

Vassar Post Office Plant Tour

By John Walter

On June 1, **James Steckley, Dave Gehringer, Barbara Stanfield, and John Walter** had the privilege seeing the inner workings of several sorting machines including postmark application, “not at this address” labeling, large envelope and magazine sorting, and a few other machines I forgot their names. We were fascinated with the live animal area with tropical fish, hatching chicks, and a few other creatures being mailed.



Behind the blue storage bins is the newest parcel sorting machine.

Charlene Balz, Assistant to the Postmaster, conducted the almost 2-hour tour.

The building is over 100,000 square feet. The pride of the sorting area employees is a new machine that receives packages from UPS and Amazon, plus the USPS. The packages are loaded on a



Just one parcel of many with live animals including tropical fish.

large conveyor machine and each package is deposited in the appropriate delivery container – ready for that “final mile.” Trucks start arriving 3 – 4 a.m. for the bulk of the sorting to start the day. The new machine can sort over 2,000 parcels per hour.

In the center of the building is a climate-controlled area with a massive computer with petabyte hard drives (roughly 1,000 terabytes) which stores every mail piece scanned. The information is stored for at least 30 days (sometimes longer) before deletion. There is also the secure locked area with certified and other signature requirements. Another locked area is for cash and equivalents such as gold bars. Yes, they are mailed via USPS.

Since this is the only sorting facility in northern Nevada, all mail from as far as Elko comes for sorting then returned to individual post offices for delivery.

Come to the June 11 meeting to see more pictures and discussion from the post office tour.

***John Walter** collects U.S. used postal stationery, U.S. naval covers esp. hospital ships, Japan, U.N., and U.S.*



Letter carrier sorting station. Not used much with modern sorting machines doing most sorting down to individual houses/businesses.