



P.O. Box 2907 Sparks, Nevada 89432

N.S.S.S. meets on the 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month at 10:00 am
in the Sparks Heritage Museum at Pyramid and Victorian Avenue

N.S.S.S.



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September 13, 2003

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Remember, only two more meetings before the **Greater Reno Stamp and Cover show**. Get to work on those exhibits. For the meeting following the show, on the 25th of October, there will be a "post Mortem" to determine what went right or wrong and whether the dates were good or not. What can we do better next year.

Speaking of summer, this summer's picnic went well. A nice spot was chosen and all was quiet and private. The picnic was a great success thanks to **Jim Ringer**.

August's program was given, once again, by **John and Marla Wetterling**. It was all about perforations, those little holes in our stamps that like to drive us crazy (unless you don't bother with them). They have them on one side, two sides, three sides and four sides and, sometimes, no sides at all. Missperfs have them in the middle and so do perfins, but that may be a new program. Thanks John and Marla. We enjoyed your sly wit and the program was marvelous.

On September 27th we have a different kind of program. **Nadiah Beekun** will up-date us on the **Youth program** and provide a work-shop for us to help her ready the materials needed for the Youth table at the stamp show in October.

Several of our members entered frames in the stamp competition at the Nevada State Fair. Kudos to them. Adult exhibitors were **Stan Cronwall, Keith Carvin, Bill Brew** and **Nadiah Beekun**. In the Junior division, **Brandon Wimbley, Muhib Beekun** and **Sumayya Beekun**.

Special congratulations are earned by **Sumayya Beekun** for taking a blue ribbon for the "Best of Show" in the Junior Division. A tip of the blue hat to you, Sumayya. **Brandon Wimbley** won the white ribbon and a

participation ribbon went to **Muhib Beekun**.

In the adult division the blue ribbon went to **Stan Cronwall**. **Keith Carvin** took second, winning the red and third place white ribbon went to **Nadiah Beekun**.

Dick Dreiling's Post Cards of Reno exhibit was not in the competition but drew a large number of admirers.

Outside of the stamp division, the awards kept rolling in. **Terri Edwards** received a blue ribbon for her EID crochet piece. **Jeanne Paquin** won first place with a beautiful Christmas Wreath and **Nadiah Beekun**, again, won Red for her chutney/relish recipe.

There are a number of people that deserve our thanks for their participation in this event. **Bill** and **Elena Brew**, **Stan** and **Elaine Cronwall**, **Barbara Stanfield**, **Keith Carvin**, **Nadiah Beekun** and **Kay Williams** and all of the above mentioned for taking part in the show and staffing the tables. It is their efforts that helped make the show such a success. But above all, it was the work, experience and organizing ability of **Dick Dreiling** that put it all together. For Dick, I vote for a special round of applause. Kudos for a job well done.

Jeanne Paquin's first exhibit, in Sequim, WA, brought her three awards. Impressive. The awards were for participation, Best Educational and an AAPE award for cachets on cover with an exhibit entitled "Discover Our Capitols", bringing her an invitation to exhibit in Victoria, BC.

Bill Brew was recently recognized with a certificate for being a member of the American Philatelic Society for 25 years. He is also one of the original members of this club along with **Dick Dreiling** and **Al Shay**.

Stamps, Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee

Young postal customers, Washington, DC, 1890s The Postal Service is proud of its role in portraying the American experience to a world audience through postage stamps and postal stationery.

Almost all subjects chosen to appear on United States stamps and postal stationery are suggested by the public, which submits proposals on thousands of different topics. Established in 1957 to provide the Postal Service with a "breadth of judgment and depth of experience in various areas that influence subject matter, character, and beauty of postage stamps," the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee has the imposing task of evaluating the merits of each proposal.

The Committee's primary goal is to select subjects that are both interesting and educational for recommendation to the Postmaster General, who decides which stamps will be issued. Besides recommending 25 to 40 new subjects for commemorative stamps each year, the Committee also recommends subjects for the extensive line of regular stamps. When recommending subjects, the Committee thinks of stamp collectors as well as all citizens and looks for stamp subjects that will stand the test of time, be consistent with public sentiment, and have broad national appeal.

