



THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR

Journal of American Philatelic Society Writers Unit #30

On the Web: www.wu30.org

Second Quarter 2007

Creating Digital References and Studies

The challenge to design philatelic literature rivaling or bettering printed resources.

By Francis Adams

My philatelic bookshelf is never wide enough for the number of reference books I aspire to. Binders with magazine cuttings don't fit and it never fails that some articles end up in the recesses of a bottom drawer, never to be found when needed. The question becomes: "How can I maintain a single philatelic reference, with as much information as possible included, for a collecting interest?"

Over the past few years, I've been working with digital exhibits and, as an outgrowth of that, digitizing articles of interest seemed a logical thing to do in attempting to assemble an electronic reference for each interest area. Early efforts didn't work; a growing stable of electronic data became an organizational problem — not much different than the paper world. Thinking someone else must have solved the problem, I stumbled through the world of electronic philatelic references looking for guidance as to what a digital reference should be and how it could be assembled.

As a novice, I decided to review different methods including CDs and DVDs, Web sites, and online exhibits. My conclusion is: There is amazingly little information or consensus on what a digital reference should look like or how to assemble diverse information to make it reasonably useful, but mainly, conveniently available electronically. I've likely missed something and I'll know as soon as this is published and someone says, "Well, why didn't you read XYZ?"

The most directly associated guideline I've found on electronic formatted documents is the current Mega-Event Digital Philatelic Study (DPS) rules and entry form (www.ASDAONLINE.COM/



Information should be clearly and logically presented.

INDEX.PHP?ID=65). A second source with some how-to information on using FlipAlbum software is *Self-Publishing on a Dime* by Peter Elias (*PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*, First Quarter 2005). A third source dealing with Web sites and other forms of onscreen presentations is *Let's Get Visual!* by Albert W. Starkweather (*PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*, Second Quarter 2006), and finally, albeit not specific to electronic formats, is the philatelic literature judging document (www.STAMPS.ORG/DIRECTORIES/DIR_LITJUDGING.PDF) found on the APS Web site.

Let's start with definitions.

In my mind, a digital reference is something akin to an encyclopedia on a subject and a digital study is a short work on a specific facet of a subject. The Mega-Event defines the term *Digital Philatelic Study* as: "A DPS is an electronic file or set of files that tells a philatelic story, such as the change from traditional to pictorial designs in British Caribbean Colonies, the Pony Express, or mail from the Crimean war. It combines elements of journal articles, exhibits, and PowerPoint presentations into a final electronic presentation form (i.e., PowerPoint file, PDF file, etc.). Like an article, the primary focus is on the story as it is told, but, like an exhibit or PowerPoint presentation, the emphasis is placed on the illustrations with the text as supplementary."

Although that definition reflects both references (the Pony Express) and studies (mail from the Crimean War) in my opinion, it's close enough to my end goal with two exceptions: (1) Illustrations and text should be balanced and (2) I want to include

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Ballot for 2007 WU #30 Elections Enclosed



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Albert W. Starkweather
Editor's Domain

Watch Out for Pejoratives

Don Imus' fall from grace following his racist and sexist remarks about the Rutgers University women's basketball team serves as a warning that words — negative or positive — once uttered seldom can be taken back, even with profuse apologies or explanations. While most philatelic editors may never face such blatant abuse of the First Amendment's guarantee of freedom of speech, they should be keenly aware of pejoratives, racial and sexist slurs that out-of-tune writers may slip into their copy.

Pejoratives, which are disparaging or belittling statements, may be the hardest to detect because they often are subtle and innocent appearing.

I recently received a column about the Battle of Midway in which the author consistently used the term Jap and Japs for Japanese, an author who ranted and raged when he saw his page proof and refused to accept that the terms are pejorative. He apparently was unaware that word meanings and usages change or was cognizant of the new meaning and simply meant to demean the Japanese. The terms originally were non pejorative World War II *headlines* — Jap and Japs easily fit into a one-column headline while Japanese did not.

The exception to the prohibition against using such terms in modern articles would be in quoting historical documents, which should not be edited to sanitize their wording. (Contemporary reports of the Battle of Midway used Jap and Japs extensively.) This also applies to racial and sexist statements as well, although editors and writers should consider rewriting particularly offensive statements as indirect quotations unless that language is apropos to the article. Offensive terms in direct quotations may be replaced with ellipses.

While editors may be tempted to follow newspaper headline style by using non-pejoratives such as Brits for British, these usages are also undesirable.

Although most editors and writers are careful to use neutral pronouns and non-gender-specific titles, they may miss one common pejorative of using the pronoun she for ships or nations.

It is generally undesirable and unnecessary to specifically identify a person's race, gender, or sexual orientation unless it is germane to the article. One extreme of this was being called homo phobic when I removed "I ... am a gay man" from a profile provided by a photographer. My argument was that this had no bearing on defining his work. I restored the wording to the final draft at his insistence.

The common sense solution to handling questionable words and phrases is: "When in doubt, take it out." 



Peter Martin
My Message

2007 WU #30 Election Update

Thanks to Nominating Committee Chairman Alan Warren we have a full slate of candidates for the 2007 WU #30 election. The ballot appears in this issue. Ronald E. Leshner has asked to step down due to his heavy workload and Editor Albert W. Starkweather has agreed to run as his replacement. The remainder of the board is running for reelection. Despite the lack of contested races, please show your support of our organization by completing the ballot and sending it in. Closely follow the directions and be sure the ballot is mailed by July 20. (See page 4 for details.)

StampShow 2007

The next Writers Unit #30 Sunday breakfast is getting closer. *APS STAMPSHOW 2007* will be held in Portland, Oregon, from August 9–12. We have some surprises in store for this year's event on August 12, so plan now to attend. The third quarter issue of *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* will have more details. (See APS advertisement on page 19.)

Style Guide

Work continues on the *Writers Unit #30 Style Guide*. Its purpose is to resolve issues of how to treat words and phrases. Whenever possible, we will include the style of the specialty organization where the words are most frequently used. To date, the American Air Mail Society, American First Day Cover Society, American Revenue Association, Universal Ship Cancellation

Society, and State Revenue Society have contributed. If your society has a specific style treatment for a word or phrase, e-mail it to: PMARTIN2020@AOL.COM.

For example, here is a portion of what Bob Rawlins, who edits the *U.S.C.S. Log* for the Universal Ship Cancellation Society, suggests for the treatment of ships:

Ship names: On first reference always include USS, the ship's name, and the hull number: USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75).

Exceptions: Do not use USS for ships before 1909; or if she is not yet in commission; or she has been decommissioned and you are referring to the ship in her present state.

There is no hyphen in the hull number. The ship name is in italics. On second reference, use only the ship's name. Do not use "the" in front of a ship's name: USS *San Jose*, not "the USS *San Jose*." Ships may be referred to as "she" or "her."

Ships' nicknames are placed inside quotation marks on first reference only. USS *LaSalle* (AGF 3), the "Great White Ghost," sailed into San Diego.

Ship names are not in all caps. Use USS *Seattle*, not USS SEATTLE.

CAC Newsletters

The American Philatelic Society annually conducts a Chapter Activities Committee newsletter competition. Jane King Fohn, Converse, Texas, coordinates the event, which allows chapters to have their newsletter efforts rewarded and also to receive feedback for improvement. The contest for 2006 newsletter had 27 entries. I was pleased to serve on the jury for this year's competition and I'll provide a full report in the next issue.

Book Reviews

Through the hard work of our editor, *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* has become one of the major sources for quality philatelic book reviews. If you know of a new philatelic publication and are willing to write a review, contact him at astarkweather@wu30.org. I'd enjoy seeing your byline added to the list of top-notch reviewers that are contributing to this feature. We also welcome articles of general interest to philatelic writers and editors.



Another Editor's View of Ship Reference Styles

By Albert W. Starkweather

While Bob Rawlins' guidelines listed in Peter Martin's column are generally correct, some do not follow current usage and others need amplification:

- USS (United States Ship), a military designation; SS (steamship); M/S (motorship); CSS (Confederate States Ship); and HMS (His or Her Majesty's Ship) are not italicized, hence SS *United States* rather than *SS United States*.
- Except for specialized naval publications, hull numbers are unnecessary and meaningless to most readers.
- USS is used for some ships constructed before 1909, including the USS *Constitution*, USS *Austin*, and the USS *Maine*, which was destroyed in 1898. There are exceptions to decommissioned ships as well — it is still the USS *Arizona*. The "Mighty

Mo," the USS *Missouri*, decommissioned in 1992, also still bears the title.

- Referring to a ship as "she" or "her" is considered pejorative in many circles, in addition to which a ship is an inanimate object. Most will agree that referring to the "USS *Harry S. Truman* and her crew" poses a bit of an oxymoron. The *Associated Press Stylebook* states: "Use *it*, not the pronoun *she*, in references to boats and ships."
- Not all naval vessels are ships, hence PT motor torpedo boat. PT boats were designated by numbers rather than names, hence PT *109*. Submarines are boats as well, but follow ship naming conventions, hence USS *Dallas*.

From this brief exposition on ship naming conventions, the multitude of issues faced by the creators of stylebooks becomes readily apparent.





Short Takes News & Commentary

Correction

The masthead in the first quarter issue of *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* should have been updated to Volume 41, No. 1, Whole Number 155.

A Poor Resource

Because of the recent scandal at Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.com) and ongoing concerns about the accuracy of information found on this site, *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* no longer will accept references attributed to this Web site. Writers are reminded of the necessity to check multiple resources for critical information.

— Albert W. Starkweather

Communicator Reviewed

Albert W. Starkweather has given *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*, the Writers Unit #30 quarterly journal a fresh look with more graphics, a modern layout, and glossy paper. Articles in the current issue include Web publishing and writing for non-philatelic publications.

