

# Postal express is reaching out to seniors

At right: U.S. Postal Service clerk Rose Byrnes sorts through the stamp drawer in the new senior express mobile post office, which visited several Farmington-area senior citizen complexes Wednesday.

Staff photos by Randy Borst

By Lisa Simon staff writer

**A** NEW mobile post office made its first stop at Farmington Place Apartments in Farmington Wednesday.

The program was installed to make postal services more convenient to

seniors.

Operating from the Royal Oak regional post office, Oakland and Macomb were the first counties in the nation to introduce the U.S. Postal Service's new senior citizen express.

The specially outfitted vehicle will provide a complete line of postal ser-

vices to elderly residents of 35 senior housing complexes throughout the northern suburbs.

"Every other week, seniors will be able to purchase stamps, mail packages and certify and register mail without going to the post office," said James Miller, postmaster of the Royal Oak Post Office service area.

"So far, it has been really well received," said Robert Brown of the Royal Oak Post Office, acting retail sales officer and coordinator of the mobile postal service.

**MORE THAN** 5,000 seniors in 14 communities will be serviced every two weeks. Each participating complex will be scheduled for two stops each month on the same day of the week and at the same time of day.

"It's going to be wonderful, especially in the winter, we won't have to hike over to the post office," said Elizabeth Batchelor, a Farmington Place resident.

"I think it's great, especially around Christmas time, when people want to mail Christmas cards and packages," added Margaret Livermore, another

Farmington Place resident.

"We've been planning it (the postal service) for a long time," said Audrey Michalak, manager of Farmington Place Apartments. "A lot of our people have a hard time getting to the post office."

**THE LOCAL** "senior express" schedule follows:

- Detroit Baptist Manor Epitaph Building, 30245 W. 13 Mile — 9-9:20 a.m. Wednesdays, Sept. 18, Oct. 2, 16 and 30, Nov. 13 and 27, Dec. 11.
- Detroit Baptist Manor Gamma Building, 30245 W. 13 Mile — 9:25-9:45 a.m. Wednesdays, Sept. 18, Oct. 2, 16 and 30, Nov. 13 and 27, Dec. 11.
- Detroit Baptist Manor Alpha Building, 30245 W. 13 Mile — 9:50-10:15 a.m. Wednesdays, Sept. 18, Oct. 2, 16 and 30, Nov. 13 and 27, Dec. 11.
- Farmington Place, 32900 Grand River — 10:45-11:15 a.m. Wednesdays, Sept. 18, Oct. 2, 16 and 30; Nov. 13 and 27, Dec. 11.
- Detroit Baptist Manor, 33200 Drake — 11:30 a.m. to noon Wednesdays, Sept. 18, Oct. 2, 16 and 30, Nov. 13 and 27, Dec. 11.



Farmington Place residents (from left) Phyllis McGrath, Mary Jones, Lillian Turner and Elaine Stanley queue up for stamps outside the "Senior Citizen's Express" window.



*'So far, the Senior Citizen's Express has been really well received.'*

— Robert Brown  
coordinator  
Senior Citizen's Express

## Little Caesar's firm prepares for growth

By Joanne Maliszewski staff writer

When Little Caesar's moved into 67,000 square feet of rented space at 10 Mile and Haggerty roads in Farmington Hills in late 1980, corporate officials assumed they would have enough room to grow.

They were wrong.

After only 4 1/2 years in two adjacent buildings in Tenery Park, near Haggerty and 10 Mile, the national pizza chain is moving again.

This time, corporate officials expect the proposed new world headquarters on almost 39 acres at 12 Mile and Drake Road will accommodate their anticipated growth explosion.

"The 39 acres should give us the ability to grow at any pace and never run out of room," said Charles Jones, corporate vice president.

Farmington Public Schools officials last week accepted Little Caesar's \$3.5-million cash offer. The property has been the home of the Farmington Soccer Club for seven years.

Whether the existing soccer fields will be maintained is unknown. But Jones last week said amenities for the headquarters would include some type of recreational facilities.

**"THE AMENITIES** (corporate President) Mike Ilitch will add to this site will be considerable," Jones said. "We might be considering jogging trails, a soccer field or a baseball field. We are very active in our minor league sports programs — baseball, hockey."

The new world headquarters, which will face I-696 on one side and the 12 Mile commercial corridor on the other, will be built in phases, Jones said.

Construction of the first phase is expected to begin sometime next spring — providing all goes well with the rezoning of the land and planning commission approval of site plans, Jones said. The land must be rezoned from residential to office.

"I don't anticipate any problems with the rezoning," Jones said.

Farmington Hills Planning Commission last week scheduled a public hearing on the rezoning request for 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 17 in the city council chambers, 31555 11 Mile.

The first building on the site is expected to include 60,000-80,000 square feet of space at an estimated cost of \$10-\$18 million, Jones said.

"The first phase is now being planned. It's not a question of dollars but what makes the most sense as far as room," he said.

**LITTLE CAESAR'S** officials have requested financial help totaling about \$3.3 million through the Farmington Hills Economic Development Corporation (EDC), Jones said. EDC is a municipal corporation that provides a mechanism to allow a bond purchaser to enjoy a tax exemption on interest earned in exchange for issuing a more-favorable lending rate to the developer.

The first building that will go up at the site should provide enough room for more than 30 employees, Jones said. Preliminary plans include expanding the initial building up to 200,000 square feet within the next five years.

The new headquarters will house Ilitch's pizza company as well offices for employees who work with Ilitch's interest in some Wendy's and Chuck E. Cheese restaurants.

Ilitch's other holdings, such as the Detroit Red Wings and Olympia Arenas Inc., will remain in offices in the Joe Louis Arena, Detroit.

Blue Line Distributors which provides products needed by the pizza stores will remain in Little Caesar's offices in Tenery Park, Jones said.

**LITTLE CAESAR'S** has more than 700 pizza stores in 36 states plus two in the United Kingdom. It plans new stores in Korea and Hong Kong. About 400-500 new stores are expected to be opened soon.

"The dramatic growth that the company has been experiencing has been due to our national and international business," Jones said. "That growth has caused an explosion."

The explosion has not been in pizza sales alone. The company manufactures pizza production equipment and is in the wholesale food and distribution business. All of the pizza stores are designed by in-house architects and designers.

"We started out with three architects. Now we have seven and two full-timers in the design department," Jones said.

**AUG. 21**, Little Caesar franchisees presented a bronze sculpture of Little Caesar to Ilitch. The sculpture was commissioned by all 188 Little Caesar franchisees from 36 states as a gift to Ilitch and his wife, Marian.

The 5-foot-7-inch bronze sculpture, the work of Midland sculptor Jim Hopfensberger, will be on display at the international headquarters of Little Caesar Enterprises in Farmington.

The sculpture was cast in bronze by Hopfensberger at the Fine Arts Center in Clarston. Before the statue could be cast in bronze the artist had to use several different materials to accurately represent the Little Caesar logo character.

A steel skeleton of Little Caesar was built to support the other materials needed to reproduce the more detailed features of the character. Hopfensberger added glycerin to the steel form to rough out the head and body of Little Caesar.

**PLASTER** WAS then used to achieve the proper texture. The finer details, such as the hands and the laurel wreath, were achieved through the use of oil based clay and wax.

A giant-sized Little Caesar pizza was actually baked and then cast in plaster to create a mold and later filled with wax to provide an exact replica of a Little Caesar's pizza, before the entire creation was cast in bronze.

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