Committee members are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Postmaster General. Committee membership ranges from 12 to 15 members, who have a wide range of educational, artistic, historical, and professional expertise. Proposals are submitted at least three years before the proposed date of issue to allow sufficient time for consideration and design production, if approved. The members also review and provide guidance on artwork and designs for stamps.

The First Commemorative Stamps

Controversial Columbian Exposition stamps, 1893

Postmaster General John Wanamaker stirred up quite a commotion back in 1893 when he issued the nation's first commemorative postage stamps. He was rebuked by a congressional joint resolution that protested the "unnecessary" stamps. Wanamaker, an astute businessman, defended his actions by saying that the commemorative stamps could become money-makers. History proved him right.

The controversial first commemorative stamps were the Columbian Exposition Issue. Printed by the American Bank Note Company, the stamps were issued to commemorate the World Columbian Exposition held in Chicago, Illinois, from May 1 to October 30, 1893. The stamps celebrated the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's voyage to the New World.

The series consisted of 15 stamps with face values ranging from one cent to five dollars. Each bore the dates 1492 and 1892. Postmaster General Wanamaker added a 16th, eight-cent stamp to the series when the fee for registering a letter was reduced from 10 cents.

The stamps were immensely popular with collectors and customers, but critics denounced them. The designs were based on paintings by various artists who visualized Columbus differently. The one-cent Columbian showed Columbus clean-shaven, spying land from aboard his ship. The two-cent, taken from the *Landing of Columbus* painting in the Rotunda of the Capitol in Washington, D.C., showed him landing, presumably a few hours later, with a full beard. These discrepancies were quickly pointed out.

Even the denominations of the stamps were condemned. Because First-Class postage was only two cents per ounce and only four pounds could be mailed, the *Chicago Tribune* pointed out that even with the addition of the eight-cent stamp for registration fees, the most that could be spent on anything mailed First-Class was \$1.36. This made the two-, three-, four-, and five-dollar Columbian stamps useless for mailing. Further, the only way to get the full value for the five-dollar Columbian would be to mail a 62-pound, eight-ounce package of books at the book-rate class of postage.

Wanamaker replied that regular stamps also were available and that nobody had to buy the Columbians. Further, some people did mail packages of books abroad using the First-Class stamps. To show his confidence in the stamps, Postmaster General Wanamaker spent \$10,000 of his own money to buy 5,000 of the two-dollar stamps and put them in his safe as an investment. The stamps, still in the safe when Wanamaker died in 1926, were valued at \$4.50 each.

In spite of the criticism, the new Columbian stamps were a sensation. Hundreds of people stood in line at the Columbian Exposition and elsewhere to buy the stamps. Two billion commemorative Columbian stamps were sold for 40 million dollars and were credited as a factor in the Exposition's success.

Next month we will all be at the stamp show going through the dealers tables trying to fill in those empty spots in our collections. Some of these spots are tough to fill and some of the stamps will be a little expensive but worth it to complete a set. Spending a lot of money on a single stamp or set of stamps can be a little scary. What if the stamp was repaired, altered or, worse yet, an outright forgery. how do you protect yourself? Most dealers are honest people and won't rip you off on purpose. The fact remains, they are people and people make mistakes or overlook something or just assume the stamp is all right because their source was honest. best thing to do? Check the stamp yourself and don't buy if it is suspect. The dealer shouldn't mind and may even be helpful.

First of all bring the tools you need to check the stamps. You will need a perforation gauge. Remember the last meeting? Secondly, a good magnifying glass or loupe. You'll need 10X or better. Third, stamp tongs to handle the stamps. Fourth, bring watermark fluid and a tray. And the most obvious tool would be a catalog and reference books that deal with the stamps you are looking for. If you have low values of the stamp you are looking for, they make an excellent reference source.