— *APS PHILATELIC LITERATURE REVIEW*, third quarter 2006

PHLNDX Updated 82nd Time

The first quarter *PC* with the write up on update 81 (page 11) arrived on March 29, just as I was sending update 82 to the American Philatelic Research Library (APRL). PHLNDX Update 82 contains 5,000 entries. Some interesting features: the two earliest English-language publications, *Stamp Collector's Magazine* and *Stamp Collector's Review*, and the earliest English revenue publication, the *Fiscal Philatelist*, have been included. Also, coverage for the *London Philatelist* extends to 1904 and some numbers of the *American Philatelist* from the 1930s have been picked up. Of course, the current publications receive the bulk of attention.

I have already started update 83. Since October, I have been commuting on a regular basis to Manhattan from south Jersey. About 2½ hours each day is spent on the train (in addition to 2½ hours driving), which is usefully filled by PHLNDX abstracting.

— Gene Fricks

Library Seeking Artifacts

The Railway Mail Service Library (RMSL) is seeking obsolete post office artifacts. Of particular interest are steel postmarking handstamps and canceling machines from any country. Visit www.railwaymailservicelibrary.org. The RMSL made excellent progress during 2006. To contact the curator:

Dr. Frank R. Scheer, Railway Mail Service Library, Inc.

F_SCHEER@YAHOO.COM

202-268-2121, weekdays; 540-837-9090, Saturday afternoons.

The RMSL is in the former Norfolk & Western station on Virginia Route 723, 117 E. Main St., Boyce, VA 22620-9639.

Those interested in RPOs, may visit the railway post office group at [HTTP://GROUPS.YAHOO.COM/GROUP/RAILWAYPO](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/RailwayPO). 

Cast Your Vote for WU #30 Officers

The ballot for 2007–2009 officers and 2007–2011 Council members is in the centerfold of this issue. Ballots should be completed and returned to Secretary–Treasurer George B. Griffenhagen, 2501 Drexel St., Vienna VA 22180-6906 no later than July 20.

With the exception of *PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* Editor Albert W. Starkweather, who is a candidate for the Council to replace Ronald E. Leshner, all are seeking reelection. Leshner opted not to run again.

The WU #30 Nominations Committee has placed in nomination Peter D. Martin of Naugatuck, Connecticut, as president; Barth Healey of Speonk, New York, as vice president, east; Kenneth Trettin of Rockford, Iowa, as vice president, west; and George B. Griffenhagen of Vienna, Virginia, as secretary–treasurer.

Nominees for 20047–2011 Council members are Lloyd de Vries of Paramus, New Jersey; James W. Graue of Valleyford, Washington; and Albert W. Starkweather of Tampa, Florida. Council members who are still serving until 2009 are Ernest E. (Gene) Fricks of Blackwood, New Jersey; Robert P. Odenweller of Bernardsville, New Jersey; and Steven J. Rod of South Orange, New Jersey.

As immediate past president, Dane S. Claussen serves as an ex-officio member of the WU #30 Executive Committee, which consists of the officers and *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*'s editor.

The newly elected officers and Council members will assume office at the WU #30 breakfast on August 12 in Portland, Oregon, held in conjunction with *APS STAMPSHOW 2007*.

George Griffenhagen, WU #30 Secretary–Treasurer 

CHICAGOPEX 2007 Seeks Literature Entries

For the 41st consecutive year, *CHICAGOPEX 2007* will host a literature exhibition. Applications and exhibits must reach the Literature Exhibits Committee by August 15; early application is encouraged. Prospective exhibitors will be notified of acceptance as soon as possible, but no later than September 15.

A prospectus and entry form may be downloaded from www.chicagopec.com or obtained by contacting J. Kevin Doyle, 5815 Lenox Road, Lisle, IL 60532-3138; DOYLE-STAMPS@ATT.NET. Entry fee is \$25 and two copies of each entry are required. Categories are handbooks, monographs, special studies, and specialized articles; society journals and periodicals; general, specialized, and auction catalogues; and newsletters, columns, and general articles.

The show, which will run from November 16–18 at the Sheraton Chicago Northwest, 3400 West Euclid Avenue in Arlington Heights, is sponsored by the Chicago Philatelic Society.

For rate information, and for room availability and reservations, contact the hotel at 847-394-2000, or through Sheraton reservations at 800-325-3535, www.sheraton.com. Mention *CHICAGOPEX* for special rates. 

January Breakfast

APS President Janet Klug addresses Writer Unit 30's breakfast on February 11 during *AMERISTAMP EXPO 2007* at the Marriott Hotel in Riverside, California. Lloyd de Vries, standing left below, poses a question to Unit President Peter D. Martin during the event. The next Writers Unit #30 Sunday breakfast is getting closer. *APS STAMPSHOW 2007* will be held August 9–12 at the Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Portland, Oregon. We have some surprises in store for this year's event on August 12, so plan now to attend. The third quarter issue of *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* will have full details. (See APS advertisement on page 19.)



Letters To the Editor

and news items ranging from informative articles, Hulme obit and update on NPM staff, controversial letters to the editor, book reviews, and more than a dozen illustrations. I also thank you for adding two important paragraphs to my secretary-treasurer's report as well as supplemental information to the Call for Nominations.

— George Griffenhagen

Editors May Digress, Occasionally

I was an editor of a journal perhaps 20 years ago, in the days of cut and paste. I felt free to write whatever I wished in my editorials. They were my preserve. Generally, editorials should be germane to the publication. But occasionally, the editor may digress to other areas. I tried steering away from religion and politics, although religion is abundantly present in stamps these days.

However, were I editorializing today, I feel it would be legitimate to refer to today's mini-Bush-dollar, having seen its buying power decrease by nearly 50 percent vs. the euro, pound and Canadian dollar.

— Robert Ausubel by e-mail

Balance Praised

I received my excess supply of the First Quarter 2007 issue of *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*, and I hasten to congratulate you on one of the best, if not the very best, issue since I have served as secretary-treasurer.

It has an outstanding balance of different types of articles

Impressed by von Reyn Article

Your latest issue is quite a fine one. I was particularly impressed with the von Reyn article on preparing images and your article on color management. I wrote similar articles on the basic concepts during the camera and film age years ago and more recently have imparted the same information to authors as interpreted in computer age terms. All of the information in each is right on target.

One initial reaction was that they both stopped short of the advanced information that might be useful to a sophisticated user, but after a bit of reflection felt that it was just right for the journal's audience to stop there. More detail would be either confusing or preaching to the choir.

— Robert P. Odenweller by e-mail

Improvements a Big Plus

As a longtime member of Writers Unit #30, I find your improvements in the design and layout of *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* a big plus. Thank you for sharing your expertise.

— Harlan Stone by e-mail

Newsletters Are the Lifeblood of Stamp Clubs

By Arthur P. von Reyn

Does your stamp club have a newsletter? Is your stamp club struggling to keep members, so talk of disbanding is rife? Let me be blunt, there is an inverse relationship between these two questions. If the answer to the first question is *no*, then it's quite likely the response to the second question is in the affirmative.

Communicating with your members on a regular basis is the best thing that can be done to keep a club alive and thriving. A club without a newsletter is like a sailboat without a mast. I think you get the picture!

It's been more than 20 years since I published my first newsletter, for the Mid-Cities Stamp Club in Arlington, Texas. In just a few years, the club grew from about a dozen and a half members to over 100. The newsletter, along with new activities, drew members back to meetings and made it easy to attract new recruits.

Getting Started

So how do you get started with a club newsletter? Unless you are the benevolent sort, you'll need some expense money, so prepare and submit a budget. For a simple newsletter, you're talking about postage plus maybe a quarter per copy for duplication and mailing envelopes. Every club should be assessing dues sufficient to cover this expense.

A newsletter doesn't have to be anything fancy. The important thing is to get something in the mail — postal or electronic — each month to inform your members what's about to happen and what just happened.

So what exactly do you put in this newsletter, now that you have decided it's just the thing to reignite interest in your club? That question is easy to answer. Tell about what's going to happen at the next meeting and what members missed by not attending the last one. Remember the old newspaper reporter's axiom: "who, what, when, where, how, and why?"

That means always give the next meeting date and location, who is presenting the program and what it is about. For the previous meeting, give some details about the program and any other special meeting activities such as auction results, door prize and award winners, newly elected officers and so forth. Remember that most people love to see their names in print, so be sure to list the



The first stamp club newsletter the author attempted, left, was a bit ambitious for the time, conveniently appearing in time for Ameripex, the international stamp show in 1986. All the newsletter basics were included except for the previous meeting notes — a trading session attended by less than a half dozen members was not deemed newsworthy. The newsletter was prepared using a Radio Shack TRS-80 computer and a daisy wheel printer (think IBM Selectric typewriter on steroids). Most people like to see their names and pictures in print. A recent edition of the award-winning Mid-Cities Stamp Club newsletter, right, now edited by Peter C. Elias, illustrates the point. A black-and-white copy is mailed to members; a color version can be downloaded from the club's Web site at WWW.MID-CITIESSTAMPCLUB.COM.



guests who attend each meeting, members who are having birthdays, and those who are absent due to prolonged illness. If you have the capability to include photographs of people, so much the better.

Most likely you'll want to dress up your publication with some sort of nameplate (also known as a *flag*). As well as the name of the club and the issue date, you might want to include a club logo, the regular meeting date(s) and location, a club officer listing and most importantly, a contact address and phone number, as well as an e-mail address and Web site, if available.

Most likely your first newsletter will be a single-sided page with some leftover *white* space. It's easy to find filler to eliminate the white space, the most common items being a calendar that includes area events like stamps shows and bourses, or a listing of new U.S. stamp issues. The former is found every two months *The Texas Philatelist* and on the Texas Philatelic Association Web site (WWW.TEXASPHILATELIC.ORG); the latter is on our Web site and many other locations on the Internet, one of the most comprehensive being found at WWW.VIRTUALSTAMPCLUB.COM.

Moving Beyond the Basics

With today's desktop publishing software, it doesn't take a lot of work to add quite a bit of pizzazz to your newsletter. After getting out the first few one-page issues, you may find it's time to expand it to both sides.

