

Nevada

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
<http://home.earthlink.net/~renostamp/>



N.S.S.S.

POST BOY

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Hope you had an enjoyable and safe New Year's. Mine, in my old age, has gotten rather boring (I don't do it any more). May this be one of the years you are the most prosperous and in the best of health.

In this issue I am continuing the article on exhibiting with "A Philatelic Elements Shopping List" on page three. On page seven is an article I found by Al Harris that may calm all those fears about the new unsoakable US stamp issues. I haven't tried the technique myself (I just don't collect new issues) so I can't vouch for it but it sounds promising. The article is called "U.S. Stamp Soaking Method that WORKS!!" Pay attention to the warnings as you do work with flammable liquids using this method.

Remember the inverted Jenny that was used to mail a ballot? Well I learned a little more about it and thought you would like to know. Turn this page over for the article (pg. 2).

The date is set for the next **Greater Reno Stamp and Cover Show**. It will be held on July 25 and 26 at the Bowling Stadium. Time to start thinking about your exhibits if you have decided to do one. One page exhibits, like we did last year are easy to do and might be just the thing to get you started as an exhibitor. Also, be prepared to volunteer and earn some of those Auction Bucks! There is a lot of work to be done long before the show and again, while the show is in progress.

Shortly after the **Show** is the **Nevada State Fair**. We will need volunteers to set up, tear down and man the tables while it is all going on. This will also give you a second chance to try your hand at one-page (or more) exhibiting. All your work won't go unrewarded either. You will be paid in Auction Bucks so you can participate in our November madness. And there are also extra benefits in manning the tables that I will tell you about while you are doing it.

The **Christmas Party** this year was attended by more than fifty members and guests. I would call that a success. There may have been more revelers if the right date had been published. **Kay Williams** would like to thank all the people who contributed their time and effort in setting up the party and especially those who stayed behind to help with the clean up. You guys are the jewels! **Kay Williams** is a jewel too. She does all the work organizing and getting things ready so you can get it set up. Next time you see her, say hello and "thank you".

ARIPEX will be held on January 23-25 in Tucson Arizona at the Tucson convention Center, 260 S. Church St. See their site for an exhibitor prospectus;
<http://www.aripexonline.com/>

Filatelic Fiesta will be held on Jan 30, 31 and Feb 1, 2009. 10 to 6:00 and 10 to 4 at the Santa Clara County Fair Grounds.
<http://www.filatelicfiesta.org/>

The Jenny Invert is Back (again)

During the elections in 2006 a mailed in ballot in Broward county Florida was said to have an Inverted Jenny on the cover. The initial reaction was a combination of excitement (there are no philatelically used inverted Jennys on cover) and disappointment over the stupidity of anyone who might use this rare stamp to mail a letter, even if it was as important as a ballot. Then, it occurred to someone that this stamp might be a fake. Hmmmmmm.



The stamp above is, supposedly, the one used to mail the ballot. The thought of using an inverted Jenny to mail a letter is not original. In the movie "Brewsters Millions", Richard Pryor, who played Brewster, was required to spend thirty million dollars in thirty days. One of his actions was to buy an inverted Jenny and use it to mail a postcard. After all, the stamp is still valid for postage.

Shortly after the discovery of the questionable cover, a gentleman by the name of Dan Jacoby stepped forward claiming his fifteen minutes of fame. He was the person who mailed the ballot. The stamp, he says, was only a commemorative stamp worth about fifty cents. There is a dealer in Florida who makes such "commemoratives". There was no crime committed in all of this as the proper postage was paid and the inverted Jenny copy was additional. The inverted Jenny itself was not sold as an original but rather as a copy or "commemorative" as Mr. Jacoby stated. The only real problem is that, since Mr. Jacoby never identified himself on the ballot or cover, his vote was not counted.

Peter Mastrangelo, an expert from the Florida APS called it questionable, saying the perforation on the top and bottom do not match their reference copies and the blue color is consistent with the counterfeit.

Counterfeit or not, I hope the cover wasn't destroyed. This one should be a keeper. The postage is correct and the "questionable stamp" is nothing more than an interesting label that now has a history written in the annals of ours and many foreign newspapers. In any case, as the Bard once said, "All's well that ends well."

Welcome to The World of Stamp Exhibiting!

by Tom Fortunato

A Philatelic Elements Shopping List

Here is a very useful checklist that can serve as a basis for acquiring material for your exhibit. It will help you obtain the variety of material you need. Even the experienced exhibitor can refresh their knowledge by reviewing these definitions.

