I can’t believe that another year has passed! What a year it has been for Kansas State University Central Mail Services. I normally send out a newsletter this time of year, but the time for a newsletter snuck up too fast for me, so since I felt it was too important to communicate to the campus community before more time lapsed, I decided to send out what I am terming “notes.”

With a new year pending, I often reflect on the accomplishments and challenges of the year and the vision for the upcoming year.

I always try to start with the positives, so let me fill you in on some of the accomplishments. We have been successful in contracting one service for international shipments that we did not offer before. DHL is a Germany based company that offers fast, inexpensive, and trackable shipments for international shipments. Since DHL is a German based company, its reach in much of the world exceeds that of other vendors and this has been a valuable tool in ensuring timely deliveries of international shipments.

One of the most exciting things that happened to CMS this year was an award received by our very own Anne Murphy. In July, Anne was recognized as the Outstanding Team Member of the year by the National Association of College and University Mail Services. This is the second year in a row that K-State CMS has received national recognition amongst its college and university colleagues, consisting of more than 400 members from across the nation!

Our employees work hard to give you the best possible service according to your needs and give your shipment the individual attention it deserves. To let you know what our employees did for the fiscal year 2014, we sent out more than 925,000 pieces of mail and 14,000 shipments, totaling more than $617,000 and $98,000 respectively. On the incoming side, we handled more than 2.6 million pieces of federal mail and more than 677,000 pieces of campus mail. Our Contract Postal Unit generated more than $164,000 in sales last fiscal year. We secured a long range contract with our presort vendor, so that we can continue to send out your first class letters at a discounted rate. This presort service saved more than $24,000 in first class postage last year, which translates to less money for us, but more money that you can keep in your department!

We have developed a mission, vision, and values statements for CMS and launched them this year. To peruse these statements, you can go to: [http://www.k-state.edu/facilities/cms/mission.html](http://www.k-state.edu/facilities/cms/mission.html). We strive for the best customer service possible and want to earn your confidence and we believe one way we can do that is to have a mission statement that envelops those philosophies and a vision statement that strives toward achievable goals.

We have developed and implemented two new electronic information sheets for your use; one for domestic shipments and one for international shipments. Since there have been some logistical issues with the implementation of these forms, the paper version of the form is still available for departments to use. Please be sure to include your e-mail address with all your information sheets, because in an effort to reduce paper use, we are now e-mailing all information sheets back to the departments with the tracking
and pricing information, instead of sending hard copies through campus mail. These and all other CMS forms are available on our Website at: [http://www.k-state.edu/facilities/cms/forms.html](http://www.k-state.edu/facilities/cms/forms.html).

We had three successful Mail Preparation 101 classes attended by 26 people, most of which were trained when our “new neighbors” moved in from Topeka, the Kansas Department of Agriculture. Speaking of Mail Prep 101, this is an early plug for the next class. The next Mail Prep 101 class is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, February 10, 2015 in Room 226 of the Student Union. I am looking at developing at a Mail Prep 201 class, with more material to hopefully help you in your mail and shipment processing, so stay tuned for that.

Speaking of upcoming events, this is a good segue to address other future events. These first are things that you should be aware of because, although we have no control over them, they have the potential to greatly impact shipping prices. By the first week of January, both UPS and FedEx will have an extra charge called dimensional weighing, or as the industry calls it, “dim weight.” Now, the charge in itself is not new, but how these vendors are figuring it will be different. Whereas dim weight was figured for oversized or unusual size, it will now be figured for any box that is over a 6” x 6” x 6”, which is not very big. Essentially what it means for you is that the size of the box matters. One example I’ve seen has been where the vendors talk about shipping a teddy bear. The teddy bear is light, but in order not to ruin it, you may want to ship it in a bigger box. Well, even though the box is only one pound, it will be rated like it is a 7 pound box just because of the size of the box. Hopefully, this will not affect your overall prices, because as usual, CMS rates shop for you, and because the USPS is not using dimensional prices, we can still give you the best deal to fit your needs. Speaking of the USPS, one thing they are doing is going to mandatory use of the Intelligent Mail parcel barcode, or IMpb. The IMpb will be required for all parcels that are being shipped at a Commercial Base rate, which is the rate that CMS does use for all parcels shipped through the USPS. We have been told that our parcel barcodes do meet IMpb requirements by our vendor, but we are waiting verification from the USPS that our barcodes qualify.

Other avenues of sales, potential sales, or marketing tools that I have been pursuing for the Contract Postal Unit include the sale of Ready Post products for use in personal shipping and the ability to use Cat Cash. On the CMS side, for departments, I have been pursuing using pictures on your envelopes (to the immediate left of the meter strip) to give your envelope a little extra pizzazz. I will keep you updated as to when these pursuits can become reality.

I want to thank everyone for their support of both Central Mail Services and the Contract Postal Unit. It is truly because of you that we exist and we aim to provide the best service possible. If you have any issues with our carriers or service, please feel free to call or e-mail me directly at jayh@ksu.edu or 2-7751. I hope you have a wonderful holiday season!

Jay