

Mailing a letter just got more expensive, and for the second time this year

By MELISSA CROCKETT MESKE
macmeske@ibjonline.com

Price increases first announced by the U.S. Postal Service in April 2023 are scheduled to go into effect on July 9.

The Forever stamp, intended to be “good forever” as first-class postage, will now cost 66 cents a piece, reflecting a 3-cent increase from its previous price of 63 cents.

Earlier this year, in January 2023, the cost to send this same 1-ounce letter and “put a stamp on it” had just increased from 60 cents to 63 cents.

In addition to the increased cost of 66 cents for first-class postage, other increases include:

- Letters (metered 1-ounce): 63 cents, up from 60 cents
- Domestic postcards: 51 cents, up from 48 cents
- International postcards: \$1.50, up from \$1.45
- International letters: \$1.50, up from \$1.45

The USPS was also seeking price adjustments for Special Services products, including Certified Mail, Post Office Box rental fees, money order fees and the cost to purchase insurance when mailing an item, according to the official announcement.

Also noted in this announcement as to a “why” behind this second round of 2023 increases: “As operating expenses fueled by inflation continue to rise and the effects of a previously defective pricing model are still being felt, these price adjustments are needed to provide the Postal Service with much needed revenue to achieve the financial stability sought by its Delivering for America 10-year plan.”

In April, the Postal Regulatory Commission was expected to review and approve the price increases before they took effect. They had already been approved by the Governors of the USPS.

Nashville’s GDB celebrates state passing of ‘PaintCare bill’

By TODD MARVER
tmarver@nashnews.net

GDB celebrated Illinois passing legislation that allows consumers to have easier access to return paint at an event at its Nashville facility on Monday, June 12. The Paint Stewardship Act would allow residents to drop off unused paint to specified locations free of charge.

“Now with Illinois passing this legislation, I think it is the best thing that has happened for our state. We’re looking forward to it,” GDB CEO Sanjeev Bagaria said. “Today, 25 percent of the population has the ability to return leftover paint.”

Bagaria explained what GDB does in paint recycling. He said GDB takes raw materials, which are used in paint recycling.

“Any company that makes raw material to manufacture paint, you will always have something that is not up to spec. Any material that has old age or is discontinued, you have two options. You can reuse, recycle or it will go for disposal,” he said.

As far as paint manufacturers, Bagaria said GDB has several plants in the US and should there be any product that is not conforming to the buying customers, GDB will fill those.

“There are times when a brand is discontinued or if there is any type of business change, we take those products,” he said.

Bagaria said there are retailers who have very liberal return policies where you can return the can if you’re not satisfied. He said they get sold for a low price, but not everything gets sold in the stores, and GDB sells this to Walmart.

“The leftover paints at Walmart stores get to our distribution centers. We have millions of gallons in the US of leftover paint. This paint that could be put to good use ends up in landfill. In America, 80 million gallons of paint if they do not have a good solution may end up in landfill,” he said.

Bagaria said one gallon of paint if it goes into landfill has the po-



State Rep. Charlie Meier (R-Okawville) takes a tour of the GDB International Paint Recycling facility located in Nashville, Washington County, Ill. (Photo courtesy State Rep. Charlie Meier)

tential to contaminate water for 50 people throughout the year.

“Imagine when 70 to 80 million gallons of paint goes to landfill. We have handled more than 1.2 billion pounds of paint and raw materials since our inception,” he said.

The legislation had been co-sponsored by State Rep. Charlie Meier (R-Okawville), who represents the 109th District including portions of Bond, Clinton, Madison, St. Clair, and Washington counties.

“This legislation will require paint manufacturers to submit to the Illinois EPA a plan for establishing a used paint collection program within 12 months,” Rep. Meier stated. “Consumers will now be able to recycle or dispose of their unwanted paint safely and also in an environmentally-friendly way.”

