

# Post Boy

Connecting and supporting stamp collectors, of all ages and interests, in Northern Nevada since 1975



October 2022  
Volume 55, Issue 10

In-person & Virtual meetings 2nd & 4th Saturday starting at 10:00 A.M.  
Silverada Estates Clubhouse, 2301 Oddie Blvd, Reno ([map](#))

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## Announcements

### Meetings –

**Oct. 8, 2022** – In-person and via Zoom. Meeting starts at 10 a.m. but sign in early to socialize. After announcements, there is a raffle with a money prize of 50% of raffle ticket money (three tickets for \$1.00). Members are allowed 5 auction items for the live auction. After the regular meeting there is a Board meeting for officers and directors.

**Oct. 22, 2022** – In-person and via Zoom. Meeting starts at 10 a.m. but sign in early to socialize. Members are allowed 10 items on the consignment table. After the raffle, there is a philatelic presentation.

**Membership dues is past due.** The renewal date is August 1 each year. Contact **Mike Potter** if unsure about your membership status.

**Online Auction #23** starts Oct. 11 at noon and ends Oct. 20 at noon. Lot images and description are due before Oct. 9 at noon. Send the information to Dave Parsons [NSSSauctions@gmail.com](mailto:NSSSauctions@gmail.com)

### Upcoming club events:

**Nov. 12** – The annual Auction Bucks Auction. This is the only time you have an opportunity spend your Auction Bucks received for club volunteer activities. Start gathering your unwanted garage sale type items for the upcoming auction.

**Dec. 10** – Annual Christmas Party which includes family members. The club provides the main entrée, usually turkey, with members providing side dishes, salads, snacks, etc. Besides the social function, there is a gift exchange with wrapped gifts and “stealing” allowed. Make plans to participate. The fun starts around 11 a.m. at the Silverada Clubhouse.

**Charlene Balz**, Executive Assistant to the Reno postmaster, passed away on Sept. 12. See page 9 for more about Charlene.

## Post Boy Reporter

**Sept. 10, meeting** – **Erik Fields** and **James Steckley** arrived early to set up the tables and chairs. Refreshments were provided by **Eric Moody**. Attendance was 26 members (including one via Zoom).

Announcements: The club purchased a licensed copy of the Zoom software. **Erik Fields** will maintain the subscription. **Eric Fields** reported that our club was finally approved as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The designation started from January 1 this year, so any donations may now be possibly a tax deduction. **John Walter** and **Dave Gehringer** represented our club at the Council meeting in Sacramento on Aug. 28.



**Some of the members present at the Sept. 10 meeting.**

PENPEX is looking for 40 exhibit frames. There will be more discussion at the Board meeting on Oct. 8. The club owns over 100 frames that are in a storage unit. Erik reported the club lost \$450 on the July stamp show with the biggest expense being security.

The APS and Hip Stamps have joined to offer online auctions. **Dave Parsons** reported that our online Auction #21 ended on Aug. 24 with 86% of lots selling for a total of \$407.50. **The total of all 21 online club auctions is \$50,976 with the club receiving \$5,190.**

The raffle drawing was conducted by **Betty Mudge**. The drawing had 10 donated prizes along with a bonus prize won by **John Walter**. **Howard Grenzebach** won the money prize of \$9.00.

**Mike Potter** and **Gary Atkinson** shared the duty as auctioneers for the live auction. There was a total of 40 member lots and 15 donated lots. A total of 44 lots sold for \$529.50

**Sept. 24 meeting** – **Erik Fields** and **James Steckley** arrived early to set up the tables and chairs. Refreshments were provided by **Eugene Smoots**. Attendance was 26 with 24 in person and 2 via online Zoom. Included in the number present were guests Marlene and Matthew Hurley from Susanville, CA. Matthew was interested in selling his stamp collection and advice on some of the items. He did sell some of the collection to club members.

James discussed upcoming USPS stamp issues.

The stamp show dates for 2023 are July 29-30. Same venue at the National Bowling Stadium Museum.

The online auction #22 ended on Sept. 22 with 42 of 74 lots sold (56%) with total sales of \$308.00. Auction #23 starts Oct. 11 and ends Oct. 20.

The raffle was conducted by **Betty Mudge** with 10 prizes. The bonus prize was won by **Mike Potter** and the money prize of \$9.00 went to **Kevin Morris**.

**John Walter** gave an excellent presentation about his experiences at the Great American Stamp Show in Sacramento in August. He attended all 4 days. He also showed and discussed some of his purchases.



