

CYBERNEWS

A Service of Bryant Enterprises

FACT OR FICTION? Fantastic Stories Found on the Web

All of the following emails were recently forwarded to me by concerned or caring clients. Can you tell which of these are true?

- Microsoft and AOL have a cooperative program where they will pay you to forward a special chain email notice to all your friends!
- The loss of income through the US Post Office, due to increased email usage, has resulted in a Bill before Congress to charge \$.05 for every email you send!
- The US Post Office is helping to cure cancer, and you can help just by mailing letters!
- You can contribute food to starving families through the UN for free - just by visiting a website!
- The woman who helped remove prayer and bible reading in public schools has been granted a hearing with the FCC to eliminate future licensing of any religious broadcasts!

A child with cancer is trying to make the Guinness Book of World records - and you can help by forwarding an email and writing letters!

Urban Legends

A very interesting phenomenon is occurring on the Internet lately. Cyberspace has evolved a new genre of "Urban Legends" - stories that pull at some emotion and come from a "reliable source". Here are some examples of the True, the False and the In-between:

NOT!

Sorry, Microsoft will not pay you to forward emails. AOL is not giving away prizes or cash for chain letters, and the Gap is not giving away free clothing for your emails.

There is no Bill 602P before Congress to enact a \$.05 charge on our email. The US Post office and Congressman named in the email have both put disclaimers on their Web site.

Well...Sorta...

Craig Shurgold, a child with cancer, really did have the wish to make the Guinness Book of World Records by receiving the most letters and post cards in history. He made it and was cured in 1991. But legend continues through the Web and, nine years later, nothing seems to be able to slow the surge behind this email ... or the 300,000 postal letters that Craig and the Make-A-Wish foundation receive every *week!*

A petition was submitted to the FCC to deny licenses to any and all religious broadcasts - including Christmas songs. This request was denied by the FCC twenty-five years ago. Yet from snail mail to fax to email, all available means have been used to keep the document in constant circulation ever since. In 1975 alone (the year of the *real* petition) the FCC received over 700,000 letters of protest on this issue. The huge flood of messages continues to this day.

NOW FOR THE GOOD NEWS

You really *can* donate food through a UN program, just by and visiting their web site and clicking on their "Donate Free Food" button. The concept is unique and incredibly successful and based on sponsorship. Large sponsors agree to donate 1/4 cup of food for every click on the "Donate" button. You can only click once a day. If there are 10 sponsors, your click will send 2 1/2 cups of food to hungry families around the world. On January 12th alone, 57 metric *tons* (125,000 lbs.) of food were donated through this web site. You can help save a life every single day, just by visiting The Hunger Site. Consider making it your default page, so you can remember to donate daily. A click a day can feed a family at:

<http://www.thehungersite.com>

The US Post Office has a program where you can purchase postage stamps and contribute to cancer research. Last October, in honor of Breast Cancer Awareness month, the Post office issued the "Fund the Fight, Find a Cure" First-Class stamp. This .33 cent stamp sells for .40 cents, and the net proceeds are donated for cancer research. This campaign was so successful that the Breast Cancer Awareness stamp campaign was continued after October 1999, and these stamps are still available. Awareness stamps for prostate cancer have also been released and future programs for other illnesses are already in the works.

To learn about the Cancer Awareness stamps, call the US Postal Service at **1-800-ASK-USPS**

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