Perforations: Perforations are often added, altered or removed to turn an inexpensive stamp into one you would hock the house to own. Check the perforations. make sure it is the right stamp. If the perforations are correct, examine them with your loupe or magnifying glass. Look for misshapen holes. A reperfer may not have lined up the pins exactly. Check the size of the holes against lower value stamps of the same set you brought with you. The holes as well as the perf tips should be the same size. Look for teeth that are flat at the tips, a sign that a straight edge may have had perfs added. For imperfs, look for the remnants of perf holes that were missed when trimmed. Don't buy an imperf that is too closely trimmed. Better yet, buy imperfs in pairs. Coils can be made by trimming the perforations from one side of a straight edge stamp or trimming the perfs from opposite sides of a regular stamp. Look for uneven or non-parallel edges. Measure the stamp. If it's too narrow, reject it. Use your reference books. They have a lot of useful information.

Repairs: Tears can be glued, thins can be filled and creases can be ironed out. Watermark fluids can detect most of these problems easily. "Dip" the stamp before you buy. It won't hurt the stamp and may reveal an unnoticed fault. Sometimes the tear is small or right under a cancellation, so look closely and hold the stamp to a light. look closely for the corner crease, the small ones are easily overlooked. Same for tears. When you dip the stamp a crease will show up as a straight line. A tear will be an uneven, wandering line. A thin will be darker than the surrounding area. A repaired thin will be lighter.

Regumming: This may be easier than you think. If dipping reveals a crease or a tear, look closer with your loupe. Is the fault under the gum? If so, it has been regummed. Look for brush marks, air bubbles or uneven application of the gum. Gum is often applied with an artist's brush by the regummer. Stamps are separated at the perforations by tearing. The teeth of the perforation are "feathered" by this action. Touch the perf tips to your upper lip (more sensitive to touch than your fingertips). If they are soft and "feathery", they are as they should be. If they are stiff and coarse, regumming may have hardened the otherwise soft tips. Sometimes the regummer will sand the tips to soften them. Gum is applied to the stamp before the perforation is done. Look closely at the perf holes. If you see gum inside, it may have been regummed. Check rotary press stamps for the presence of gum breaker ridges (they look like ripples in a pond). If the stamp is flat, it's been

regummed. While all this information on :
 regumming, and everything else, is useful, the
 best thing to do is compare the stamp to
 another stamp that is known to be real, such
 as one of the lower values of the same set. UV
 lamps are useful also. If the gums fluoresce
 differently, you may be looking at regummed
 stamps.

The early stamps can be deceptive as the
 gum on earlies was applied by brush. Uneven
 thickness of the gum is common. Brush
 strokes are too. Be cautious of gum that looks
 too good or stamps that are not hinged. In the
 case of these very early stamps, the worse the
 gum looks, the more likely it is real.
 Still.....

Covers: Lower value stamps on covers are
 often removed and replaced with higher value
 stamps to improve the desirability of the
 cover. It is good to know the postal rates (next
 issue) of that era. A high value stamp, such as
 a \$5.00 stamp on a cover that only demands
 .03 to send should be suspicious. Look closely
 at the postmark. It should tie the stamp
 directly to the cover. If they don't match up
 exactly, consider rejecting it. A pre-stamp
 cover can sometimes have a stamp added with
 a fake postmark or desirable postal markings
 can be added. Look for off black or slightly
 gray postmarks. This may indicate that a
 rubber stamp was used. Machine cancels used
 by the Post Office are made with a blacker ink
 than is used with rubber stamps. If you decide
 to purchase, make sure the seller is willing to
 give you time to have it expertized. This also
 true of any purchase you might make.