**John Walter during his presentation.**

## New Member – Fred Saalbach

**Fred Saalbach** joined the club in June. When he moved from Pennsylvania to Reno, he brought his father's stamp collection with him. Although Fred is not currently a stamp collector, he joined our group to learn more about his father's hobby and to sell some of the collection.

Fred has collected casino chips until that collection was stolen. He has also dabbled in silver collectibles.

We also learned that Fred has attended Burning Man in the past and made a few comments on that experience. The subject came up since Burning Man just ended on Sept. 5 and **John Walter** had an image of the post office used for the event. It was air-conditioned and only had a small window for service plus the outside mailbox. The first couple days of the festival had some high winds and sandstorms which are normal at that time of year. Everyone and everything are coated with a very fine white sand as the festival goers depart. Thus, the post office tent to protect employees and the mails.

If anyone has mail canceled at the Burning Man post office in the Red Rock Desert, please share with other members.



**2022 Burning Man Post Office.** *Courtesy of the Reno Gazette Journal.*

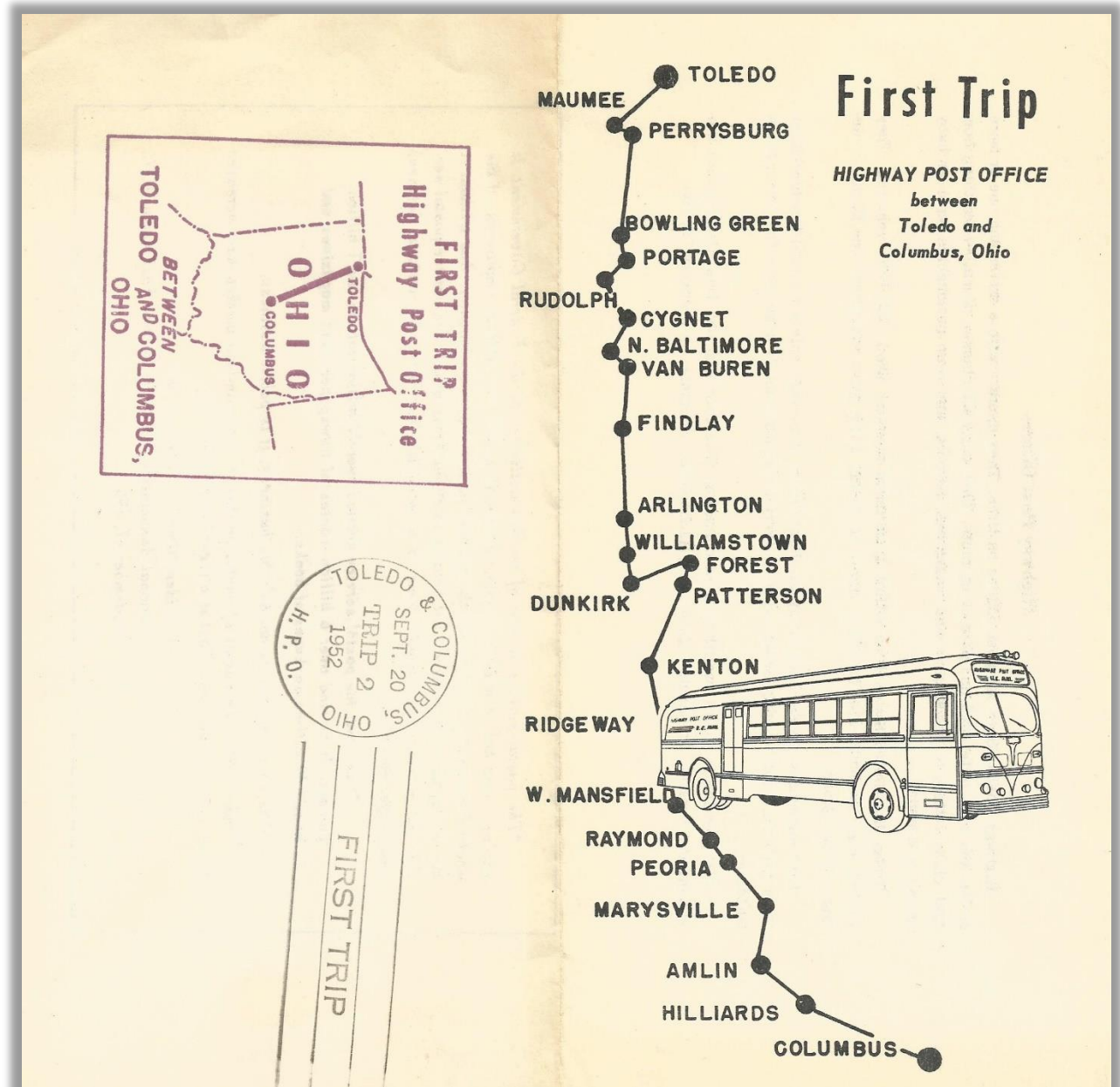


# The United States Highway Post Office

By James Steckley

## Introduction

In a recent donation to the stamp club, an 8" x 8" sheet of paper was included describing the First Trip of a Highway Post Office route from Toledo, Ohio to Columbus, Ohio on September 20, 1952. I had never heard of it and when I asked the question at the recent club meeting, only three members had ever heard of it. I was curious enough to look up some more information about the subject.





## History Before Highway Post Office

The movement of mail throughout the country is a fascinating part of our nation's postal history. Before the invention of automobiles and other horseless vehicles, the early long-distance movement of mail was often done by the railroads. It is interesting to note that railroad route agents often also served as the town postmaster with the daily arrival of the mail train being significant in many small towns across our nation.

During the early and mid-1800s, the railroad station was also often the only place in town with an accurate clock, so the station typically drew many visitors each day. Mail transported by the railroad from this period can often be identified by a 'R.R.' postmark which designates either the railroad or the termination location of the route.

	
<p><b>1848 R.R. Cancel</b> Image courtesy of PhilaMercury</p>	<p><b>'Fast Mail' Cancel</b> Image courtesy of PhilaMercury</p>

