

BUSY: ‘That little thing can cost me an hour or more a day sometimes’

Continued from Page 1A

The internet has greatly changed the holiday delivery experience in the 18 years Barton has been delivering mail, she said. People do send fewer Christmas cards through the mail, but packages have increased dramatically.

“Ten years ago I had 10 to 15 (a day) and now there are hundreds,” she said.

According to information on the USPS website, Dec. 17-23 is usually their busiest delivery week. They recommend shipping USPS Ground Delivery packages by Dec. 14 for the best chance of having them arrive by Christmas, and sending priority and first-class mail by Dec. 20 at the latest.

One thing people can do to help, Barton said, is to make sure the area in front of their roadside mail box is clear of snow, garbage cans, cars and other obstructions so that carriers can pull up



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Mail carrier Diane Barton attempts to put a parcel in a mailbox Thursday on Southeast Ninth Court in Hermiston. Many packages are too large for contemporary mailboxes and Barton will have to deliver those items to the residences on foot.

and reach their arm through the window instead of parking and getting out.

“That’s huge for us,” she said. “That little thing can cost me an hour or more a

day sometimes.”

Barton said the salary and benefits package she gets

through the U.S. Postal Service was “life-changing” for her family after she switched from working two minimum-wage jobs.

She said she loves getting out and meeting people, and over a decade on the same route has become very familiar with her customers and their preferences. In some cases, she said, she is the only person an elderly homeowner will talk to all day. She even follows up when customers who are usually waiting eagerly for her don't show up at the mailbox.

"It's my watch. I feel it's part of my duty to take care of people," she said.

A changing organization

Changes will likely be coming to the U.S. Postal Service. The organization has been losing money for the past decade, and on Tuesday the Treasury Department released a report with

recommendations to make it more sustainable.

The report states that online shopping has increased package volume but email has decreased letter volume, making the agency's business model and rate structure outdated.

“Although the USPS must still serve all citizens and businesses in the country, its goal with respect to commercial mailers and shippers must be to optimize long-term revenue based on market principles, rather than to ensure access to a rate-regulated, uniform government service,” the report read.

Recommendations include exploring new sources of revenue, increasing the agency's flexibility in pricing and looking for ways to reduce operating costs. The Treasury Department did not recommend privatizing the postal service, which has been discussed in recent years.

QUILT: Grover worked as a reporter, photographer for the EO in 1950s

Continued from Page 1A

After the *East Oregonian* published a patriotic poem written by Grover, she caught the attention of a commanding officer at the air base, who made her a civilian aide.

At just 19 years old, Grover was suddenly trusted to relay coded messages about troop movements.

Grover said she sent the message that transferred the Doolittle Raiders from Pendleton to South Carolina for further training, although she didn't know what the coded content of the message meant. Within a few months, Lt. Col. James Doolittle would lead his group on the United States' first bombing raid of the Japanese home islands.

Grover worked at the Pendleton Air Base from 1942 to 1943 before she

transferred to an airfield in Spokane, where she remained through the duration of World War II.

She tried joining a women's auxiliary unit that flew planes in non-combat situations, but the war ended before she was accepted.

Anita Zimmerly of Quilts of Valor was at the Pendleton Air Museum to present Grover with her honorary quilt.

Zimmerly said the local chapter has been inactive after their leader suddenly died earlier this year, but the group is taking steps to reorganize and resume awarding veterans with homemade quilts.

There was some question about whether the nonprofit could award a quilt to a civilian, but when she found out that Quilts of Valor had made a donation to civilian workers at the Dover

Air Force Base mortuary in Delaware, the group decided Grover was deserving.

"We don't do it for the glory," Zimmerly said. "But for the smiles."

Grover smiled often as she recounted how she helped the Army sell its assets once the war ended before returning to school to complete her education and pursuing careers in journalism and academia.

She was working as a reporter and photographer for the *East Oregonian* in the 1950s when her college beau unexpectedly stopped in Pendleton to visit.

The pair had lost contact with each other during the war, and he had since moved on to work in the insurance business.

"He told me, 'I always wanted to marry you,'" she said. "We never made it that far."



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

An ID pin sits on the lapel of the uniform that Dorys Grover wore during World War II. The uniform is part of a display at the Pendleton Air Museum.

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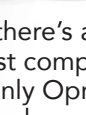




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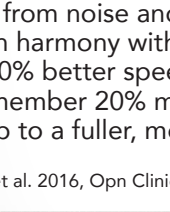
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* Le Goff et al. 2016, Opn Clinical Evidence White Paper, Oticon, Inc.



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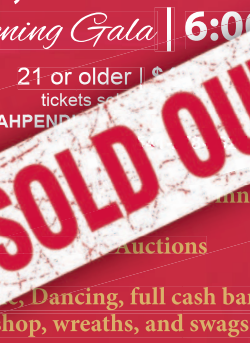
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