Lifelong Oak Lawn residents Bill Bradshaw and Matt Dillon had been mulling over a business idea after a Bears game this fall, when it hit Bradshaw.

“That’s the stuff movies are made of.”

The film that came to mind was “P.S. I Love You”, a 2007 movie in which a deceased husband leaves letters for his wife to help her cope with his death.

The business idea became Letters for Tomorrow, a service run by Bradshaw and Dillon that acts as a sort of time capsule courier. For a fee, the duo will hold your message for a prescribed period of time and send it to the recipient on the date requested.

They say they can ship nearly anything, including photos, letters and even small memory cards capable of holding albums worth of photos, videos and other memories.

Dillon admits, “I’ve always been kind of sentimental. But it was when my father passed, when I realized how meaningful it would have been to receive something from him five years down the road.

“It could even be stuff I already knew, but just the idea of getting something tangible to serve as a memento would have been neat.”

Dillon mentioned the possibility of his father passing along a message to his son, who was age 1 when his grandfather died. They also see a number of other applications including reminding oneself of goals years down the road, armed forces members recording their thoughts before heading overseas or offering words of wisdom to a loved one.

Dillon had been ruminating on the idea for some time before mentioning it to Bradshaw, a longtime tinkerer. Bradshaw, who owns multiple patents and has appeared on Oprah and Jonathan Brandmeier’s radio show with his inventions, immediately took to the idea.

Having pitched products to major corporations, Bradshaw was intrigued by the simplicity of Letters for Tomorrow.

“I’ve dabbled with ideas that require plastic molding and expensive metal casting and loved that this is something we could do on our own,” he said.

It was on that first night that Dillon and Bradshaw began sketching out the future for Letters for Tomorrow. First, they checked for similar ventures and an available domain name online. Then they devised the filing and storage system that requires breaking out the following year’s envelopes each December and sorting them by month, then making one drop at the post office each month.

They worried about the ever-increasing price of postage. But when Bradshaw’s wife, Doreen, mentioned Forever Stamps, they knew they were in business.

“The Forever Stamp was the icing on the cake. We knew we had to give it a shot then,” said Bradshaw.

But they’ve run into some skepticism as well.

“Some people immediately think it’s goofy,” said Dillon.

In fact Dillon’s wife, Debbie, was one of the initial cynics.

“She was against it from the get-go,” said Dillon. “She said, ‘No, no, no. That’s stupid.’ ”

But the pair were convinced about their low-cost start-up and have taken to a guerilla marketing campaign to spread the word, handing out company cards at every opportunity.

“You might find me out at O’Hare (International Airport) handing out information like a Hare Krishna,” Bradshaw said.
When asked what they would do with any remaining mail if their detractors proved correct, Dillon said: “Oh, we’d make sure everyone received their mail. We’ve got honest intentions. We’re more interested in making sure the memories reach their intended destination.”