

## Reduced hours at the Roland Park Post Office

By Kathy Hudson

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The Roland Park post office has had reduced hours for several months now. It is closed between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. I've seen many irritated workers arrive there during a lunch break only to find the door locked.

Rumors have flown that this post office was supposed to close November 1, but it is still open. Thank goodness. It is well used. In the late afternoon only one postal clerk is usually on the desk. Lines stretch to the far wall.

Once the holiday season gears up, that situation will turn out be a nightmare for both customers and postal workers. Already, I've heard reports of frayed tempers and colorful language.

I thought that was just the way it would have to be until I happened on the Riderwood post office in the middle of the day 10 days ago. It was open. One clerk was at the desk. When she was tied up with a customer who had a lengthy transaction, a second postal worker stepped from the back and took the next customer in line.

When it was my turn, I asked if they had reduced hours. The answer was no. That confounds me. I can't imagine why one busy post office has reduced hours and another does not. I also can't imagine that the post office on Deepdene Road does any less business than the one on Bellona Avenue. In fact, I imagine that with all of the small businesses and schools around the Roland Park post office, it might do more.

If the U.S. Postal Service is trying to drive away customers, closing midday during the busy holiday season is one sure way to do it.

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Kathy Hudson is a freelance writer who lives in in Roland Park. Her interests include gardening, literature and city life. She's a terrible cook, so she's always on the lookout for a decent meal, carryout or otherwise. She's written for "The Baltimore Messenger" since 1995 and has had a bi-weekly column, "Hudson's Corner," since 1998. For "Style" magazine she writes spotlights on people and regular garden features.