By 1865, the United States Post office created the Railway Mail Service which combined simply transporting the mail with actual processing and sorting in transit. When the train arrived at either a connection or termination station, the mail was already organized in pouches without the need for further sorting. This era marked the beginning of the use of the 'R.P.O.' cancellations. In 1875 a notable new development evolved, the 'Fast Mail' first class mail service. Mail from these runs used a special marking 'Fast Mail' (or some variant of 'Fast Mail'). The late 1800s were the heyday of mail moving by train and is represented by well over 10,000 different RPO cancels. RPO mail trains continued in operation until 1977 when the last run, between Washington and New York was completed. The 'Mobile Post Office Society' (APS chapter) offers additional information for collectors interested in this part of US postal history.

	
<p><b>Collection and Distribution Wagon</b> Image courtesy of National Postal Museum</p>	<p><b>Distribution Wagon Cancel</b> Image courtesy of PhilaMercury</p>

Mail still needed handling between the railroad and the post offices and between post offices themselves; horse drawn wagon were often used. In 1896 the Post Office extended the use of horse drawn wagons in several large cities (New York and Washington) to include a 'Collection and Distribution Wagon'. These specialized wagons were outfitted to allow two mail clerks to postmark and sort mail. The NY route was 3 miles, and the Washington route was 1.75 miles long. As the wagon plied along their routes, they would stop at collection boxes and smaller post office stations to collect mail. The routes terminated at a railroad station and was sent on to more distant cities. Since the driver of the wagon was not a postal employee, he was not allowed inside the wagon and drove the wagon from the outside.

### **Highway Post Office Service**

By the turn of the century, the invention of the automobile and other self-powered road vehicles began to change the fabric of our society. The automobile facilitated large population movements out of the cities and into more rural areas. As dirt roads gave way to paved highways in the 1930s and 1940s; alternatives to railroad mail services became feasible. In the 1920s, post office officials began receiving offers and quotes for using modified buses as 'moving post offices.' By the mid-1930s, Post Office officials saw the hand writing on the wall with the decline of railroad service. Working in conjunction with Congressional members, postal officials began formulating plans using motor vehicles for transporting and sorting the mail. During this inception period they called the plan the 'Mobile Post Office of the Highway.' Ultimately the plan became reality when Congress passed Public Law 740 and the President signed into law the Highway Post Office Service on July 11, 1940.



**The First Highway Post Office Bus, 1941**

This law stipulated that motor vehicles and supporting equipment be purchased and operated by the government or by privately owned companies under contract. Due to pressure brought by the railroad special interests, the law also include wording which disallowed Highway Post Office Services in any area which already had adequate railroad facilities. The specifications required that bus-like vehicles be equipped in similar fashion as the previously successful Railroad Post Office cars.