The easiest things to add are a members' classified ad section and business card advertisements from local stamp dealers. Writing a couple of paragraphs about what's going on in the world of collecting doesn't hurt either; most likely, the majority of members do not subscribe to a philatelic publication like *Linn's Stamp News* or access collector Web sites on a regular basis. If you haven't done so already, take a digital camera to meetings so you can easily add photographs to your publication.

Other features commonly found in club publications are member submissions like collecting tips, quizzes, philatelic trivia, letters to the editor, and the inevitable but always entertaining "my favorite stamp" or "how I started collecting."

To make life easier on yourself, delegate responsibility for some regular features to club officers. The president could

pen a regular column on his thoughts about the club and philately. The club secretary should be the one to write about the previous meeting. Don't forget reports from the chairperson of committees like those for the auction and annual stamp exhibition.

Some club newsletter editors go a step further and add one or more feature articles for each issue. Typically, a different member writes each month about something pertaining to his or her collecting interest and provides some material for illustrative purposes. General pleas for articles seldom work; an editor has to be aggressive about "volunteering" fellow members. In a small group, the volunteer pool is likely quite limited, so one work-around is to tape record presentations at meetings and transcribe them; don't forget to borrow a piece or two of material for illustrative purposes.

Finishing Up

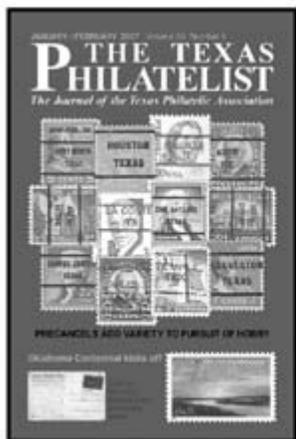
Once you have all the material you need for your newsletter, you'll need to decide how to present it. Getting into the details of layout is beyond the scope of this article, but the accompanying illustrations indicate that a two-column format for 8½ × 11-inch paper gives some flexibility in grouping material; this is especially true for submissions that are short and would look strange if stretched across an eight-inch-wide page.

Unless you are still living in the typewriter age, the next step is to print out an original and check it for errors. I strongly recommend proofing line by line from a printout, not attempting to do so from a computer screen. Bear in mind that the absolute worst person to proofread is the person responsible for the writing or editing. The reason? That individual will probably mentally read the material as it's supposed to be written, not what's actually printed! If at all possible, have someone else give your masterpiece a once over.

With the final original in hand, all that remains to be done is to run down to the copy shop, wait for the printing to be finished, bring the copies home, fold and insert them into envelopes, stick stamps on the envelopes, and then take the whole mess down to the post office. If the newsletter is only one page, the expense of envelopes can be saved by folding in thirds and addressing the back.



Multiple column format makes layout easier, especially when articles are relatively short, above left. One problem is *clashing heads*, which occurs when a heading in one column is directly adjacent to one in another. Using different style fonts and sizes, or inserting illustrations helps eliminate this. Some editors become ambitious and produce multiple page newsletters, such as one formerly edited by Rick Houghland of the Dallas–Park Cities Philatelic Society, above right. The author has helped update *THE TEXAS PHILATELIST*, below.



An often-overlooked way to assist an editor is for a member who lives close by to volunteer to handle the distribution once the editor has the original ready.

Editor 'Burnout'

As I alluded to earlier, of all the duties necessary to the operation of a successful club, preparing the newsletter and getting it out in a timely manner is one of the most critical to the long-term viability of the group. The individual who takes on the task realizes that, and is usually quite dedicated, churning out issue after issue. Occasionally, he or she will receive kudos and recognition for a job well done, which is all well and good.

But I can tell you from experience that's not what the editor really wants; it's contributions from members. When an editor approaches a member asking for "something to put in the newsletter," an affirmative response is music to his or her ears. On the other hand, hearing excuse after excuse like "maybe later" and "too busy" eventually leads to editor *burnout*. And often, fellow club members never quite figure out why the editor quit.

Newsletters and the Internet

The Internet has introduced an entirely new distribution channel for newsletters — copies that are downloadable from Web sites, or are sent via e-mail. The Mid-Cities Stamp Club of Arlington, Texas has offered the former capability for almost six years while the Dallas–Park Cities Philatelic Society has tried the latter.

Whether electronic transmission of newsletters becomes the wave of the future is uncertain. Most collectors still like going to the mail box and receiving their newsletter in the mail, if for no other reason than a new commemorative stamp might have been used to mail it!

Arthur P. von Reyn of Dallas, TX, is president of the Texas Philatelic Association, Inc.

He has been assisting Douglas Moss, editor of the association's journal, The Texas Philatelist. This article originally appeared in the January–February issue of that journal, as did his previous article on image preparation.



Reviews

Print and Electronic

Books & Catalogues

Planty Volumes XVII and XVIII

Mellone's Planty Photo Encyclopedia of Cacheted First Day Covers, volumes XVII and XVIII, Barry Newton, editor. 8½ × 11 inches, card covers, perfect or comb bound, 214 and 104 pages respectively, ©2006 F.D.C. Publishing Co.. Perfect binding \$44.95, comb binding \$47.95 for volume XVII; perfect binding \$19.95, comb binding \$22.95 for volume XVIII plus postage from F.D.C. Publishing Co., P. O. Box 206, Stewartsville NJ 08886.

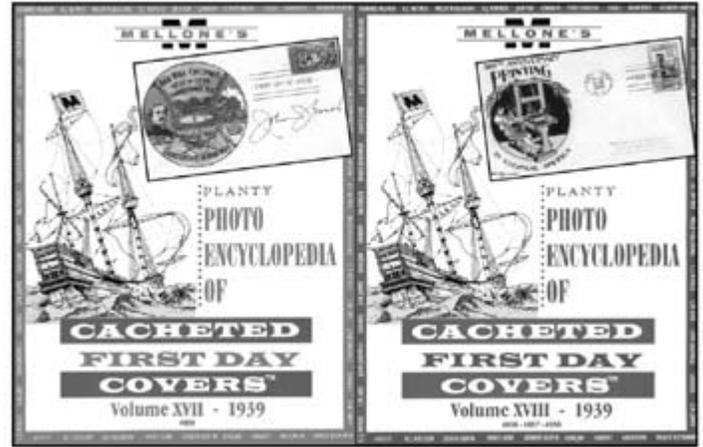
The two final volumes have arrived, completing an 18-volume project begun in 1994 that illustrates, describes, and prices the cacheted first day cover of United States stamps from 1901 through 1939. This has been a labor of love for Mike Mellone and Dorothy Graf, as well as a corps of collectors and editors who helped gather the information, illustrations, and pricing data for the entire series.

Collectors looking for how many cachets are available for a given stamp issue, who the cachetmakers were, and the approximate retail values for these covers, will find the answers in this wonderful multi-volume encyclopedia.

Completing volume XVII was an especially difficult task, for it is devoted entirely to the enormous number of illustrated covers that exist for the popular 1939 baseball centennial stamp, Scott No. 855. More than 300 major cachets of the period are listed, followed

by more than 100 corner card envelopes of individuals, firms, and organizations that serviced FDCs for the issue. In addition, there are many subvarieties shown that expand on these numbers.

The third group of covers is 100 major types of add-on cachets that were applied to unillustrated FDCs many years later. A fourth group consists of general purpose cachets not designed for this specific stamp. For this volume only, an alphabetical index of cachetmakers appears at the end.



The final volume, XVIII, covers the cacheted FDCs for 1939 stamps commemorating the Panama Canal, tercentenary of the printing press in colonial America, and the 50th anniversaries of North and South Dakota, Montana, and Washington statehood.

The illustrations throughout are quite clear and of sufficient size to enable collectors to identify their covers easily. This series provides U.S. cacheted first day cover collectors with the major reference library they need, for the time period covered.

Mellone plans to update his catalogues of the cachets of the 1940s, with a third edition.

— Alan Warren

Newest and Biggest Swiss Strubel Book

Das Grosse Handbuch der eidgenössischen Ausgabe / Sitzende Helvetia Ungezähnt / Les Rappen / Sitting Helvetia Imperforate / 1854–1863 by Urs Hermann. 8½ × 12 inches, case bound; in German, tables, charts and illustrations in color and B & W, Volume I 656 pages, Volume II 174 pages. ©2006 Strubel Study Group, Swiss Postal History Society. Price 340 Swiss francs (about \$381) plus 55SFr postage (about \$55) from Geri Oeschger, Schwimmbadstraße 43, CH-5430 Wettingen, Switzerland, telephone 011-41-56-437 35 75.

The Strubel Study Group of the Swiss Postal History Society has finally published a huge book on the imperforate Sitting Helvetia stamps (known as Strubels), presumably giving us the ultimate word on a subject that has bewitched and bothered the best Swiss philatelic researchers and authors for more than 100 years. Led by author Urs Hermann, the study group dug so diligently and successfully for new information on production and usage that it was forced to miss the 150th anniversary of the first Strubels in 2004, not releasing this two-volume work until 2006 at NABA Baden, the most recent Swiss national exhibition.

The book contains, as expected, a new classification for the cat-

aloging of the Strubels, offering a simplified and a specialized listing and comparing both to the most recent arrangements in the Zumstein Specialized Catalog (2000) and Brach (also 2000). To the uninitiated the Strubels look fairly straightforward, falling into five categories: Munich printing on Munich paper with (1) green silk threads or (2) different colored threads, Bern printing on (3) Munich paper or (4) Zurich paper with different colored threads, and Bern printing on Zurich paper with (5) green threads.

But to place each stamp in the correct sequence within each group, this book evaluates in almost overpowering detail not only the sources of paper and color of threads, but also four paper thicknesses, three sizes of printing plates, spacing between individual clichés, regularity of cliché rows, numerous cliché faults, quality of embossing, printing completeness and clarity, many ink color varieties, production quantities, shipping dates, and periods of use. The findings are illustrated and documented in hundreds of color and black and white tables, charts, and illustrations of the highest quality. In covering all these details the book also includes pictures of more Strubel color proofs and mint blocks than I think have been recorded in any other publication.

