

# KAREN

## On Tuesday

If you didn't receive a funny Valentine, or even a postcard from the beach last summer, it may be because residential mail in the District has been backed up since August.

New sorting machines kick out 20,000 pieces of mail an hour, but postal employees say they can't handle that much. As a result, many of the carriers, especially those in the Georgetown area, are haunted by thousands of pieces of first-, second- and third-class mail that have been accumulating in the post office for six months.

There's said to be so much undelivered mail piled up in the basement of the Friendship Station Post Office, which serves part of Georgetown, that there's barely room for postmen to squeeze in. "I have more than 100 feet of mail piled up," says one postman assigned to a Georgetown route. Hours have been cut, and supervisors say no more overtime. Who says nothing stops the U.S. mail?

How downright chic the Smithsonian Resident Associates have become with their series "Conversations with Texans." Displaced Texans Dale and Scooter Miller and former Navy Secretary Fred Korth, as well as that Neiman-Marcus customer who showed Stanley Marcus his label in her 40-year-old fur, turned out in style to hear the department-store founder talk the other evening.

The famous dry-goods merchant pointed out the difference between a sparrow and a Texas oilman: "A sparrow can still make a deposit on a Mercedes." Such jests ain't so funny in Texas, but Stanley says that the Texas economy will recover. He just doesn't know when. He does have a prescription for how to make a small fortune: "Just give a big one to the Hunt brothers."

Washington government relations officials generally attempt to shield their home offices from the seriousness of Capitol investigations on the theory that what the home office doesn't know won't hurt the folks in Washington. House Energy and Commerce Chairman John Dingell wants to put an end to that practice. The champion of oversight intends to call on CEOs of



Jack Kemp

major corporations, say insiders, to testify on various investigations. He has already invited the CEO of TRW, and chairmen of Pratt-Whitney, FMC Corporation and Citicorp may not be far behind.

**A**lthough Rep. **Jack Kemp** and **Ivan Lendl** defeated Sen. **John Warner** and **Andres Gomez** at a benefit tennis challenge the other evening, the amateurs looked better on the campaign trail than on center court. Jack told his fans after the match, "I know you were tempted to boo, but remember I'm the same guy who cut your tax rates so you could afford to come tonight."

The NFL Quarterbacks plan to kick off a Jerry Smith Memorial Fund at an awards dinner Saturday night at the Washington Hilton. Although no one is saying so, the dinner is to benefit AIDS research. The Redskin tight end, who died last year after disclosing that he was suffering from AIDS, was the Quarterback Club's first speaker 20 years ago.

**Larry Pressler** pointed out to novelist **Sidney Sheldon** a technical inaccuracy in his latest book, "Windmills of the Gods." As part of his research for the novel about a woman ambassador to Romania, Sidney interviewed the South Dakota senator about Senate confirmation hearings. Larry reminded him, at **Jean Viner Bell's** cocktail-buffet for the author the other night, that rarely are all the senators on the Foreign Relations Committee present for confirmation hearings. (We all know that, don't we?) But in "Windmills" they were all present. If senators get a lot of license, shouldn't authors get a little?

— **Karen Feld**