

ESCAPEES Mail Service

FORUM



Escapees Mail Service Newsletter

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101 Rainbow Drive, Livingston, TX 77351 • 800-231-9896 • MailService@escapees.com

Summer has officially arrived in Texas, and this is the hottest summer that we have had in years. Hopefully, you are in a cooler climate, far away from the 100-degree temps we have been experiencing. As always, we've got an eclectic mix of news to share with you in this issue.

UPS Partnership

As a reminder, we are now able to ship your mail via UPS, in addition to FedEx and U.S. Postal mail. The rates we have negotiated with UPS are comparable to Priority Mail. As our volume builds, the discount they give us will become greater. As with FedEx, you can track your UPS shipment every step of the way and have an accurate delivery date.

Remember: you will need a physical address (not a P.O. box) to be able to have your mail sent via UPS or FedEx, but most RV parks will allow you to have packages sent to your site.

Check out the May 2008 issue of *The Forum* newsletter for a comparison of the new rates, which can be found on our website, www.escapees.com/MailForwardingService/TheFORUM.asp

New Phone System

If you've called in the past few months, you've noticed we have a new phone system. Our old system was becoming obsolete, so we replaced it with the new whiz bang system we have now. We hope you have been enjoying the new features it offers as well.

Our operators are still the first responders on the phones, but you may get an automated message if they are all handling other calls. The automated message allows you to leave a voice message for us or continue holding. It will then tell you your place in the queue line and your estimated hold time.

Unfortunately, all of our extensions have changed so please make note of your chapter's new extension number, found in the latest *Escapees* magazine.

Payment and Correspondence Address

Please be sure to mail any payments or correspondence to our corporate address: 100 Rainbow Drive, Livingston, TX 77351. Do not use your own mail service address or you may just find your check in your next mailing!

Now you can have your mail shipped via UPS!



UPS Package car in Atlanta. Photo courtesy of UPS.

Voting Information

November is fast approaching and with it comes the general election. Don't let your vote go uncounted! Be sure to carefully complete your absentee ballot application and allow plenty of time for mailing. Here are some important dates and information to keep in mind.

- Nov. 4, 2008 General Election
- Sept. 5, 2008 First day to apply for ballot by mail
- Oct. 6, 2008 Last day to register to vote
- Oct. 20, 2008 First day of early voting
- Oct. 28, 2008 Last day to apply for ballot by mail (must be received, not postmarked!)
- Oct. 31, 2008 Last day of early voting

Source: www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/2008-voter-dates.shtml

Important note: Absentee ballots must be received in the County Clerk's mailbox no later than November 4, 2008, regardless of when it is postmarked, in order to count. Mail early!

Applicants can start calling for applications now, but don't mail them in before September 5, 2008.

Applying for Your Absentee Ballot

You can request a ballot application from the County Clerk's office (See "Voter Resources" below), pick one up from the club office, or download one from www.sos.state.tx.us

Filling Out Your Application

If your legal residence is Rainbow's End but you do not own or lease a specific lot, your Residence Address line would be Rainbow's End, Livingston, TX.

The Mailing Address line would contain your personal mailing address

(___ Rainbow Dr., #___, Livingston, TX 77399-___).

If you own or lease a lot, use your 9-1-1 address as your Residence Address.

It is very important that you fill out your application for a ballot carefully and completely. There are eight critical boxes that must be completed:

1. Name
2. Residence Address (the same one you used on the residence line of your voter registration)
3. Type and Date of Election (example: Primary/March 06)
4. Party Preference (You MUST select a party if voting in a primary.)
5. Reason for voting by mail (out of county traveling)
6. Special Instructions for Mailing Ballot (Most of you would probably indicate "Address outside of the county.")
7. Mail My Ballot To (When you are voting absentee, you cannot have your ballot sent to any address in the county in which you are registered unless you are 65 or older or disabled.) Escapees Mail Service members who are

traveling out of the state may have their ballots sent to the following address:

Your Name
c/o Escapees RV Club
PO Box 1578
Shepherd, TX 77371

8. Sign Here (Make sure you sign your application.)

Including your phone number will allow the county clerk to contact you if needed.

Each year, a number of applications for absentee ballots are being returned to the applicants due to errors or omissions. It is very important that you properly complete and sign the application form. Check your application for the following common errors before sending it in:

- **Incomplete Information:** Please carefully read the instructions included with the application. Make sure that all required information is included. Forms that are missing even a single required item will not be processed.
- **Signature does not match:** Make sure that you sign your name exactly as it is shown on the application. Signatures that do not appear to match will cause the form to be rejected. If your full name is Mary Elaine Smith, do not sign it "Mary Smith" or "Mary E. Smith."
- **No registration number:** Your voter registration number must be included and must be correctly entered.
- **Return address not allowed:** If you are under the age of 65, your ballot cannot be mailed to any address within Polk County. You must either have the ballot mailed to you at your current location, or use the Shepherd, TX, address for forwarding. Any application that requests that the ballot be mailed to an address within Polk County will be rejected. The only exception to this rule is for persons over age 65 or disabled persons.

Voter Resources

Polk County ballot applications fax	936-327-6874
Polk County Clerk's Office	936-327-6804
Polk County Republican Party	936-327-8683
Polk County Democratic Party	936-327-5910
Polk County Libertarian Party	936-685-4992

Online Resources

Escapees voter info:	www.escapees.com/voterinfo.asp
Texas voter info:	www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter
	www.politics.com/tx.htm
Republican Party:	www.texasgop.org
Polk Co. Republicans:	www.polkcountygop.org
Democratic Party:	www.txdemocrats.org
Libertarian Party:	www.tx.lp.org
General local news:	www.EastTexasNews.com