Part 1 of Volume I presents an overview, including biographies of

the involved government officials, stamp design sources, technology for Dickinson silk thread paper, descriptions of the paper mills and printing presses, and statistics on the quantities of stamps printed and sold. These last numbers make it clear why there is an abundance of Strubels still available today for this kind of deep study. Part 2 concentrates on the Munich printings, Part 3 on the Bern printings, Part 4 on the new catalog classification and a stamp valuation table, and Part 5 on postage rates, the great variety of cancellations, and examples of different frankings, including mixed usages with stamps from other Strubel printings, Swiss issues and countries.

No doubt to limit the weight of Volume I, the study group has

placed several appendixes in Volume II. It contains a census of known domestic frankings arranged by the ascending amount of postage, rate tables for foreign destinations worldwide, 60 pages of footnotes for the text in Volume I, and a bibliography.

At the conclusion of Parts 1, 2, and 3 in Volume I, the author includes a very brief summary in four other languages besides the German used throughout the text. "With the translated summary and the support of the pictures and statistics," Hermann writes, "a general understanding is possible." A reading knowledge of German, however, will make this magnum opus much easier to use.

— Harlan F. Stone, *Consilium Philateliae Helveticae* (CPhH)

Word War II Patriotics

***United States Patriotic Envelopes of World War II* by Lawrence Sherman. 8½ × 11¼ inches, 438 pages case bound with dust jacket. ©2006 James E. Lee Publishing, Cary IL. ISBN 0-9712608-8-5, \$75 plus shipping from James E. Lee, P. O. Box 36, Cary IL 60013-0036.**

This book is an updated and expanded version of the author's original book titled *United States Patriotic Covers of World War II* published by the Collectors Club of Chicago in 1999. The changes and improvements are reflected in the page count (438 vs. 380), as well as the fact that color is used entirely throughout the new edition. Collectors provided examples not found in the original volume, resulting in 1,400 additional cachets. Further research uncovered new details on cachetmakers and their artistic methods.

Sherman begins with a brief history of the evolution of envelope art leading to the United States patriotic covers of the Second World War. A discussion on printing methods is followed by biographies of some of the major cachetmakers of the time including Walter Crosby, Jacques Minkus, Herman Fluegel, Dorothy Knapp, George Linn, and others.

The next chapter begins the catalogue listings with the work of hand-painted covers by such artists as Gladys Adler, Dorothy Knapp, and Arthur Knoll that are listed separately, followed with an alphabetical listing of other artists. The tables identify the publisher, catalogue number, cachet text, color, general topic (map, event, Japan, VJ Day, etc.), and a price-indicating letter from A (\$3–6) to I (more than \$1,000). Suspicious or fraudulent covers are marked

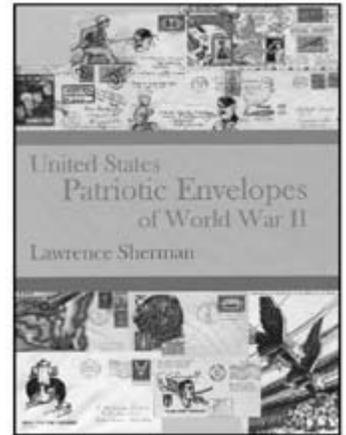
with an X. A separate chapter reviews the prolific WW II patriotic envelopes of Minkus.

The catalogue listing appears in chapter 7 and consumes more than 250 pages. The listing is peppered with a number of illustrations of these beautiful works of envelope art. Two short tables are the publisher catalogue and the publisher imprint catalogue. The former identifies the abbreviated name of the publishers, their imprint, the site where it is found (corner card, back flap, front), the full name of the publishers, and the city and state of operation.

The imprints listing tabulates the letters and words that help identify the cachet maker, any illustration, and the short and full names of the publisher. A number of the imprints illustrated include Gladys Adler, ArtCraft, Cachetcraft (Staehele), and Zubay.

A selected bibliography will lead readers to further sources and an index concludes the volume. Sherman's new edition becomes the definitive account of this popular World War II phenomenon. The knockout color illustrations will no doubt induce more collectors to exhibit such material in the illustrated mail division at our national shows.

— Alan Warren



New Zealand FDCs

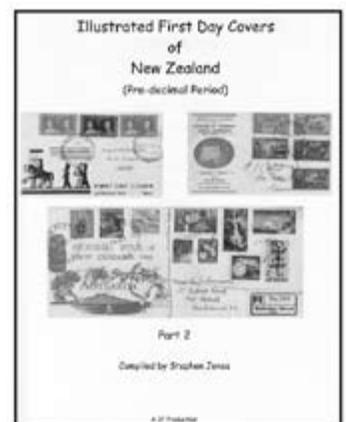
***Illustrated First Day Covers of New Zealand (Pre-Decimal Period), Part 2* by Stephen Jones. 8 × 11¼ inches, 312 pages, stiff covers, comb bound. ©2004 self-published, Lower Hutt, New Zealand, ISBN 0-476-00245-1. Approximately U.S.\$20, available from David Holmes Philatelist, Ltd., P. O. Box 27646, Auckland 1020, New Zealand; e-mail DAVID@STAMPWORLD.CO.NZ.**

Stephen Jones publishes a newsletter on illustrated first day covers of New Zealand. This is his second catalogue, the first one having dealt with the health issues of his country. Part 2 focuses largely on FDCs of the definitive and commemorative issues from 1935 to 1967.

The stamps are divided into four sections of the catalogue: commemoratives, definitives, Christmas, and *other*, and are listed chronologically therein. The author developed his own system

of catalogue numbering. Each listing begins with a letter denoting one of the four sections (C for commemoratives, D for definitives, etc.), followed by the two-digit year date (37 for 1937). Then comes a number indicating which issue for a given year — if there were six stamp issues in a calendar year, then a number from one to six appears. Last is a letter that identifies the cachet maker.

Other aspects of each cover description include date of issue,



envelope size, cachet color(s), and a scarcity value from common (1) to rare (7). In addition there is a notation as to whether the cover was distributed locally, regionally, or nationally, followed by any specific comments. The beauty of each listing is that the entire cover is illustrated in black and white and only slightly reduced in size.

The catalogue page numbering is a bit confusing as each of the four sections begins again with page 1. The last section, Other, includes the government life, Ross Dependency, and airmail issues.

Several appendices cover other authorized uses; last day of use

(two examples); limited edition hand illustrated covers including paste-on labels and typewritten cachets; and miscellaneous items such as picture post cards.

The author used his own extensive collection as a basis for the catalogue as well as materials of other collectors. Although his treatment appears to be exhaustive, he admits there will likely be further discoveries. The illustrations are quite good and of sufficient size so as to reveal many details for each cover.

— Alan Warren

Briefly Noted

O.A.T. and A.V.2. Markings, third edition, by Murray Heifetz. 8½ × 11 inches, 167 pages, soft cover. ©2007 the American Air Mail Society. \$15 plus \$4 domestic postage from Greg Schmidt, 1978 Fox Burrow Court, Neenah, WI 54956-1184; e-mail GSCHMIDT7@NEW.RR.COM. Foreign purchasers contact Schmidt first to determine shipping charges PayPal from foreign purchasers accepted, provided the PayPal fee of 5 percent is added.

These markings owe their origin to Universal Postal Union procedures and are civil markings, although O.A.T. cachets were applied almost exclusively to airmail items expedited by *Onward Air Transmission*. They are known from 1938 to 1974 and usually are seen on World War II covers. A.V.2 is the number of a UPU form used for processing airmail.

O.A.T. / A.V.2. markings were: (1) transit instructions when applied at the exchange office; (2) alert indicators applied at the office of origin showing that air transit is required; and (3) for the A.V.2. strike, to alert postal authorities at an exchange point that an *open* dispatch was accompanied by the required A.V.2 form. Both markings normally were applied only to the top cover in a bundle.

This 167-page book provides comprehensive coverage of the markings, a summary of the UPU procedures for their use, and shows the forms and tags / labels used by postal authorities. Since the second edition, a number of new markings have been added and some previous assumptions have been modified. The database of markings has almost doubled, resulting in changes to the order of rarity. Main additions are sections on forgeries and facing tags and labels, and modifications to places of marking origins. In marking types there is one new O.A.T. and 10 new A.V.2s. The book is copiously illustrated with all varieties of O.A.T. and A.V.2 markings, including many covers with these airmail markings.

— Ken Sanford

Table of French Postal Rates 1849 to 2005, third edition, by Derek Richardson. A5 format, 100 pages, card covers. ©2005 French & Colonies Philatelic Society of Great Britain. U.S. residents may order from The Philatelic Bibliopole, P. O. Box 36006, Louisville, KY 40233-6006; WWW.PBBOOKS.COM, for \$20 plus \$3 postage and handling. All others from Peter Maybury, 18 Courtneys, Wheldrake, York YO19 6BR, UK; e-mail STOCK@FCPS.ORG.UK; pricing varies according to destination.

The first edition of this very useful, compact booklet was published in 1992 and consisted of 59 pages. The new enlarged and corrected edition uses cleaner and more legible fonts, and the numerous tables are easier to use. The original 19 sections of different internal rates have been increased to 29 and their places in the handbook have been rearranged, mainly for the better. New

(since the first edition) rate sections now include the *simple tax*, election literature, prices for postal stationery, debt and COD collection, money transfers, rates to the overseas departments and territories, and postal service for the blind.

Foreign rates again begin only with 1876 and the beginning of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), which was founded in 1874. The original seven sections have grown to 11, and now include mail for the blind; additionally, newspapers, books, maps music scores have been moved from the general section for printed matter, et al.