Using this checklist will not only enable you to exhibit your subject with a good variety of material, but it will also introduce you to some new and challenging philatelic areas. Later, your checklist can be adapted to determine which elements you can use. While topical/thematic exhibits use these elements extensively, all exhibits show some of them.

Essays are trial designs for a stamp unlike the final accepted work in some way—major or minor. Oftentimes, several designers are asked to send in sketches of their proposals. Those not selected remain as essays. In fact, even the accepted design may become an essay if additional changes are made to it before production.

Proofs are a test printings of a stamp from an original plate or die.

Trial colors are a test of the stamp design printed in different colors to find out which are the best colors to use. Trial colors are types of proofs.

Specimens are final examples of approved regularly issued stamps but without postal validity. At the turn of the century it was common for countries to issue specimens as examples for other countries to view as acceptable and valid stamps. Such would have "Specimen" overprinted on them, or perforated into the design to stop people from using them in the mail. Specimens continue into this day primarily for journalist use. They are overprinted in a variety of ways.

Printing varieties entail an assortment of possibilities. Paper varieties are just that—stamps issued on different paper varieties. Perforation varieties are stamps issues that through the production process are found with different perfs. Watermark varieties are symbols in the stamp paper that can be seen where the paper is slightly thinner. Sometimes paper having a different watermark were used to produce stamps, intentionally or not.

Production formats are important. It's good to show not only single stamps, but pairs and blocks if they are significant, including any with special production salvage markings on them.

Coils are stamps produced for vending machines or ease of use.

Booklets are another production format.

Continued on page 10

<http://www.ipl.org/>

An e-mail was sent to me proposing that Nixon had won the popular vote when he ran against Kennedy in 1960 but lost in



the Electoral College. While there were a few presidents who won the popular vote and lost in the Electoral, I didn't think this was the case here. I decided to look it up. I was right, but that's not the point. I found an interesting site could pass on to you and that was how I found it. A general search for "presidents" brought this one to my attention.

On occasion, many of us go to the library to research a cover or stamp or some aspect of the post office. Two things are involved here; research and history. That's what libraries are for. With this library, you don't have to spend your money on gas nor your time and energy getting there. So just what kind of library is this? In their words "The Internet Public Library is a public library for the world wide web."

There are limitations however. You can't check out a book and the Scott catalog doesn't seem to be available. Type "Postage Stamps" in the search box at the top and you'll find a host of other sites to explore that are all about stamps and one about Van Gogh (no stamps though).

There are also links on the left side of the page so you can find whatever general subject you are seeking. Some of the subjects are "education, leisure (where you will find stamps), dictionaries, encyclopedias and POTUS (presidents) Others sections of the library include "Kidspace" and "Teenspace". Don't ignore these places. You may want to go there to learn things about your computer like how to write HTML which is found in Kidspace.



All-in-all, this a great site for research on the internet and a good aide to stamp collecting (or philately). I have it in my "favorites" and you should put it there too.



By the way, the opening page had "Lighthouses, a Photographic Journey" as of this writing. Maybe you can find a stamp with a lighthouse on it.

Now that we've all stuffed ourselves with turkey and all the trimmings, spent too much money on gifts, decorated our Christmas trees and houses and yards, watched more football than we have all year and paid homage to the Christ child, then spent an eventful evening welcoming in the New Year, it's time to get back to the regular old grind. Ain't that a relief? This one doesn't seem too hard.

1. On August 15, 1947, a stamp was issued in Bath, Maine. What industry did it honor?
A) Lobstering B) Ship building C) Maple syrup
2. In what year did the US end domestic airmail service?
A) 1977 B) 1980 C) 1984
3. "Old Faithful" appears on a 1972 commemorative. In what national park is it located?
A) Yosemite B) Sequoia C) Yellowstone
4. What animal appears on the thirty cent definitive of 1922-25?
A) Tweety B) Bald eagle C) Buffalo
5. Who is on the twelve cent 1938 definitive?
A) Millard Fillmore B) Zachary Taylor C) James K. Polk
6. What athletic activity is depicted on the 1979 Olympics Postcard?
A) Sprinting B) High jump C) Swimming
7. The Graff Zeppelin issue came in three denominations, \$1.30, \$2.60 and another. What is the other?
A) \$0.65 B) \$1.19 C) \$1.24
8. What author appears on the three cent stamp in the "Famous American" series?
A) Emerson B) Poe C) Hawthorne
9. What is the name of the lamp shown on the fifty cent stamp in the Americana issue of 1975-79?
A) Iron Maiden B) Iron Mike C) Iron Betty
10. What vehicle is shown on the ten cent special delivery stamp of 1922?
A) Delivery truck B) Motorcycle C) Bicycle

If I hadn't yakked so much at the top, there would have been room for the bonus question. Maybe next month.

