal Bulletin, July 10, 2003, issue or call your Mail Unlimited representative.

### About Mail Matters

The goal of Mail Matters is to provide current information and money saving tips and strategies for any business that utilizes mail for marketing, direct sales, customer retention or communication.

You have received this newsletter because you are either an existing or previous customer of Mail Unlimited or Direct Response Marketing or have expressed an interest in our services. If we have mailed this to an incorrect address, you know someone who would like to be added to our mailing list or if you would prefer not to receive any further editions of this newsletter, please send an email to [info@mailunlimited.com](mailto:info@mailunlimited.com) with the appropriate information. If you prefer, you can fax the information to 407.657.6698.

## Zip Code *continued from page 1*

taxpayer subsidies covered the rest. The Post Office Department processed and delivered 68 billion pieces of mail to 188 million customers at less than 60 million addresses. Today's U.S. Postal Service earns its own way without taxpayer support for postal operations and delivers 203 billion pieces of mail to 291 million Americans at more than 141 million addresses.

And if that's not enough useful information for you, you can dazzle your friends at the next social gathering by being the only one in the room to know what ZIP stands for. Sure, anyone can tell you what NASA stands for but how many people know that ZIP is an acronym for Zoning Improvement Plan?

Mr. ZIP the cartoon figure was adopted by the Post Office Department as the trademark for the ZIP Code, which began on July 1, 1963. Faced with growing mail volumes, the Post Office developed the five-digit Zoning Improvement Plan code as a way to quickly sort mail and speed its delivery. The first digit in the ZIP Code indicates a general geographic area of the nation, starting with "0" in the eastern U.S. to "9" to represent areas in the western U.S. The next two numbers in the ZIP Code represent regional areas, and the final two numbers identify specific post offices or postal zones.

Ausman added that today's use of ZIP Codes extends far beyond the mailing industry. They are embedded into the way that businesses work and have become an integral element of the 911 emergency system that uses ZIP Codes as an aid in saving lives.

Mr. ZIP made his mark on American culture when he appeared in public service announcements, urging postal customers to use their five-digit ZIP Code. Actress Ethel Merman also helped out. She joined Mr. ZIP in introducing the ZIP Code by singing a public service announcement for television.

Mr. ZIP was based on an original design by Harold Wilcox, son of a letter carrier and a member of the Cunningham and Walsh advertising agency, for use by a New York bank in a bank-by-mail campaign. Wilcox's design was a child-like sketch of a postman delivering a letter. The figure was used only a few times then filed away. Later, AT&T acquired the design and made it available to the Post Office Department at no cost.

After the 1983 introduction of ZIP+4 (the four new numbers were street specific information), Mr. ZIP took a hiatus. His image was printed in the white area outside of the stamp image, known as the selva, but that practice ended in January 1986.

So where is he now?

Currently undergoing a renaissance, the Mr. ZIP character is being updated by the Postal Service for licensing and other purposes, extending his cultural icon status to a new generation of Americans. "We assure you that we still love our Mr. ZIP," says Pamela York, manager of USPS Licensing. "He may have been out of sight in recent years, but certainly not forgotten. We expect Mr. ZIP to make an appearance in the near future in some unexpected places. As the Postal Service has changed in the past 40 years, expect a new look - and outlook - for Mr. ZIP in coming months," said York.

## Thanks To You!

Mail Unlimited has continued to grow throughout this year at an unprecedented rate. We want to thank you, our valued customers, for continuing to turn to us for your mailing and fulfillment services. We especially appreciate all the referrals you have sent our way, knowing they will receive the most friendly, reliable mailing services available.

To accommodate our growth, we have recently added a few more terrific people to our staff to help serve you even better. We hope you get a chance to meet them soon.

Richard Pilhorn; Rich is a Florida native who had left the area for a career with the Chrysler Corporation after graduating from UCF. Rich, his wife Jill, and their 2 year old daughter Maggie recently moved back to Florida to be closer to family. Rich has taken the position of Sales and Customer Service Manager. Rich likes to get away for a round of golf when he can.

Heidi Walker; Heidi is our newest outside sales rep. She is new to the area, but not to the industry. Heidi has helped clients plan and execute successful mailings for the past year and half in Omaha, NE. She enjoys golf, boating, and is looking forward to learning how to surf.

Diane Parish; Diane was born and raised in Ohio. She has been living in Florida since 1994 and "loves it." Married with 4 children ages 12-29, she enjoys hand-crafting unique soaps, cooking and entertaining, and long walks with her husband at night. Diane is standing by to serve you as a Customer Service Representative.



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## Mail Piece Endorsements

*Return Service Requested*, *Address Service Requested*, these are just a couple of examples of what the Postal Service refers to as mail piece endorsements. When used properly, they can be a very helpful way of tracking the deliverability of your mail and keeping track of your customer's and prospect's current mailing addresses. But beware, they could also be quite costly. Following are some of the more common endorsements and associated fees. If you have any questions regarding endorsements, just give us a call at 407-657-9333.

Endorsement and USPS Action	Priority Mail and First-Class Mail	Standard (Bulk) Mail
<b>ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED</b> <i>Forwarding and return. New separate address notification provided.</i>		
Months 1 through 12: mailpiece forwarded; separate notice of new address provided (manual \$0.60, electronic \$0.20 each)	Forward at no charge	Forward at no charge
Months 13 through 18: mailpiece returned with new address attached	Returned at no charge	Single piece rate x 2.472 and rounded up to the next whole cent.
After 18 months or <i>if undeliverable at any time</i> : mailpiece returned with reason for nondelivery attached.	Returned at no charge	Single piece rate x 2.472 and rounded up to the next whole cent.
<b>RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED</b> <i>No forwarding, only return. New address notification provided.</i>		
Mailpiece returned with new address or reason for nondelivery attached.	No charge.	Appropriate single-piece First Class or Priority Mail rate charged.
<b>FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED</b> <i>Forwarding and return. New address notification provided only with return.</i>		
Months 1 through 12: mailpiece forwarded.	Forward at no charge	
Months 13 through 18: mailpiece returned with new address attached	Single piece rate x 2.472 and rounded up to the next whole cent.	
After 18 months or <i>if undeliverable at any time</i> : mailpiece returned with reason for nondelivery attached.	Single piece rate x 2.472 and rounded up to the next whole cent.	