This is a lot to remember, so a checklist
 may be in order to help you remember. You
 may want to bring it with you., so, here it is

1. **Tools**

- Perforation Gauge
- Magnifying glass or loupe
- Stamp tongs
- Watermark fluid and tray
- Catalogs and/or reference books
- Lower value stamps of the same set

2. **Perforations.** Check for

- Perf s right for stamp
- Mis-shapen holes
- Hole and tooth size
- Flat tipped teeth
- Perf hole remnants (trimmed stamp)
- Uneven or nonparallel edges
- Size of stamp

3. **Repairs**

- "Dip" the stamp (in watermark fluid)
- Hold the stamp up to a light

4. **Regumming.** look for;

- Fault, dust or markings under the gum
- Brush marks or air bubbles
- Uneven application (except very earlies)
- Hard tips (should be soft)
- Gum inside the perfs
- Gum breakers
- Fluorescence (if you have UV)

5. **Covers**

- Postal rates for the era
- Postmark matches on cover and stamp
- Gray postmark ink (should be black)

6. **All**

- Time for expertization

The first question will be a breeze for most of us. I've liked and stuck a lot of those little purple critters on my mail. The last one may be a little tougher, so let's get comfortable with an ice filled glass of your favorite beverage and work these little puppies out.

1. Who is on the three cent value of the 1938 definitives?
A) Martha Washington B) Thomas Jefferson C) George Washington
2. What American boy is shown on the Folklore stamp of 1972?
A) Huckleberry Finn B) Tom Sawyer C) Thom McAnn
3. How many stamps are there in the American Credo series of 1960 - 61?
A) Four B) Six C) Eight
4. Who is the scientist honored on a 1964 airmail issue?
A) Werner Von Braun B) Robert H. Goddard C) Albert Einstein
5. What Polish astronomer is shown on a 1973 stamp?
A) Lech Walesa B) Nicholas Copernicus C) Aleksander Alex Wolszczan
6. What color were the parcel post postage due stamps of 1912?
A) Red B) Green C) Purple
7. what scientist appears on the one cent stamp of the Famous American Series?
A) Luther Burbank B) John J Audubon C) James E Byrd
8. The U.S. issued a sixteen cent stamp for the Phillipines in 1934. What sport did it show?
A) Baseball B) Basketball C) Tennis
9. What bird appears on the one dollar airlift stamp of 1968?
A) Sparrow B) Eagle C) Turkey
10. In what year were Christmas seals first introduced?
A) 1902 B) 1907 C) 1912

So what was the first year the Christmas seals were introduced? I know, but I have the answers already. I'll tell you next month. But you know too, don't you.

"The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending and having the two as close together as possible." - George Burns

I look forward to seeing lots of great answers for this quiz. I hope you did better than I and I'm sure you did. The first five were pretty easy, but then you have to look up postal cards and postal air mail cards and postal notes (postal notes?) and such things as most of us don't collect.

1. - C. George Washington appears in the twelve stamp issue celebrating the 200th anniversary of his birth. #'s 704 - 715
2. - C. The presidential issue of 1938, also known as the "Prexies" featured George Washington on the one cent stamp. # 804
3. - A. The four stamp set pictured a cable car from San Francisco, who else has 'em. #1442. Also pictured are the Decatur house, Washington DC, the whaling ship Charles W. Morgan from Mystic, Conn. and San Xavier del Bac, a mission in Tucson Arizona.
4. - A. Winston Spencer Churchill was honored in the year of his passing as a WWII hero and statesman in 1965 on issue #1264.
5. - B. # 875 shows Dr. Crawford W. Long as one of America's foremost scientists of the time.
6. - C. Gymnast, #UXC18, issued on December 1, 1979
7. - A John Marshall, # 263. These were the definitives issued one year after the first set of commemoratives which featured Columbus on the five dollar stamp.
8. - B. Ninety cents, # PN18. Postal note stamps were first issued on February 1st to supplement fractional dollar amounts for the regular money order service. They were discontinued six years later on march 31, 1951.
9. - A. The American Arts issue, #'s 1553 - 1555 pictured Benjamin West, an artist, Paul Laurence Dunbar, a poet and D. W. Griffith, the movie maker.
10. - C. The only parcel post set ever issued, #'s Q1 - Q12, shows a working Postal Clerk on the one cent stamp.

This quiz should have had you running back and forth through the Scott Specialized as it did me. I had a bit of a time with the Postal Note stamps. I wasn't aware of their existence until I put this quiz in the Post Boy. I see by the answers I received, a couple of you also had a problem with Postal Notes. You'll find them in the Scott Specialized catalog at the library.