For pre-1849 internal rates and pre-1876 international rates, as well as information on non-franchise military rates, etc., the long out-of-print *Les Tarifs Postaux Français 1627-1969* by J.-P. Alexandre, et al, remains the *bible*, although readers having difficulty with French may find it hard to navigate. The Alexandre work is listed here in a concluding two-page bibliography.

— Stanley J. Luft

Colorado Revenue Stamps by Kenneth Pruess. 8½ × 11 inches, 58 pages, softbound. ©2007 self-published. \$12.50 postpaid from Pruess, 1441 Urbana Lane, Lincoln, NE 68505-1971.

Pruess has built on previous catalogues by George Cabot and Bert Hubbard and the research of Frank Bocovich (to whom the volume is dedicated) to compile a worthwhile addition to state revenue literature. The simple two-column layout format has large, easy-to-read text. Each stamp series is illustrated. Image quality is not high but it is sufficient for stamp identification. Significant varieties are listed. At the end of each stamp category references are provided for anyone who wishes to do additional research. An index and additional references are at the end of the catalogue.

While there is not an extensive discussion of the tax rates and usages of Colorado issues, you will find a solid general listing of all the state's issues across a broad spectrum of categories, including liquor, tobacco, feed and fertilizer, bedding, drug, motor vehicle, sales tax, and fish and game. Colorado specialists will especially appreciate the listings of the difficult municipal stamps.

Because of the large variety of issues, Colorado is a not an easy state to catalogue, but Pruess provides clear listings that include a brief introduction, the year of issue, stamp identification, catalogue number, denomination, color, and a catalogue value. Oddly, Pruess provides only one value for each catalogue number meaning that he considers that mint and used stamps are of the same value. This is rarely the case, even for low value stamps. Pruess also does not identify a grade (fine, very fine or extremely fine) for his assigned values. In general, the catalogue values are very conservative and anyone who has an opportunity to buy the listed stamps in very fine condition at the catalogue values provided will get a good buy.

— Peter D. Martin

Electronic Media



Exploring Japanese Forgeries

Forgeries of the Dragon, Cherry Blossom and Koban Postage Stamps of Japan (ISJP CD-ROM Monograph 1) by Ron Casey, Thomas L. Zane, and Lois M. Evans-de Violini. Single CD-ROM with 446 MB of data. ©2002 International Society for Japanese Philately, Inc., ISBN 0-934282-17-X. \$49.95 postpaid to non-members anywhere in the world from the ISJP, P. O. Box 1283, Haddonfield NJ 08033-0760. The price includes a one-year membership in the society. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS: IBM-compatible or Macintosh computer with Internet web browser installed; a 17-inch SVGA monitor with a minimum 1024 × 768 resolution and 256 colors is desirable.

Japan's first three stamp issues — nicknamed the Dragons (1871–1872), Cherry Blossoms (1872–1876), and Kobans (1876–1892) — were released during the Meiji Restoration, a period when the feudal power of the Tokugawa *shōgunate* was destroyed and Emperor Meiji-tennō opened Japan up to Western commerce and ideas. As a result, there was enormous Western interest in Japan and a lot of money to be made by forging these early Japanese stamps for sale to foreigners and tourists. The creation of postal *imitations* was legal in Japan until 1905, so even today as many as 80 percent of the copies of these stamps on the market are not genuine (Scott No. 1–71).

There is an upside, however. Since most of these forgeries were intended to deceive foreigners rather than deprive postal authorities of revenue, many of them are marked *sankō* (考参), *mozō* (造摸), or *mihon* (見本) — reference, imitation, or specimen — on their faces in kanji characters. (Japanese specialists call these *signed forgeries*, which is something of a misnomer.) Moreover, most unsigned forgeries are rather crudely done and easily identifiable by an educated collector with the help of good reference materials.

Enter this CD-ROM monograph published by the ISJP. According to the foreword, it contains the equivalent of 2,340 paper pages and illustrates about 1,800 different forgeries. The authors assert that it “captures all known information, as of spring 2002, about the forgeries of these classic stamps.” Such a wealth of data could be daunting to collectors less experienced than the authors, but

helps such as a bibliography, glossary, key to the major design elements of each issue, and tutorials on *How to Use this Database* and *Reading with an HTML Browser* are included. The bibliography could be vastly improved by hot linking the references to included soft copies of them, at least for the ISJP articles and monographs.

Collectors using this disc can choose just how deeply they want to delve into their specimens. For each issue there is a general section that simply explains how to tell the genuine stamps from the forgeries, but there are also more detailed plate and state studies that will allow specialists to identify their forged specimens exactly. Apart from the technical information, lengthy introductions to each known forger give historical background on their activities, such as production and distribution methods.

In terms of presentation, this is one of the most attractive philatelic CD-ROMs I have reviewed thus far. Rather than being a collection of PDF files, it is presented in HTML format and, therefore, is really a Web site on CD. The authors have made good use of the flexibility this provides, and users can access the information on the disc either by stamp issue or by forger. Adding a search engine to the disc would have been a nice bonus, although end users can achieve the same effect — albeit less elegantly — by using their operating system's built-in search function.

Nearly every image on the CD is hotlinked to either a 300 or 600 percent enlargement, and a second click on the enlargement brings the user back to the original page. Most importantly, great care has evidently been taken to secure the cleanest possible scans of the best specimens.

Newly found data — information that was discovered too late for the CD — and corrections are available on the society's Web site:

[HTTP://ISJP.ORG/CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS.HTML](http://ISJP.ORG/CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS.HTML)

[HTTP://ISJP.ORG/CORRECTIONS/CORRECTIONS.HTML](http://ISJP.ORG/CORRECTIONS/CORRECTIONS.HTML)

For specialists in classic Japanese philately, *Forgeries of the Dragon, Cherry Blossom and Koban Postage Stamps of Japan* is an invaluable reference work. For the rest of us, it is a model worthy of imitation and a case study in how to present dense and detailed philatelic information in an accessible and attractive format.

— Daniel A. Piazza

Classic First Day Covers

WINFRED MILTON GRANDY: A PHILATELIC BIOGRAPHY by Joseph P. Connolly with Sean P. Connolly. 995 pages, CD-ROM, self-published by the author, ©2006. \$23 postpaid in the United States from Joseph P. Connolly, 571 Treat Lane, Orange, CT 06477.

Until now collectors of Grandy cachets have had to rely on occasional articles in the philatelic press and several catalogs including Barry Newton's 1980 catalogue, *Winfred M. Grandy: FDC Photo Cachet Catalog* published by F.D.C. Publishing Co. Now we have a major collector of Grandy materials, who personally knew the cachetmaker, prepare a listing of the cachets and varieties along with background material and historic photographs.

As an introduction to his subject, author Connolly provides a few photos of Grandy, a biographical sketch and even some articles that Grandy wrote for *Covers* magazine in the early 1940s.

The recognized first commercial cachet that Grandy prepared was for the 1935 Connecticut Tercentenary issue, Scott No. 772. The depth of Connolly's knowledge and material is reflected in the artist's design work and proofs, the cachet varieties, and even unofficial cancels. There are also photographs of the actual printing cuts in many cases.

Following the introductory sections the format of the catalog is to illustrate the cachets chronologically for first day covers beginning with the 1930s and going on to the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. In these later years Grandy did fewer new issues and his last two cachets appear to be for the 10-cent Landing of Rochambeau postal card in 1980.

After the FDCs there are sections devoted to a few airmail issues, picture post cards that Grandy designed (mostly for Lincoln and Civil War themes), and event covers. Grandy was president of the Universal Ship Cancellation Society from 1945 to 1947 and

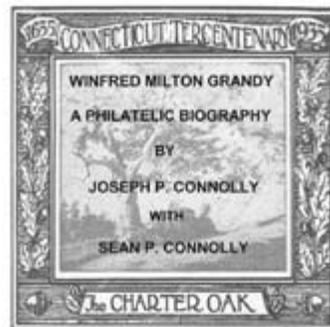
a number of his convention covers for the David Bushnell Chapter No. 48 are shown. Grandy also did several cachets for the Tri-State Collectors Exhibitions in the 1970s.

Next are some World War II period patriotic cachets, some Grandy cuts borrowed by others to prepare covers, examples of pasted-on cachets where the master cut his own cachets and applied them to uncached covers, and recycled cachets that others used to prepare FDCs of newer issues that are related to cachet themes. A final section, appropriately titled "They Ain't Grandys," illustrates cachets attributed to the cachetmaker but made by others, many of whom are identified by author Connolly.

The format of the CD's contents is one large Adobe Acrobat PDF file. Although the pages are not numbered, the Adobe Reader toolbar indicates which page you are on, and when you go to print, it also tells you the current page number. Page numbers placed directly on each page would have been helpful for reference.

This compact disc is a fine example of what modern technology can provide at a fraction of the cost of a printed book. The CD contains wonderful full color illustrations and covers nearly a thousand pages! The love of his subject breathes throughout the author's work. Joseph Connolly, with the assistance of his son, has prepared an in-depth document of the life and work of one of the hobby's most famous cachetmakers. Grandy collectors will forever be indebted to the Connollys for this compilation.

— Alan Warren



Revised Inmate Mail Book

German Concentration Camps 1933–1945: History and Inmate Mail by Erik Lørdahl. CD-ROM version 3.0, ©June 2005, available from War and Philabooks Ltd., Gydas v. 52, 1413 Tårnåsen, Norway. The CD varies in cost depending on whether the buyer has previously been recorded as a purchaser of the original printed book and/or the CD version 2 that was released in 2004. Pricing and availability may be obtained by contacting the publisher or the author at LORERI@C2I.NET.

This revised version of the author's original book published in 2000 is now furnished on CD-ROM. As a result of contact with other collectors, the new discoveries contributed to increasing the size of this book from 700 to 1,200 pages. The text is in English, which is amplified by a table of German terms and abbreviations with the English equivalents.

The formats of all of the text chapters are MS Word documents and there is an Excel table of the prisoners' mail database. This is an extraordinary work that brings together so much historic and postal information regarding the German camps and subcamps and underscores the nature of the holocaust.