The first route was established on February 10, 1941, with a route between Washington D.C. and Harrisonburg Virginia. Two additional routes were added in 1941 before the war interrupted the addition of new routes. By 1950 the number of routes grew to over 20 routes. During the 1950s, many routes were added, changed, or discontinued. The routes ranged from single daily two-way trips to multiple daily trips depending upon the size of the mail volume. The routes themselves were typically under 150 miles in



length to avoid stops for refueling. Highway Post Office schedules and timetables were exacting and an on-time trips were stressed.

By the 1970s the Post Office took advantage of new automation sorting and handling technology and changed the foundational distributional system it was using. They established region-based Sectional Centers and semi-trucks delivered large volumes of mail between them.; the advantage of sorting and processing mail in-route evaporated. The last Highway Post Office route, Cleveland to Cincinnati, made its final trip on June 30, 1974.

### Collecting HPO Covers

Highway Post Office covers are a fascinating part of U.S. postal history but beyond that there are several good reasons to collect them. Due to the low volumes of HPO covers for some routes and trips, some covers are quite challenging to find. Yet because the demand is not high, collecting them is quite affordable. HPO covers were not mass produced and promoted by large companies.

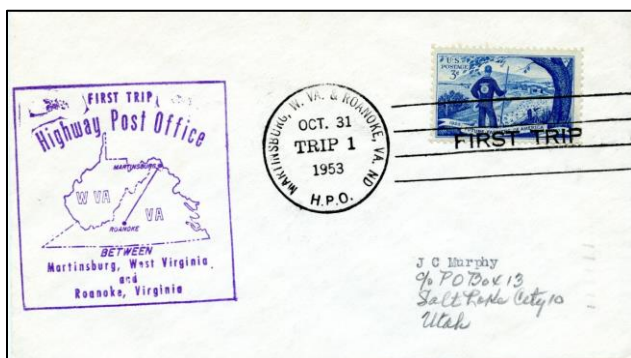
Many collectors begin collecting with First Trip covers. Since First Trips were typically given special attention and fanfare, these covers often carry cachets and First Trip cancellations. Collecting Last Trip covers are a bit more daunting to collect; while some Last Trips received special attention others were more quietly ended. Last Trip covers often do not carry cachets or special cancels; collectors need to be aware of the Last Trip date to recognize the cover. Lastly, some collectors seek out 'normal' or commercial HPO covers. These non-philatelic covers are those which were carried during the normal HPO service.

For further information on the HPO covers, see <https://stampsmarter.org>

**James Steckley**, our current President and Donations Chair. His main collecting interests are Canada, U.S., and Revenues.

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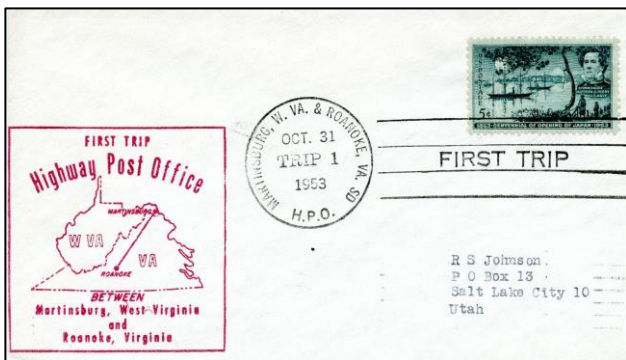
### Sample First Trip Highway Post Office Covers from Editor's Collection



Martinsburg, WV and Roanoke, VA northbound.



Los Angeles, Long Beach and San Pedro, CA



Martinsburg, WV and Roanoke, VA southbound.



Columbus and Greenville, MS

## October Quiz – U.S. Presidents See Themselves on Stamps

By Eric Moody

Presidents of the United States cannot, of course, be depicted on our country's postage stamps while they are still alive. However, other nations are free to put the likenesses of living U.S. chief executives on their stamps – and have done so quite often. This quiz focuses on some of the “foreign” appearances of American presidents during their lifetimes.