I meant to give you these answers in the last issue so here they are now. This is from the November quiz. Hope you can remember that far back. It wasn't a hard quiz but it was interesting.

1. A. Few men have been honored on stamps of all countries. Sir Roland Hill, the inventor of stamp collecting (and adhesive stamps) is one of them. Though we can't be sure it was his intention to invent stamp collecting.

2. B. Those little slits in stamps that are used to replace holes for separation are created by a process called rouletting.

3. A. An item all stamp collectors should own, love and know is the perforation gauge, used to measure the number of holes in an inch of stamp.

4. A. The Army needed a system of mail delivery to keep secret the place it was delivered to, so an APO number is assigned to a unit. When the unit moves, the number moves with it and the enemy will never know where that is by the **Army Post Office** number.

5. A. William Robey bought his sheet of Jenny inverts on May 13, 1918 and sold them almost immediately for a cool \$15,00.00. Not a bad day's pay in 1918.

6. C. All three answers are pretty close and could be used to describe this envelope but "Albino" is the proper philatelic term.

7. C. If you're a member, you should know this one. It's *American Philatelic Society*.

8. A. And another Society but, this one is called the *Society of Philatelic Americans*.

9. B. The so called "Bluish" stamps were issued in 1909 on a paper that was given its bluish cast by the higher rag content introduced in an attempt to reduce shrinkage.

10. B. The series that produced the "Broken Hat" was the Columbian stamps issued in 1893. It was simply a plate flaw caused by a small crack.

Bonus question. I hope you read the article about the atomic bomb stamp because that's where the answer was. Apparently, the stamp was designed but not used as the Japanese government felt it was insensitive to Japanese feelings (I understand).

Like I said, not a tough quiz but interesting. By the way, everyone aced the December quiz. Good job. Maybe next year I'll make it harder and not put the answers in the same issue!

U.S. Stamp Soaking Method that WORKS!!!

By Al Harris

Time to soak? Grab a bottle of 150-proof Everclear or an 80-proof Absolut. Don't drink it! Use it as a solvent to dissolve the !#@%*& self-adhesive glue from the backside of contemporary U.S. stamps.

If you can brave the flashpoint and other dangers, with Everclear you can soak the glue off a single onpaper Forever self-adhesive in less than a minute. In less time than you can conventionally soak a tray or even a bathtub full of ordinary foreign stamps coated with commonplace glue, you can fill several blotter/drying books with no loss of color or damage to the stamp or paper (see comment below). In my opinion, it even bleaches the paper somewhat without degrading the ink!

Absolut is tamer; the risks are less, but the soaking time is greater. Both do the job about equally well.

I've recently run experiments based on my more than 35 years of experience in developing film and paper in a darkroom plus many years as director of publicity and publications at Jacksonville (Alabama) State University. I'm now retired and have loads of time on my hands to soak stamps. I've found the following process works quickly and efficiently; soaking is no longer a chore.

Many noxious solvents, including turpentine, have been recommended as a remedy for the USPS "goof-up" — i.e., glue that has no water-soluble layer and resists being soaked off envelope paper with lukewarm water.

I claim no originality for this fix. I'm no expert, and probably many others have discovered the same thing by accident (spill a little here, spill a little there and finally there's bound to be a soggy US stamp stuck somewhere on your shot glass).

In my musings, I envisioned a darkroom approach.

I figured I could soak the stamps in straight lukewarm 80-proof Absolut vodka with a drop or two of Dawn dishwashing detergent as a wetting agent to help the stamp turn loose from the glue faster. As a photographer would do, I "agitated" or gently rocked my "dissolving tray" to help the alcohol erode the glue much better. The Dawn and alcohol work remarkably well together.

After a few minutes, I gently begin rubbing the glue side with my fingers and placed the glue-free stamps on a paper towel. Lo and behold, the congealed glue rolls off the stamps easily like a mass of depleted rubber cement. It looks like KY Jelly straight from the tube.

Then, as another experiment, I switched to Everclear, a 100 percent full grain alcohol which is widely available and cheap. It carries numerous warnings on the label. Take them seriously! Use good ventilation and turn off off gas flames. The results were astounding! The Everclear cut the soaking time in half. I soaked from a standard paper envelope a US self-adhesive in far less than a minute. The envelope paper would have dissolved, I think, had I not removed it quickly.

I experimented with Q-tips on large batches of stamps (all US commems). Finally, using my fingers to massage the glue was much faster.