The historic description of the camps during the Third Reich includes a calendar of major events, names of the camp commanders, maps showing camp locations in Europe, and listings of

the camps with opening and closing dates. These are divided into two groups — 1933–1939 and 1936–1945.

Types of mail include official mail, prisoner mail, formular cards, envelopes, lettercards, and post cards, among others. Special cachets, labels, and censor markings are itemized. More than 70 camps are listed with examples of mail, censor marks, and special labels associated with each of them. There is also an extensive list of the subcamps.

One chapter deals with forgeries of postal artifacts associated with 11 camps. Fortunately the amount of forged material is limited, but is a hazard for collectors of camp mail. A series of newsletters that updated earlier versions of this book are included on the CD.

The large database provides prisoners' names, the camps they were in, nationality, prisoner number, location within the camp (block number), and letters and documents associated with the prisoners. The sources of these last items are recorded in the database and were provided largely from collectors around the world who helped author Lørdahl with this monumental project.

Literature references for further reading are provided. Many of the censor markings and items of mail are illustrated.

— Alan Warren

Journals & Newsletters

Texas Postal History Society Journal

Published quarterly by the Texas Postal History Society. 8½ × 11 inches, saddle stitched, 24 pages. Editor Tom Koch, 1013 Springbrook Drive, DeSoto, TX 75115, KOCHACABANA@TX.RR.COM.

Sometimes a philatelic journal or other stamp periodical will appear with articles that are specialized to the point where the reader is forced to reread them in order to digest their information. Some editors feel they must publish technical articles in tune to the subject covered in their particular journal. The *Texas Postal History Society Journal* takes a different approach by publishing articles easy on the eyes and geared towards all collectors as well as non-collectors. *USA Today* presents a publication with appealing articles and the Texas publication capitalizes on this approach.

The society began publishing an all-color journal with the May 2006 issue. Prior to that most illustrations were in black and white with occasional color photographs and a color cover. The journal is printed on clay-coated paper that enhances the quality of the illustrations whether they are in color or black and white. Other illustrations including maps were of high quality. (EDITOR'S NOTE: The journal is printed by Adventure Graphics in Dallas, which also prints *The Texas Philatelist*, journal of the Texas Philatelic Association, and the *Stamp Insider*, journal of the Federation of New York Philatelic Societies.)

Each issue contains five to six articles of two to 10 pages long covering the wide range of Texas postal history. Recent issues included articles covering post offices and postmarks, free frankings, and Confederate postal history relating to Texas. All articles were concisely written and well illustrated. The reader can only walk away with the desire to look for Texas covers and ultimately take up collecting that state's postal history.

Each issue's regular features include a message from the society's president. The current president is Vince King who also pens a regular feature surveying Texas covers at auction. His commentary is valuable in that the reader can make an informed decision when it comes time to bid at auction. His annotations read between the lines of often-archaic auction descriptions. Also interesting is the Texas History Timeline by Kreg Walvoord, which is a useful tool when searching for postmarks commemorating Texas history.



— Alfred Carroccia

Briefly Noted

THE COMPUTELIST is the quarterly publication of the Philatelic Computing Study Group (www.PCSG.ORG). Its primary goal is to help philatelists get the most out of their computers. With the advent of the Internet and the technological advances that enable volumes to be written to CD and DVD, collectors are realizing that the computer is just as important a tool to stamp collecting, as are tongs. The 20-page, 8½ × 11-inch, black and white illustrated, saddle-stitched journal achieves this balance by looking at all areas of computers and philately. Articles explore the use of such software as Excel and Word as philatelic tools, with practical examples as to how an average collector would utilize those products. One excellent article geared towards beginners explained how a scanner can be used to read and extract postmarks from covers. Another fascinating article explained how the 1,000-plus page *The Complete Deegam Machin Handbook* was put on CD using Adobe Acrobat. The current editor, Al Gore, and Webmaster Rene Kienzle have resigned and the group is seeking replacements. Contact is Richard Sine, 400 Poplar St., Fort Mill, SC 29715, PRESIDENT@PCSG.ORG.

THE AMERICAN STAMP DEALER & COLLECTOR is published 10 times a year by the American Stamp Dealers Association, Inc. (ASDA). This publication is billed as a national stamp collecting magazine with slick color throughout with crisp color illustrations and graphics. While it is published by the ASDA, the content is geared toward the collecting community. The “& Collector” recently was added to the name to reflect this. The articles range from specialized, including a recent one on expertising typographed overprints, to a beginners question and answer feature. Regular features balanced information geared towards both col-

lector and dealer. Information is available from ASDA, 3 School St., Suite 205, Glen Cove, NY 11542.

ACROSS THE FENCE POST is the monthly newsletter of the Wisconsin Federation of Stamp Clubs. The 8½ × 11-inch folder is printed in black and white with one or two photographs and illustrations. The newsletter details the activities of Wisconsin clubs and collectors and publishes an extensive calendar of shows. Each issue also featured a short article penned by editor Wayne L. Youngblood on scarce usages and unique covers which are always interesting to read. Information from Wayne L. Youngblood, P. O. Box 111, Scandinavia, WI 54977-0111.

SHOW ME GAZETTE, the official newsletter of the Missouri Postal History Society, is published quarterly. Issues range from 10 to 12 pages in length with black and white illustrations. Each 8½ × 11-inch issue contains an in-depth, clearly written, and well-illustrated feature article covering aspects of Missouri postal history. Society news and events are also chronicled along with a regular feature entitled the “Back Cover” with an interesting cover shown — where else? — on the back cover.

Information from P. O. Box 32858, St. Louis, MO 63232.

— Alfred Carroccia

Material for reviews may be sent to the editor. Reviews are also welcomed from others. Reviews should be concise and stress those aspects that are helpful examples (positive or negative) for other authors, editors, and publishers. Review requests from those having an interest in the item, such as publishers and distributors, must include a copy of the publication. 

Digital Creation — Continued from Cover

background data, checklists, maps, etc. beyond what may typically be found in the DPS examples I've seen so far.

Some DPS examples resemble exhibits and others don't; it apparently is a matter of personal taste or final objective for format and content. Examples of previous DPS submissions to the Mega-Event can be found online at the ASDA Web site (WWW.ASDAONLINE.COM/INDEX.PHP?ID=57). Using the Mega-Event DPS rules, the overall structure, purpose and components for a digital philatelic reference/study are now better defined.

Keep in mind that per Mega-Event rules, a DPS doesn't have to be a one person show. The power of comprehensiveness lies in collaboration between collectors of the same area, each contributing to the whole work. Another interesting facet is the ability to include material you do

not own to demonstrate points you might not be able to demonstrate using only material from your personal collection. This option opens up a world of possibilities allowing research and knowledge to be presented without steep material acquisition costs.

With the *what* being addressed to some degree, let's look at the *how*. The nuts and bolts of *how-to* is variable depending on your goal. The items you'll need are: (1) Hardware — your computer and access to a scanner or digital camera; (2) Software — either word processing software (MS Word), or Presentation software (MS PowerPoint), or Page Layout software (Adobe InDesign); (3) Time (each of us has some); (4) Philatelic material — your collection and other scans; (5) Information and knowledge of the subject area; and (6) Supplies — ink, labels, CDs, and DVDs). All but one of these items is straightforward; most people have misgivings about No. 2. You believe you need to be an expert user of PowerPoint or whatever software you have, right?

Doing a Google search for "free PowerPoint tutorial," I found a large number of quick lessons that were graphical and *free*. I've used free online graphic tutorials and they do help. Other resources are the local adult education classes, or, if you're really having trouble and need an in-house expert, ask the grandkids! (EDITOR'S NOTE: Most high-end programs come with online tutorials. The *Dummies* series (Wiley Publishing, Inc.; WWW.DUMMIES.COM) and *Visual Quickstart Guides* (Peachpit Press; WWW.PEACHPIT.COM) books are also excellent resources.) Another consideration is publication production costs. If you burn a CD for distribution and add a plastic case with a printed label, a single finished CD is less than \$3 for materials, including label, printer ink, and electricity.

I'd like to encourage all exhibitors and collectors to share their knowledge by building electronic exhibits, digital philatelic studies, and/or reference documents using whichever method with which they are most comfortable. Each method has its own benefits and

practicalities, familiarity with the software used being a main one.

For my goal of developing a digital philatelic reference, I personally decided to learn and use XHTML (eXtensible HyperText Markup Language) as my goals include (1) making the reference universal across Windows and Macintosh computers, (2) readable using any Web browser software (MS Internet Explorer, Firefox, etc.), and (3) readily shared via the Internet. You can use most any software to produce your document. If you save your shiny new document in PDF (portable document format), it will be readable across computer platforms with the free Adobe PDF reader software most every computer user has. (EDITOR'S NOTE: In addition to working seamlessly on Windows and Macintosh computers, Acrobat is also available for Palm Pilot, Pocket PC, and Nokia Symbian for its Communicator 9500 series and 9210/9290 devices. The handheld devices are ideal for accessing data at shows or other

places where a traditional computer is unavailable. Adobe is promising to release a Linux version in the near future.)

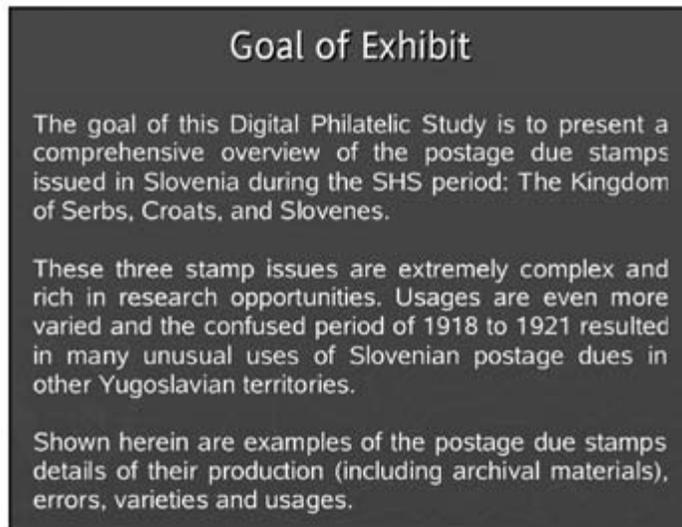
The following list is not a step-by-step procedure, but rather some points I've come to recognize as being helpful in my efforts. Bear in mind that this *tip list* is not specifically Mega-Event criteria, nor is every factor included; but, it may be helpful to those starting out with their own digital efforts.