1. In 2009 St. Vincent and the Grenadines issued a two-stamp commemorative set which depicted both a sitting U.S. President and a future President. The men were:  
(a) Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush    (b) Dwight Eisenhower and Richard Nixon  
(c) Barack Obama and Joe Biden    (d) Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman
2. President Truman's visit to this South American country in 1947 was commemorated on a stamp (Scott #673) issued that year. The country is:  
(a) Venezuela    (b) Brazil    (c) Argentina    (d) Chile
3. In 1996 Grenada released a set of nine stamps carrying various portraits of this President.  
(a) Bill Clinton    (b) Jimmy Carter    (c) George H.W. Bush    (d) Ronald Reagan
4. In 1954 South Korea produced a set of stamps that commemorated the adoption of the U.S.-South Korea Mutual Defense Treaty. Depicted shaking hands with Korean President Syngman Rhee was U.S. President  
(a) Harry Truman    (b) Dwight Eisenhower    (c) Franklin D. Roosevelt    (d) Herbert Hoover
5. The year 2018 saw this country issuing a souvenir sheet of three stamps that celebrated President Donald Trump's visit to Italy in the previous year for a G7 summit meeting.  
(a) France    (b) Italy    (c) Tunisia    (d) Nevis
6. The Central African Republic released a set of stamps (#1170a-i) in 1996 that featured U.S. President Bill Clinton and  
(a) Hillary Clinton    (b) his pet dog    (c) his pet cat    (d) Monica Lewinsky
7. Between 1966 and 1979 South Korea issued stamps depicting visits by all the following U.S. Presidents except  
(a) Lyndon Johnson    (b) Richard Nixon    (c) Gerald Ford    (d) Jimmy Carter
8. In 1990 Guinea produced a stamp (#1142) commemorating a historic summit meeting between Soviet Head of State Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President  
(a) George H.W. Bush    (b) Ronald Reagan    (c) Bill Clinton    (d) Jimmy Carter
9. A Brazilian stamp of 1940 (#487) that celebrated the Pan American Union carried an image of this U.S. President:  
(a) Calvin    (b) Franklin D. Roosevelt    (c) Herbert Hoover    (d) Harry Truman



10. A 1993 stamp from St. Vincent (#1885) depicted the 1970s signing of a “Common Declaration” by West German Chancellor Willy Brandt and U.S. President  
(a) Richard Nixon (b) Gerald Ford (c) Jimmy Carter
11. This U.S. President appeared in a set of “Year of the Elder Person” stamps issued by Guyana in 1999.  
(a) George H.W. Bush (b) Jimmy Carter (c) Richard Nixon (d) Ronald Reagan
12. A 2018 souvenir sheet of six stamps from the Marshall Islands commemorated President Donald Trump’s visit of the previous year to  
(a) Mexico (b) China (c) Marshall Islands (d) Israel
13. (**Bonus Question**) Abraham Lincoln shared portrait space with a living U.S. President in a set of stamps (#1395a-d) produced by Liberia in 1998. The living President was  
(a) Ronald Reagan (b) Jimmy Carter (c) Bill Clinton (d) George H.W. Bush

The October quiz is worth 130 **Auction Bucks**. Please complete the quiz and give your answers to **Betty Mudge** at the next in-person meeting or email to:  
[postboyquiz@renotamp.org](mailto:postboyquiz@renotamp.org)

**September Quiz Answers:** 1. c 2. d 3. b 4. d  
5. c 6. b 7. a 8. d 9. c 10. b 11. a 12. d

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### Charlene Balz, USPS Employee Passed Away

A very dear friend of the Nevada Stamp Study Society passed away on Sept. 12. Charlene Balz worked as the Executive Assistant to the Reno postmaster for over 10 years. She was the go-to person to obtain special cancellations for our stamp shows. She was good about recruiting fellow employees to help at the stamp show’s USPS booth and to cancel our commemorative show covers.

In early July, Charlene gave our members a tour of the main post office plant. This is the area she first started to work over 30 years ago. As we walked around the sorting machines and other equipment, she told us she was making plans for retirement soon. Then two weeks later we heard she was in the hospital with kidney failure and needed dialysis.

On the right is a picture of Charlene cancelling show covers in 2021 using a special template she developed to hold the covers in a position so the cancel can be applied precisely. She also introduced a fast-drying ink after noticing the regular post office ink tended to smear the cancel waiting for the ink to dry.



Charlene will be missed. There was no local obituary in the newspaper.

## Vassar Post Office Display

The Reno main post office on Vassar Steet has 2 wall display cases that are changed every 4-6 weeks by **John Walter**. The October display has material celebrating both National Stamp Collecting Month and Nevada's admission to the Union on Oct. 31, 1864.



Display for National Stamp Collecting Month.



Display for Nevada Day – Oct. 31.

The display for November will feature material for Veterans Day and maybe Thanksgiving Day.

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## Auction Bucks Auction – Nov. 12

With the good weather we are having, time to clean the garage or storage shed to donate items for the Nov. 12 Auction Bucks auction. This is the only time we get to use our hard-earned Auction Bucks awarded for NSSS volunteer activities. Just coming to a meeting, and signing in, earns Auction Bucks.

More about the auction in the November Post Boy.