I had to attend to the work continuously or the stamps would over-soak in the Everclear. Finally, I cut the Everclear with a little distilled water and the time became manageable but still fast. Experiment to see what's right for you.

The already-exposed glue on a Forever stamp acted rather like a snail dissolving in salt. By stripping a whole sheet of Forevers, I found the glue could finally be removed entirely with finger- or thumb-rubs long before the paper got too soggy.

The plan worked like a gem — and history overruns with real-life examples of solutions that arrive to us in dream packages. After several "trials," I tweaked the process and tested several alternate theories.

I found:

1. Not just ANY alcohol will do. Don't use rubbing alcohol. Avoid bourbon and corn mash whisky as they usually include caramel coloring and other ingredients which can stain the stamps, leaving a prematurely "old" looking soakers. The cheapest high-octane clear alcohol works as well as the most expensive, which you'd be better off sipping while you soak your stamps. Remember: use the cheapest and highest-proof clear alcohol for stamps; use the tamest, best-tasting alcohol for drinking. After glueremoval, you can even soak some of your stamps in coffee – instant or ground bean, it matters not. This is how we used to do "sepia toned" prints in the darkroom before the costly (and foul-smelling) commercial sepia solution came along. Patt saves my culled (torn or damaged) stamps for decoupage, and so before I'm finished and while the stamps are wet, I give them a long soak in coffee as she loves the warm, brown hues. I rinse, then dried them in a separate blotter book to avoid staining my good stamps.
2. You can buy everything you need, excluding the alcohol, for about \$5 USD at a thrift store. You need only two trays: one for soaking and a slightly larger plastic tray or small tub for rinsing (agitate it by hand during rinsing unless you splurge on a professional model, or increase your son's allowance for providing agitating services). Not knowing the long-term effects of alcohol on stamp paper and ink, even when hinged to acidfree album pages that remain closed so to avoid sunlight, I rinse my stamps about five minutes or longer in cold tap water, then begin removing them in small batches to the blotter paper. This gives me "insurance:" time to pluck and blot a number of stamps that I can easily handle; otherwise, I'd find myself with a mound of stamps that would be drying and sticking together before I could place them into my drying press.
3. For heaven's sakes, DON'T DISCARD THE USED ALCOHOL – AND DON'T DRINK IT EITHER!!! AND KEEP IT AWAY FROM CHILDREN (teach them soaking techniques with lukewarm water and foreign stamps). By the time you've soaked a large batch of stamps, the alcohol is laden with dissolved glue. Only someone who got an A in chemistry might know what it really contains, and it certainly can't be good for you. Keep it out of reach of children. A brown plastic darkroom bottle is handy for storing old alcohol. Cheesecloth or nylon hose and funnel work well for removing solid matter and other particulates from the used "soup." Simply pour the leavings into the jug then rinse out the cheesecloth or nylon. Keep a tight lid on the bottle of used alcohol. With luck, your used alcohol may last six months or much longer depending on your level of stamp activity – never mind that it turns a bit gelatinous. In this regard, you can see how an approximate \$17 investment (in my state) in a tray full of Everclear (190-proof, 750 ml to the bottle) can cost less than pennies per use, especially if you cut it with distilled water. (Only college students and fools actually drink this stuff straight; if you drink it at all, heavens to Betsy, just let the vapors pass over your favorite glass of juice).
4. As opposed to darkroom work, light is not a problem, you can work anytime; simply line your 8x10 or larger plastic trays in the bathtub or kitchen sink area under good light so you can see (as well as feel) when the glue is gone. Each globule you leave behind may represent a sticking point, so be thorough. Check with spouse ahead of time to ensure you're not about to hold up someone's bath time or other personal matters.
5. A wetting agent of some type is needed. You can spend \$15 or more for one of the commercial wetting agents, like Photo Flow solution, or you can spend fraction of pennies with a drop or two of Dawn dishwashing detergent. Wetting agents help penetrate the paper without harming the stamp.
6. After the job is done, blot and enter the stamps in your drying press. You'll find that the next day, if you've followed these points to the letter, the dried stamps will shake free and cascade from the press as easily as if you'd soaked them in water. If not, you've missed a step or misunderstood a point. In my experience, the No. 1 cause for sticky stamps in the drying press is that you've gotten in a hurry and not rinsed long enough to remove all the glue. And, remember, the longer you re-use the alcohol solution, the more dissolved glue accumulates in it. Don't be a miser: start over with a fresh bottle occasionally!
7. Other caveats to remember: Only time will tell how long the stamps can last before reacting to the

alcohol process. I believe the stamps will last indefinitely. Fifty to a hundreds years from now, you want your heir to be proud of the bright, like-new condition in which he finds his stamps in the albums you've bequeathed. You can test this process by speeding up the "aging" factor. Simply leave a dry, test set of stamps, hinged to acid-free paper, outdoors under blazing sun for a number of days. After a month or six months of this (it's your call, but the longer the better), and if there are no discernable age spots or discolorations, I'd call it a success. Because I'm retired and liable to keel over dead long before sufficient, exhaustive testing is done to prove just how long they'll hold up, I've neglected this step.