Under the Paint Stewardship Act, manufacturers would pay a fee to the IEPA to set up a paint collection site, service or event, allowing residents to



GDB’s CEO Sanjeev Bagaria speaks at the celebration event held at the facility on June 12 to mark the passage of the Paint Stewardship Act, or “PaintCare bill.” (Todd Marver/Nashville News)

drop off unused paint to specific locations free of charge. These collection sites will be within a 15-mile radius for 90 percent of Illinois residents.

• Todd Marver is a member of the Nashville News editorial team, part of the Better Newspapers Inc. media family.

I-270

Continued from Page 1

The \$496.2 million joint IDOT-MoDOT project will replace the bridge with two structures that have wider shoulders that can accommodate the eventual expansion of I-270 to three lanes in each direction. A companion \$35.4 million Missouri Department of Transportation project will reconstruct the Riverview Drive interchange just west of the bridge.

Construction started last winter and is anticipated to wrap up in 2026. Additional information can be found by visiting the project website at www.270mrb.com.

Director Patrick McKenna with the Missouri Department of Transportation said, “For decades, there has been underinvestment in infrastructure throughout the nation and throughout our region. Through the leadership of Governor [Mike] Parson [of Missouri] and Governor Pritzker, for the entire time they have been in office, both have helped to express investment where it’s needed...It makes things better, it makes businesses thrive, and it moves freight through the region and vitally for the nation.”

“It’s incredibly important we maintain and improve our state’s infrastructure. The Chain of Rocks Bridge plays a critical role in connecting those coming

to and from the Metro East and Greater St. Louis Area,” noted Senator Erica Harriss (R-Glen Carbon). “As traffic counts have more than doubled since the construction of the current bridges, there is a critical need to replace the bridges and improve the overall safety for both passenger and commercial traffic.”

Both Missouri and Illinois continue to coordinate on long-term plans to improve capacity and increase reliability of I-270 by adding a third lane in each direction, extending as far east as Illinois 157. In IDOT’s current multi-year improvement program, \$75 million is identified courtesy of Rebuild Illinois for an additional lane between the river and just east of St. Thomas Road, a project that includes the reconstruction of the Illinois 3 interchange.

Rebuild Illinois (RBI) is investing a total of \$33.2 billion over six years into the state’s aging transportation system, creating jobs and promoting economic growth. Its investment plans touch on all transportation modes: Roads and bridges, transit, waterways, freight and passenger rail, aviation, and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. To learn more, visit online at <https://idot.click/Rebuild-Illinois>.

Midwest-centric Better Newspapers Inc., has expanded into radio, purchasing five stations

By ZACHARY DAUM
mascheraald@heraldpubs.com

Midwest-centric Better Newspapers, Inc. is expanding into radio broadcasting with the purchasing of five radio stations in Missouri from Ozark Radio Network.

These stations include country radio station KKDY of West Plains, Mo. (102.5), classic country station KUKU of Willow Springs, Mo. (100.3), “The Fox 96.9” KUPH of Mountain View, Mo., classic rock station “Q-94” KSPQ of West Plains, Mo. and News-talk KWPM (1450.) The deal also includes the West Plains, Mo.-licensed AM translator K286CK at 105.1, which simulcasts KWPM.

Based in Mascoutah, Ill., Better Newspapers Inc., led by Publisher Greg Hoskins, is a family-owned company that now operates 35 publications in Illinois and Missouri. Hoskins purchased his first newspaper in Mascoutah in

1991, forming Better Newspapers, Inc.

Publications in the Southwestern Illinois region include the Illinois Business Journal, Troy Times-Tribune, Mascoutah Herald, Scott AFB Flier, and the Fairview Heights Tribune.

Ozark Radio Network, run by husband and wife, Tom and Shawn Marhefka, set out to continue the legacy started by Shawn’s grandfather, Robert Neathery Sr. in 1947. Hoskins will see this legacy continue.

This is Hoskins’ first foray into radio and he is both optimistic and excited to see his stations thrive. “We hope to continue the traditions of the incredibly capable staff already present at our radio stations and hold strong to the ideals of journalistic integrity,” said Hoskins.

• Zachary Daum is the managing editor at Herald Publications, part of the Better Newspapers Inc. media family.