1. The Three Keys

- The viewer is king: Understanding viewers' desires to learn leads to a useful digital reference tool or DPS.
- Clearly define the document's title, purpose and objectives on the entry page.
- Don't make me think — show me.

2. Viewer-Centric

- The document should be free of needless distractions. Keep the viewer's interest in a positive way.
- A document's simplicity lets viewers concentrate on content.
- Uncluttered layout, which is pleasing to the eye, promotes comprehension.
- Include a table of contents with a brief description of each main section.
- An index is very useful in larger documents as it allows viewers to easily find pages of interest. Linking directly to each main section is helpful.
- A *help* page is great for explaining navigation methods and other features within a document.
- Inclusion of advertising and commercial notices should not overpower content.
- If such technology as Adobe Flash is used for an entry page, allow visitors to *skip* to the main content.



Clear goals help both the creator and user.

3. Ease of Use

- Organize and present your knowledge in a way that supports the learning process. As this is a new medium, experimental approaches are expected.
- No portion of a document should be password protected: the goal is unhindered access.
- Allow access to content without making the viewer go through a number of steps or registration.
- Do not include multiple entry pages or a long path to content — one or two clicks is best.
- A viewer should be able to go directly to any main section from the index or table of contents.
- Include a function to return to the table of contents or index from every page in the document.
- Long pages should have a *top of page* function at the bottom, or at regular intervals, on very long pages.

4. Hardware Compatibility and Software Coding

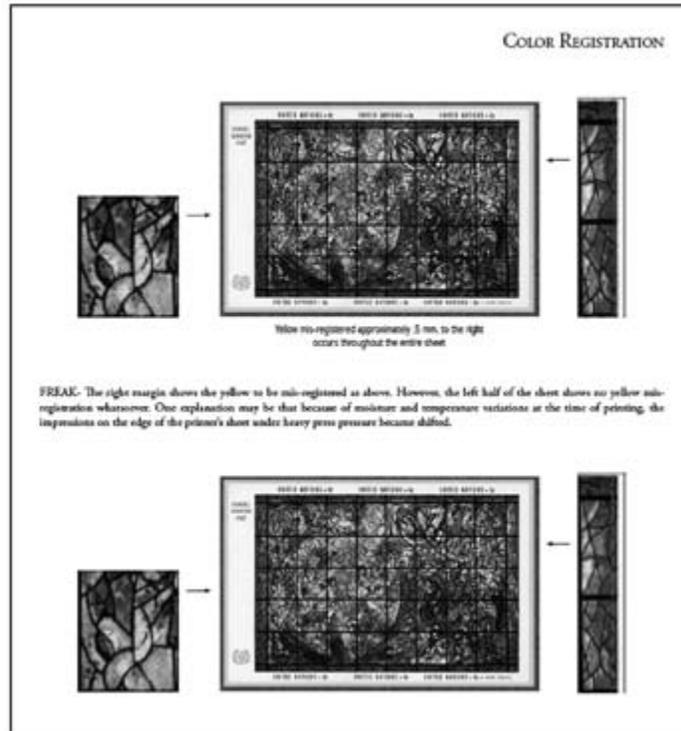
- The document should not freeze or crash viewers' computers.
- Documents should maintain reasonable presentation, regardless of hardware type or software version.
- Coding and scripts (HTML, Javascript, etc.) must work as intended and no code fragments should be visible.
- Do not use cursor trailers, comet cursors, or any uncommonly used software plug-ins.
- There should be no forced software downloads. Use standard software such as Flash Player.
- If using Flash, balance the speed, text-images, brightness-level, color contrast, and sound-volume.
- Functions only available with the latest hardware or software are OK. Include links so users can download newer versions of such software as Acrobat, if necessary. Functions should degrade gracefully, not affecting a document's usability on older systems.

5. Navigation

- Have a clearly visible navigation system, standardized throughout the document.
- The navigation system should be flawless, with no broken links.
- Color encoded sections markers are fine; maintain consistency.
- Links should be named, or have tool tips, so it's clearly understood where the link is going.
- When using alternate navigation methods to enhance navigation, remain consistent.

6. Layout

- Ensure the viewers know where they are in the document by including header and footer information.
- All pages should be laid out in a consistent manner, unless the subject demands specific treatment.
- Subject or section schemes should match throughout the document and not change from page to page.
- Maintain the same color or graphic background on all pages within sections.
- Harmony between text, graphics, and page colors is a good thing.
- Avoid too much information on one page.
- Allow for ample margins and white space around text and graphics.
- Horizontal scrolling to view content not in the window is undesirable. Vertical scrolling is fine.



Generous spacing makes complex material appear less dense.

7. Interactivity

- If software allows embedding active text and graphic links in documents, take advantage of that option.
- Use tool-tip windows to convey supplemental information such as explanations of abbreviations, etc.
- Make hyperlink buttons large enough to be used easily.
- Include an option to turn music or sound off and make the option obvious, easy, and quick to select.
- Do not rely on sound to convey information. Sound is an optional feature to enhance the document.

8. Text in an On-Screen Environment

- Choose a common font for Windows and Macintosh as special fonts can affect your presentation. Some optimized fonts for computer screens include Arial, Georgia, Verdana and Times. (EDITOR'S NOTE: The newer OpenType format, developed jointly by Adobe and Microsoft, allows fonts to be embedded in Adobe and other programs that are universally readable on different platforms.)
- Text must be easily readable and not too large, not too small. Colored backgrounds should be selected with text legibility in mind. Graphic backdrops are generally undesirable.
- Do not use *CoOl WrItiNg*, blinking text, or text on animated backgrounds. Scrolling text (marquees) are also passé.
- Text should not be in multiple colors unless for a specific use such as headers.
- Text should have good contrast with the screen background for visually impaired viewers. (EDITOR'S NOTE: Designers should be aware of color deficient (colorblind) users. One site

Continued on Page 16

Digital Creation — Continued from Page 15

offering a convenient way to test your output is WWW.COLORLAB.WICKLINE.ORG/COLORBLIND/COLORLAB.)

- Use bold type only to emphasize a word or a few words.
- Use italics sparingly as they sometimes display with difficulty on computer screens.
- If hyperlinks are underlined, do not use underlines as text decoration. Underlines are passé for emphasizing text; bold or italics work better.
- Do not use lazy abbreviations such as *U* instead of *you*.

9. Textual Content

- Use your spell check to minimize spelling errors.
- If available, the automatic grammar checker can assist with correcting mistakes.
- Don't use unfamiliar words; if you do, include a definitions page.
- Translations of foreign language markings, etc. are encouraged.
- Do the research to ensure accuracy.
- If it is new information, say so.
- If you have open questions or need information, include a page with that need.

10. Graphic Images

- The document should not consist of only graphic images. Textual descriptions are absolutely necessary.
- Images should include original size information if various sized items exist with identical designs.
- Constructed or composite images should be described as such.
- All images must load properly.
- Images should not be blurry or too small to illustrate the point.
- Color images are great, but optimize images to ensure minimal loading time.
- Images should be relevant to the theme and have a purpose.
- Do not include cute graphics only because you like them.
- Ensure icon images are large enough to communicate the idea behind their purpose.
- Include animations, but use them carefully.
- Limit movie clips due to file size.

11. File Formats

- Use Portable Document Format (PDF) files when possible.
 - a. PDF files may be generated directly within Adobe Creative Suite and Microsoft Office applications.
 - b. Adobe Acrobat Reader is a free download.
 - c. PDF documents display correctly on Windows and Macintosh, as well as hand-held devices.
 - d. PDF documents allow a document to include embedded special fonts.

- Microsoft Word and PowerPoint have third party viewers.
- Documents built with XHTML are universal on all hardware using any Web browser software.
- Illustrations are best viewed as GIFs (graphic image format) and photographs as JPGs.



Tool-tip provides translation of German text.

12. Electronic Files

- The electronic document's file name should be simple.
- Electronic files should include the date the document was last updated or revised.
- Version numbers are helpful when discussing changes.
- A list of newly added information or features is often useful for long-time readers.
- Files contain invisible data (metadata) for search purposes, incorporate such data when possible.
- CDs and DVDs should be enclosed in a protective case with a label.

- CDs and DVDs should be clearly identifiable when removed from their protective case.
- Consider file size carefully. Is it only available on CD or DVD, on the Internet, or also via e-mail?

13. Printed Materials

- If also available in printed format, ensure the typeface is appropriate for printed materials.
- Consider the printed pagination before designing the electronic document.
- Some documents may be made available in two formats, one for screen and one for printing.
- Instructions on using the electronic media are useful.
- Include instructions on the CD label or the inside the case cover.
- CD labels should be clearly legible.

14. Internet

- The document should not be dependent on a connection to the Internet to function.
- Live hyperlinks to Web sites on the Internet may be included on a CD. Note that the computer must be connected to the Internet for them to function properly.
- Live hyperlinks to Web sites on the Internet are treated as strictly supplemental information.
- Hyperlinks to Web sites should open in new windows indicating a change to a different source.
- Hyperlinks to Web sites should complement the document subject and content.

15. Credits and Administrative Info

- A clear statement declaring copyright notices and/or attributions is required. Protect your work; [HTTP://WHATISCOPYRIGHT.ORG](http://WHATISCOPYRIGHT.ORG), [HTTP://CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG](http://CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG).