"My" system, now yours as my gift of gratitude to the many who have helped me, has some negative points: for example, EVERY US stamp coated with self-adhesive glue automatically becomes a soaker, so you'd better find a way to enjoy soaking. On the other hand, I enjoy quiet time in a darkroom or other "soaking space" listening to soft music and watching the soaking tub fill with my little gems.

If you have questions, call or e-mail me for a problem-solving discussion at 256-435-4001. (I cannot accept collect calls -- I live on a frugal disability budget). As I mentioned, I'm retired and have plenty of time to experiment -- if the solution to your problem is not obvious and is of sufficient interest to others, I will work on it.

My e-mail: alofbama@netscape.com. And, if you find the soaking process helpful and feel charitable toward a disabled collector (me), send me a few of your good-condition used or duplicate commems, either U.S. or WW variety, on paper or off, at P. O. Box 265, Jacksonville, Alabama 36265, USA.

By the way, I specialize in birds, insects, snakes, U.S. and WW scenics. :)

Warning

You should NOT use a tray of Everclear or any other alcohol product anywhere near an open flame, such as a wall heater or anything that might cause a spark, such as a water heater or other appliance that may have a short circuit. Don't smoke near Everclear. Read and follow the warning labels on the bottle. With cold weather upon us, this becomes even more urgent.

It could be -- and probably would be -- deadly if someone filled a tray with Everclear while smoking. In my experience, nothing is worse than an alcohol fire: you can't see the flames with your naked eye and wouldn't even know where to point an extinguisher if you had one. Many years ago, on assignment as a photographer at a Talladega 500 stockcar race, I personally witnessed a pit crew member catch fire as a spark ignited his refill can, and he was flown to a Birmingham hospital where he nearly died as a result of the fire. So, please, for safety's sake, emphasize safe handling of the product, know the hazards and your limitations in putting out such a fire, and know how to handle grain alcohol fires specifically. Most important of all: Keep a fire extinguisher handy.

Some people think it's enough to dump used grain alcohol down a kitchen or bathroom drain; well, there's a trap under the sink that can hold enough alcohol to possibly catch fire or explode unless flushed out with plenty of running tap water from the sink.

A lot of people are interested in this alcohol-based soaking method and are using it because it works, according to e-mail in my in-box. I keep and use it as a solvent while knowing proper, safe storage is of utmost importance.

Enjoy your hobby, but know the risks and be prepared for the worst.

God Bless,
Al Harris

Miniature Sheets contain multiple stamps mostly with the same design.

Souvenir Sheets are similar to a miniature sheet but imply some form of commemorative inscription in the sheet margin.

Panes are typically the sheet form found in a post office. Then there are complete sheets as printed at the printers.

Stamp types include

Definitives (used for a prolonged period of time),

Commemoratives (having a short usage),

semi-postals (with regular postal value and a tax for a worthy cause),

Postage Dues, and

Revenues (exclusively to denote a tax paid);

There are more types as well, but these are the most common.

Postal stationery are specially made envelopes, post cards or letter forms for use in the mail with postal value.

Aerograms are thin paper letter forms used for international mail.

Envelopes and Postal Cards look as you would expect, but have a prepaid indicia on them denoting their postal value. Also in this category are wrappers, commonly used for mailing newspapers and pamphlets.

Cancellations and Postmarks are found on covers and other postal documents. Common types are machine, hand, and pictorial. These explain in what manner they were applied or their intent. Backstamps are routing cancellation marks applied to the reverse of a cover showing where and when a letter passed through postal handling.

Don't overlook **meters**. These are common today, especially on bulk and commercial mailings. Several companies around the world make meter machines, and their types and history are fascinating.

When it comes to **Covers** (envelopes or similar wrappings which carried mail), those postally used and non-philatelic in origin are best.

Censored Covers are mail pieces which were opened for inspection. Always look for Auxiliary Markings which denote special handling, delays, etc. Whenever possible, explain the route a cover may have taken from origin to destination.

A **maximum card** is a post card bearing a stamp cancelled on the picture side. Ideally, the stamp used, cancellation and picture post card should all be related by topic in some way.

This is just a short list of the possibilities!

To be continued in the next issue