

# Mail addressed to Mr. Santa never gets to the North Pole

By Peggy Polacek

Dear Santa:

I've been good all year (I didn't even pull down the goal post at football games!) Please send me tickets to Florida and the Orange Bowl, a 4.0 grade point average for this semester and all the right classes at the right times next semester.

Thank you very much,  
Virginia  
a typical student

If this letter reminds UNL students that Christmas is near, they better hurry and mail their letter to the North Pole for Santa Claus.

Actually, letters addressed to Santa never quite reach the great white north but instead, they find their way to Linda Brownson, the postmaster's secretary at the U.S. Post Office in downtown Lincoln.

Letters to the jolly old man arrive throughout the year, with a general increase of letters after the Thanksgiving weekend, Brownson said.

Three to 10 letters arrive each day during the holiday season.

Letters arrive at the post office, and are delivered to Brownson's desk. The letters are addressed to: "Santa, Mr. Santa, Santa Claus and Santa Closs." Sometimes letters even are addressed to the North Pole or North Pole, USA.

Brownson opens and scans the letters to see if anything of value is in them.

If she finds something valuable in the envelope, she then returns it to the sender.

For all those who believe Santa answers the letters, they better stop reading now because he doesn't. Brownson said several people contacted her to offer their services to answer the letters for Santa.

People or organizations pick up the letters from Brownson and send their replies from Santa. The groups pay for postage on the letters.

An organization even expressed interest in helping children whose letters sounded as if they were needy, she said.

Papers with only a picture drawn and a name are often the sole contents of envelopes, Brownson said. Sometimes the letter may only be scribbles sent from children too young to write.

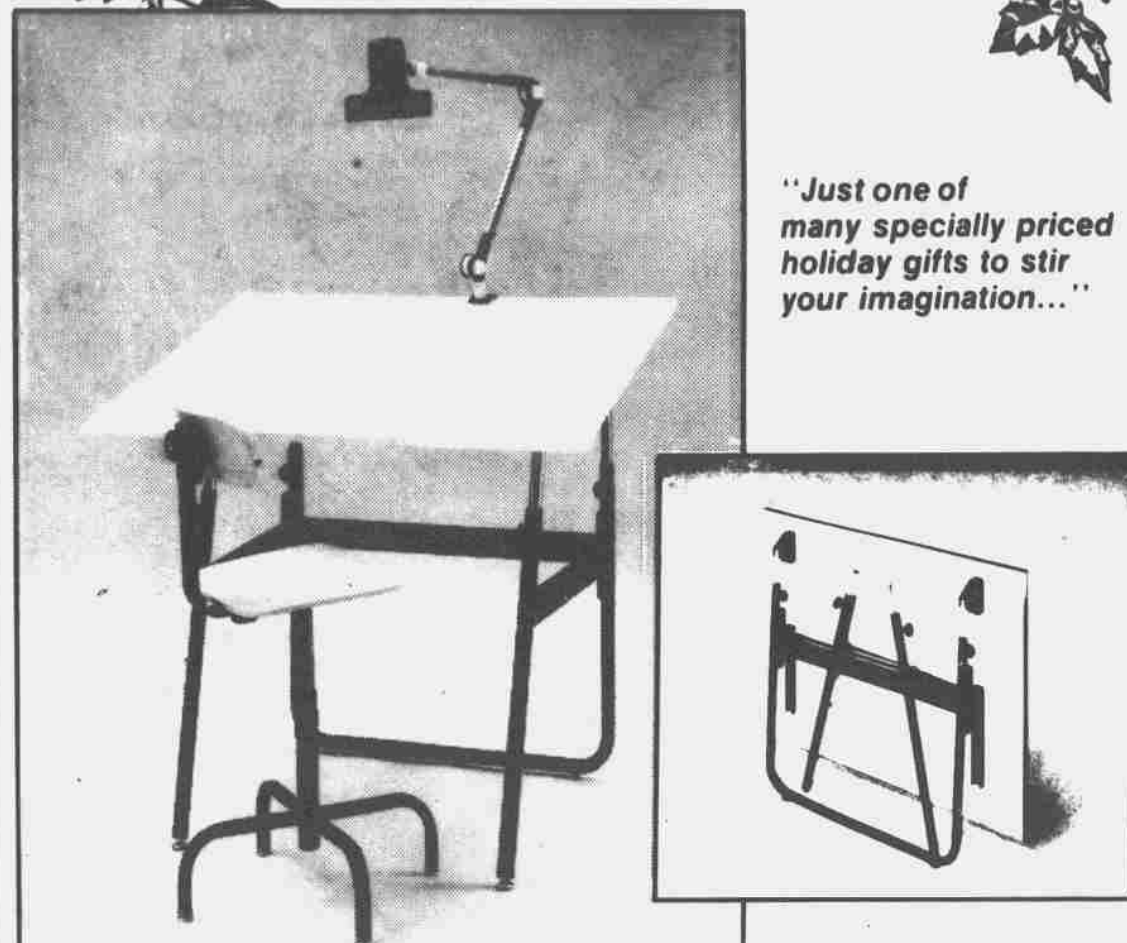
One child sent a notebook sheet full of toys he wanted that included their name and page number in a catalog, she said.

Another child, perhaps a video addict, listed the names and prices of his presents: Donkey Kong, \$59.97; Pac-Man, \$59.97, etc.

No matter what the letters ask for, there is always the usual please and thank-you, and the love and kisses signature, she said. After all, love is what the Christmas season is all about. And if love works for those kids - umm, Santa, I love you, too, and please just leave the Orange Bowl tickets under the tree. I promise to send you a postcard!

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# Check list helps students countdown to Christmas

Heavy sigh . . . the end of dead week is nigh. Those of you aren't dead yet will be by the end of finals week. But before you open that calculus book, before you study that Spanish, before you doze off during that philosophy lecture, look at your calendar. Christmas is just 15 days away.

The day has a tendency to sneak up on students who are preoccupied with things like grades. Don't let the fast approach of the Big Day add to your already-adequate pressure. Santa doesn't give finals.

If you do, however, find yourself a little behind on those Christmas preparations, perhaps this check list will help you get into the holiday spirit.

**Dec. 11** - It's Friday, it's the end of dead week, it's time to give yourself an early Christmas present - take a long winter's nap.

**Dec. 12** - How about some Christmas shopping on the last Saturday of the semester. Be sure to put on your armor -

the crowds will be full of spunky people who have just woken up from their naps.

**Dec. 13** - Many local Churches will be having Christmas programs today. How about stopping by? A few prayers before finals never hurt anyone.

**Dec. 14** - Today's the day to start the last-minute Christmas diet. This is not a diet that aims at taking the pounds off but just battles those extra pounds that come from eating too many Christmas cookies.

**Dec. 15** - Sell your books so you'll have some extra spending money for last-minute shopping.

**Dec. 16** - Be sure to wish all your college friends a Merry Christmas and safe travels over break.

**Dec. 17** - Be sure to lock your door and turn off your stereo before you head for your holiday destination.

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