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Computer mail lists replace Dallas with college

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

When ZIP (Zone Improvement Program) codes were set up more than three decades ago, Dallas was designated 18612.

When the extended ZIP codes (ZIP + 4) were added to expedite mail delivery, specific addresses received their own ZIP codes.

It sounds simple and logical, but apparently it isn't.

In the eyes of computers handling nationwide mailing lists, there are two choices of where to send the huge volume of mail coming to ZIP code 18612 - either the Dallas Post Office or College Misericordia.

For example, the mailing address of *The Dallas Post* is P.O. Box 366, Dallas, PA 18612-0366.

But recently, a letter addressed to *The Dallas Post*, P.O. Box 366, Clg Misrcorda, PA 18612-0366 appeared in the mailbox. (Clg Misrcorda is evidently computer speak for College Misericordia on Lake Street.)

"I don't really know how these things get out," said Dallas postmaster Ray Cecconi, referring the question to customer service representative Carl Orbon.

"I've heard a lot of stories, but never something like this, with the college's name," Orbon said. "As long as the extended ZIP is correct, we'll deliver it."

Orbon said that the area master mailing list, which is updated almost daily, is at the Wilkes-Barre Post Office, which handles the entire region's mail.

"I've heard of small towns like Larksville, which uses Kingston's 18704 ZIP code, being called Kingston or Wilkes-Barre, but never anything in Dallas," he continued.

Six calls to the company, National Association of the Self-Employed (NASE) in Plano, Texas which originally sent the letter, weren't much help either.

One telephone number had been disconnected. Operators at two other toll-free numbers didn't have a clue about who supplies

the mailing lists.

NASE sells health insurance and wanted to know if we were interested in buying some.

Finally, NASE customer service representative Shanda Lewis said that the computerized mailing lists come from the Chamber of Commerce, but she wasn't sure how well they had been updated.

"We don't sell computerized lists to anyone," said Sarah Shaw, assistant systems administrator at the Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce. "We will sell lists of members on paper to other local dues-paying Chamber members, but certainly won't re-

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Quake closeup Cathy Flick's mother was at epicenter

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

When Kunkle resident Cathy Flick first saw news footage of the earthquake which hit California early in the morning of January 17, she didn't realize that its epicenter was less than 2 1/2 miles from her mother's and stepfather's home.

It wasn't until several hours later, when scientist announced the epicenter's location in Northridge, that she became worried.

"It really shook me," she said. "I was glued to CNN all day, searching for familiar landmarks. I knew some of the streets that the TV newscasters had named."

When footage of the fires was broadcast, Cathy got out her map of Northridge and started to pinpoint the locations of the scenes of devastation that she saw.

An apartment building which collapsed, killing 16 people, was less than 11/2 miles from her family's home.

Several hours later her stepfather's son-in-law, John Aalto, who lives 18 miles from Northridge, called her.

"He sounded rather shaken, but wanted us to know that they were all right," Flick said. Aalto had driven to their parents' home after unsuccessfully trying to call them, carefully threading his way through back roads around fires, buckled streets and collapsed freeway bridges.

Flick's mother and stepfather, Myrtle and Wally Thomson, later sent photos of the damage to their large ranch home and their written recollections of the earthquake.

The Thomsons' first impression of the quake was: "The house and we occupants could not possibly survive such shaking. We desperately clung to each other and wondered if this was the end."

"All about was a roaring noise from the house, its contents and the very ground itself. The quaking finally stopped but the roaring noise continued, or appeared to."

Describing the neighbors pouring into their yard from all directions, hugging one another, some crying, they continued: "The aftershocks were severe and incessant. It was two hours before dawn. The weather was warm, balmy and crystal clear - like California was mocking us."

Someone had brought along a radio, but first reports of the damage were "incoherent." The wail of sirens came from all directions.



WHAT A MESS - Wally and Myrtle Thomson's kitchen was a jumbled mess of spilled food and utensils after the 6.6 earthquake centered in Northridge, California, where they live. He described the experience in a letter to his stepdaughter, Cathy Flick, and sent several photographs of the destruction.

Thomson described how he had run back into the house between aftershocks to disconnect the gas and water lines to the water heater, which was making a hissing sound.

Returning to the front yard, he saw a friend who lived nearby stumble out of her car. Her townhouse and 15 others had just burned down from a gas pipe explosion. She had lost

everything. Another family was searching the neighborhood for their dog, which had run away when the quake started.

People started backing their cars from garages in case they collapsed during the aftershocks, or if they might need them to leave in a hurry later. Cars were also a "relatively safe place to sit" while waiting for daylight or the next aftershock.

When the Thomsons finally went back into their home after daylight to survey the damage, they found a 2,000 year-old Roman vase shattered, the stereo and CD collection buried under "a mountain of books" and all the pictures fallen from the walls to the floor.

