



Farmington Hills postal carrier Sherri Belobradich, alias Santa, takes mail from a postal patron as part of the Santa Express program. THOMAS ARNETT/staff photographer



Santa holds 5-month-old Zachary Perry of Farmington Hills. THOMAS ARNETT/staff photographer

## Santa bags it for post office

Santa delivered personally this Christmas, thanks to the U.S. Postal Service and the Farmington and Farmington Hills post offices.

Carrier Brian Koppin, dressed as Santa, delivered packages within the Farmington postal district directly to residents' homes on Christmas Eve as part of the Santa Express service. It was the second consecutive year for Koppin, who works as a part-time flexible carrier on different routes in the district.

With the Santa Express, residents could send a Santa-delivered package anywhere in the Farmington district for \$8.75 for a half-pound, or

**While the service was popular, the post office would have liked more participation.**

\$15 for up to five pounds. The packages could weigh as much as 70 pounds. Mailing costs included insurance up to \$500 per package.

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said Fred Bending, superintendent of postal operations for Farmington. While the service was popular, the post office would have liked more participation.

"We had some repeaters, people who used the service last year and loved it," said Susan Gillespie, manager of communications for the Detroit division of the U.S. Postal Service. They also had the same number of packages sent as last year. "It's too soon to tell if we'll do it again next year," she said.

"Everyone who participated was very well pleased," Bending said. "It's an expensive way to have Santa visit your home."

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