- Use of graphics not produced by the author is acceptable provided permission and credits are included.
- Identify if a graphic or text is in the public domain.
- Including a bibliography of sources of your information is useful to viewers.
- Make your document freely available in at least a minimal format. This is not saying that you should not charge for the full version.
- Consider adding your document to a Web site as that helps with distribution.
- Reading about the author is interesting, but screen personal information before publication.
- Make it easy to contact you, by including your e-mail address or Web site.

16. Beta Testing

- Before releasing your masterpiece to the public, have friends check it for embarrassing errors, broken links, and poor performance on both Windows and Macintosh platforms.
 - Both expert and novice computer users should check the document's ease of use.
 - Accept feedback and suggestions for improvement gracefully.
- I'm not sure my digital reference will ever be *completely* finished, but that's inherent in the process of information gathering. There's satisfaction in knowing I can continue the journey at my own pace and skill level, plus it's a great outlet for my creative side. I share my digital reference on the Internet and once in a while, I get an e-mail with information on a new stamp release or some other facet of the area. Other collectors are sharing with me as well.

The Future

The future of digital philatelic exhibiting should be bright, although it is fraught with fears of Photoshop fakes, concerns of ownership, verification, or just plain reluctance to include this exhibiting method in the hobby's future. Digital philatelic studies, simply put, are electronic literature. This new breed of literature has far fewer *issues*. DPS rules bypass the fears in digital philatelic

exhibiting, while literature is inherently a collection of information from all sources, regardless of ownership. As the DPS is a completely new development, it owes little to established philatelic competitions and can develop on its own terms, changing its rules as appropriate to accommodate the future.

More and more collectors are becoming familiar with computers and more proficient with various software programs.

Our ability to share information is faster and easier with higher speed connections to the Internet. The avalanche of digital exhibits and title or synopsis pages being posted to the Web today is a good indication that this medium is here to stay and becoming very popular, very quickly.

With the hobby seemingly diminishing, maybe this is another way to help ensure its future among younger generations. Perhaps digital materials for simple studies might also be offered free through our societies and the participants encouraged

to craft them, in their own fashion, into new and exciting formats. Youngsters love computers and being creative. With a little luck, it'll be fun and they will continue with more serious projects, building on the experience and methods of others until we finally have intelligent digital philatelic reference tools that talk to us and search through libraries, etc. on our behalf.

The dream is there for the grasping. So, when can we look forward to seeing your digital effort? 

Francis Adams (FRAN@FRANADAMS.COM), a WU #30 member since 2005, is mainly a collector and exhibitor of thematic subjects. His current efforts are aimed at learning how to combine the hobby of philately and computer technology to produce digital exhibits and literature references for his collecting interest areas (WWW.BONEANDSTONE.COM). He is a member of many national philatelic societies and especially enjoys working with the San Diego Exhibitor's Workshop. Adams is also Web site administrator for the Old World Archaeological Study Unit (WWW.OWASU.ORG).

Expert Help for Writers, Editors

Two notable members of Writers Unit #30 are offering expert help for writers and editors.

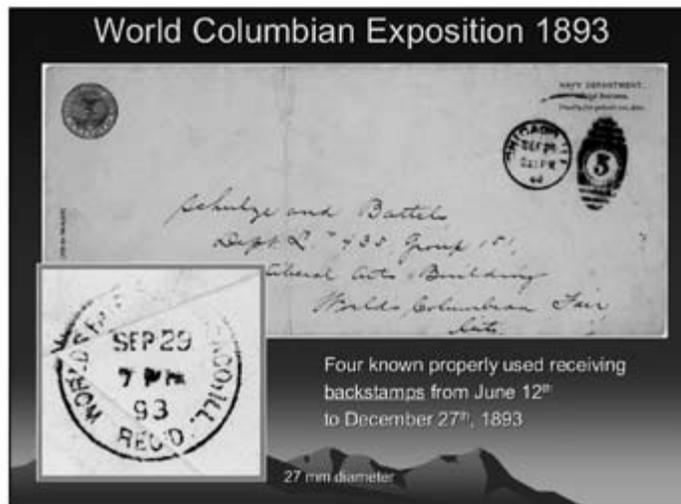
Barth Healey, a senior staff editor at the *New York Times*, will review society journals and other publications, providing constructive comments.

Send two or three recent issues to him at 220 Montauk Hwy., Apt. 16, P. O. Box 277, Speonk NY 11972-0277. Please supply return postage.

Past president Charles J. Peterson offers free critiques for periodicals and books / manuscripts. Submit the four most recent issues. Include postage equivalent to four times the first class mailing fee. Any unused amount will be returned. Critiques can be expected in about 30 days.

Inquire before sending books and manuscripts, providing a brief description. Return time will vary, depending on length and other commitments. Include a SASE.

Send your materials to Peterson at P. O. Box 5559, Laurel, MD 20226. His phone is 301-776-9822; e-mail CJP7777@AOL.COM. 



Graphic enlargements should indicate the original size.

SMALL PUBLICATIONS FACING HUGE POSTAL HIKE

The new postage rates being implemented by the U.S. Postal Service will affect many small and independent publications in this country. Postal rates for smaller periodicals will increase by as much as 30 percent, while some of the largest circulation magazines will face hikes of less than 10 percent.

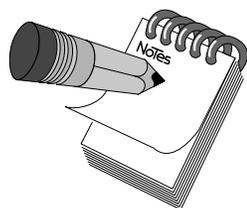
The plan favors to the nation's largest publishers, such as Time Warner and Hearst, while burdening smaller and independent magazines with higher postal rates. The Postal Service Board of Governors recently accepted the periodical rate recommendations

by the Postal Regulatory Commission. According to a document outlining the Board's decision, the Commission recommended "a rate structure proposed by Time Warner, Inc."

The plan to give big media lower rates was submitted by Time Warner, the nation's largest publisher. Postal regulators chose the Time Warner plan — with no public involvement or Congressional oversight— instead of another proposal that would have imposed an equal increase on all publishers.

The Nation magazine is part of a broad coalition that has sent a letter to the Postal Board of Governors opposing the new postage rate plan. The advocacy group *Free Press* is calling for a Congressional hearing on the changes.

— Columbus Free Press and Democracy Now 



Secretary-Treasurer's Report

As of April 24, 2007

New Members

1934 Yamil H. Kouri, Jr., 408 Waltham St., #347, Lexington, MA 02421-7934. Author: *The Postal History of Spanish New Orleans*; editor: *The Cuban Philatelist* (Cuban Philatelic Society of America); writer: *ACADEMVS* (Spanish Academy of Philately). Sponsor: George B. Griffenhagen.

1935 Regis Hoffman, 71 Brookside Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15241-1109. Columnist: *Stars & Strife* (Military Postal History Society); writer: *American Philatelist* and *American Revenuer*. Sponsor: George B. Griffenhagen.

1936 Steve Davis, 20 Martin Crossing Bay, N.E., Calgary, AB, T3J 3Y1, Canada. Editor: *U.S.A to Z* (Electronic newsletter of U.S. Specialized Group); writer: *Air Post Journal* (American Air Mail Society) and *U.S. Stamp News*. Sponsor: John M. Hotchner.

1937 Lawrence Sherman, MD, 5365 Caminito Exquisito, San Diego, CA 92130-2864. Author: *U.S. Patriotic Covers of WW II* (1999) and *U.S. Patriotic Envelopes of WW II* (2006); editor: *U.S. Post Office in WW II* (2002). Sponsor: Alan Warren.

1938 Paul Ashley Helman, 2710 H St., Sacramento, CA 95816-4324. Columnist: *U.S.C.S. Log* (Universal Ship Cancellation Society). Sponsor: Alan Warren.

1939 Kenneth Charles Wukasch, 300 Alpine Trail, San Marcos, TX 78666. Author: *Handbook of the Postal Cards of the World's Columbian Exposition*; writer: *Discovery* (Columbus Philatelic Society), *Postal Stationery* (United Postal Stationery Society), and *American Philatelist*. Sponsors: Harold Stral and Harvey Karlen.

Change of Address

0894 Kalman Illyefalvi, 869 Bridgewater Drive, New Oxford, PA 17350.

1489 Peter D. Martin, P. O. Box 463, Naugatuck, CT 06770.
1708 Hendrik Burgers, 8 Lucia Court, SS1, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0, Canada.

1804 George W. Holland, 745 E. 43rd Ave., Eugene, OR 97405-3902.

1915 Daniel A. Piazza, P. O. Box 76846, Washington, D.C. 20013-6846.

Resigned

1014 Major R. N. Spafford, Great Britain, who wrote: "My health is deteriorating and I must retire from WU #30. The very best for the unit to go from strength to strength."

About Writers Unit #30

The purpose of the Writers Unit #30 of the American Philatelic Society is to encourage and assist philatelic communication, knowledge, and comradeship. Membership is open to any philatelic writer, columnist, editor, or publisher — and anyone interested in philatelic communication.

Join Us Today

Join Writers Unit #30 now and begin reaping the benefits of membership, including your subscription to *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR*. Applications received before October 1 will be recorded as members for that calendar year and these members will receive all issues of *THE PHILATELIC COMMUNICATOR* for the calendar year. Applications received on or after October 1 will be recorded as members for the following calendar year.

An application may be downloaded at www.wu30.org.

Membership Dues

USPS ZIP Code Addresses.....	\$15.00
Canada and Mexico	\$17.50
All Other Addresses.....	\$20.00

Payment must be made in U.S. funds by a check imprinted with a U.S. bank transit number, or by postal money order, payable to *APS Writers Unit #30*. Some overseas members prefer to send U.S. bank notes by certified mail.

Updating Your Mailing Address

Please notify us of address changes to assure that you receive each issue of *The Philatelic Communicator* without delay. This will also save WU #30 more than \$1.00 because the USPS charges 70 cents when they have to send us an address correction, and we still have to pay the postage for reshipping the issue to the member.

George B. Griffenhagen, WU #30 Secretary-Treasurer
2501 Drexel St., Vienna, VA 22180-6906

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