All of the rooms were trashed. "The kitchen was ankle deep in broken glass, syrup, molasses, soy sauce, spices, pancake flour, utensils and coffee. Closets were a mixture of fallen clothes, broken glass and emptied boxes. The computer and printer were tumbled and the three bookcases put out an avalanche of books papers, photos and magazines."

They joked about "dish-washer safe" dishes, which ironically had been among the few to survive the earthquake.

In the garage they met a similar scene: "Metal shelves had dumped tools, insecticides, paint cans, golf clubs onto the floor in a grotesque array."

They had lost all utilities. A new concrete roof had been shattered in six places, with roof tiles lying all over the yard. The garage's front corner had sustained major damage, with the brick veneer split in several places, the frame split open and the beam over the door threatening to fall.

Two of the three block walls surrounding their property leaned dangerously; one later toppled.

See QUAKE, pg 14

Quake quotes

Wally Thomson described the January 17 California earthquake in a letter to his stepdaughter Cathy Flick. Here are excerpts from his letter.

"All about was a roaring noise from the house, its contents and the very ground itself. The quaking finally stopped but the roaring noise continued, or appeared to."

"The aftershocks were severe and incessant. It was two hours before dawn. The weather was warm, balmy and crystal clear - like California was mocking us."

"The kitchen was ankle deep in broken glass, syrup, molasses, soy sauce, spices, pancake flour, utensils and coffee. Closets were a mixture of fallen clothes, broken glass and emptied boxes."

"We spent the afternoon sitting in our backyard in superb weather. Every so often our house would shake from the aftershocks, some of them over 5.0 (on the Richter scale)."

"Chimneys down, apartments without walls, ambulances, fire engines, total confusion. A pall of acrid smoke hung over the valley."

"We were horrified to hear it called the Northridge Earthquake."

"The apartment house where 16 died was only 1.4 miles southeast of us, just across from our post office."

"The major quake area has been determined to be a square 10 miles on a side. We are right in the middle of that square."

"There must be 100,000 people in the same shape we are, maybe more. There may be 10,000 a lot worse off than we, including the dead, the injured and the homeless."

"It seems that everyone we know is carrying some psychological scars from the quake - probably ones that they will always have."

75-year-old busted for having heroin

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

According to the Pennsylvania State Police Wyoming Barracks, Forest Habblet, 75, of Chase Road, Shavertown, was arrested February 11 after a police raid on his home netted 123 bags of heroin, 529 "unknown pills" and more than \$9,800 in cash.

He was arraigned before District Magistrate Hendrak and sent to the Luzerne County Prison in default of \$20,000 bail, police said.

A preliminary hearing has not yet been scheduled.

According to records in the office of the Luzerne County Clerk of Courts, Habblet had previously been arrested in May, 1989, and convicted for sale of prescription drugs with intent to deliver and delivery of a controlled substance.

He was sentenced to three to

23 months in the Luzerne County Prison on the weekend program and paid a \$1,000 fine and court costs.

He was placed on six months' probation at the end of his sentence, according to court records.

He had been also arrested in February, 1990, and pleaded guilty to possession of prescription drugs and paraphenalia and possession of controlled substances with the intent to deliver, according to court records.

After that arrest, he was sentenced to two to 12 months in the Luzerne County Prison and ordered to pay court costs.

Pennsylvania State Police Trooper David M. Hahn, assisted by the Troop P Vice and Narcotics Unit and Jackson Township assistant chief of police Jerry Leedock, investigated the case.

Cabinet maker asks for zoning change

By GRACE R. DOVE
Post Staff

A Harveys Lake custom kitchen maker who has repeatedly denied being engaged in manufacturing has requested a zoning hearing February 22 at 7 p.m. for a variance to operate a manufacturing business.

Mark Sopp, owner of Creative Rooms on Route 415, has asked for a use variance and permission to operate a business which sells and manufactures custom kitchen cabinets and counter tops in a designated C-1 (commercial) area.

The zoning hearing board had decided November 30, 1993, after a hearing November 11, 1993, that Sopp was manufacturing in the section of the building which he leases from Joseph Paglianite.

He was given 60 days to change

the type of work done at his shop, so that no cutting, sizing or sanding would be done there.

Codes enforcement officer Paul Grimes ordered Sopp to stop work at his shop after he saw uncut and unsized wood, saws, sanders and fresh sawdust on the premises during an inspection of the shop January 27.

Grimes told Sopp in a letter dated January 27 that he was violating the zoning hearing board's order to stop manufacturing.

Sopp replied to Grimes in a letter dated January 31 that "most of the cutting and sizing is now being done at another location. It is not realistic to assume that no cutting and finishing will not be done as it is part of the assembly

See ZONE CHANGE, pg 14

Winter Games

No, not the Olympics in Lillehammer, but area athletes have done well in the Keystone Games at Montage Mountain. Page 9.

New fields

may be in store in Dallas. Page 2.

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