

Post office closing at noon both Christmas, New Year's Eves

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

Counter lines have been steady and sometimes long, but people's attitudes are good even though there is some waiting.

That's according to Imperial Postmaster Jerry Lines, who expects the staff here to remain very busy at their jobs until Christmas.

As predicted, Monday this week proved to be the busiest day for incoming packages, and outgoing mail was also strong.

Lines did not have specific numbers but it was an increase over last year.

"It was very, very heavy," Lines said of the incoming package volume.

It was bigger than last year, Lines said, reflecting consumers' increased strong online shopping.

While Monday's strong outgoing mail volume may have hinted of people getting their Christmas cards finished over the weekend, he countered by saying the post office here was still selling a lot of Christmas stamps this week.

For delivery before Christmas, Lines recommends packages and cards be mailed no later than Friday this week. However, if they are going out of state, today (Thursday) should be the goal to get them in the mail by First Class and be certain of a Dec. 25 arrival.

People can squeeze in a couple extra days if they use Express Mail, Lines said. That guarantees a one to two-day delivery, but it's going to cost more. If using Express Mail, packages and cards should be at the post office on Saturday at the latest, he recommends.

To avoid the rush at the Imperial Post Office, Lines said the slowest time is between 9 and 10 a.m. The lines are pretty steady now between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., he said.

Two people are at the counter most of the time during the 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. hours, except from 12 noon to 1 p.m.

Noon closings

Some of Lines' recommended mailing timelines are due to where Christmas and New Year's Day fall on the calendars this year, in the middle of the week on Wednesday.

In addition, the Imperial Post Office and most in this area are closing at 12 noon on Dec. 24 and 31. Lines aid he wasn't sure if the noon closings were nationwide, but most of the post offices in this area will be closing at the noon hour.