



Stamping Around

Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Arlington Meetings: First Wednesday @ 7:30 p.m.
 Bob Duncan Community Center, Vandergriff Park
Irving Meetings: Third Wednesday @ 7:30 p.m.
 Garden & Arts Center, 906 Senter
Lake Granbury Meetings: 4th Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.
 Bentwater Activities Center (adjacent to Bentwater Marina)



CHAPTER
MEMBER



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<http://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>

April 2016

Postage Rates & Fees	1/17/2016	4/10/2016
DOMESTIC		
1st Class - 1 oz (retail / metered or PC postage)	0.49 / 0.485	0.47 / 0.465
" 2 oz	0.71 / 0.705	0.68 / 0.675
" 3 oz	0.93 / 0.925	0.89 / 0.885
" 3.5 oz (maximum)	1.15 / 1.145	1.10 / 1.095
non-machinable surcharge	+0.22	+0.21
" > 4 oz —> see 1st Class Flats		
1st Class Flats - 1 oz	0.98	0.94
" 2 oz	1.20	1.15
" 3 oz	1.42	1.36
" 4 oz	1.64	1.57
" 5 oz	1.86	1.78
" 13 oz (maximum)	3.62	3.46
(if rigid, non-rectangular, non-uniform, must be mailed as 1st Class Parcel)		
1st Class Parcel - 1 oz	2.54	2.45
" 2 oz	2.54	2.45
" 3 oz	2.54	2.45
" 4 oz	2.74	2.64
" 8 oz	3.54	3.40
" 13 oz (old maximum)	4.54	4.35
Media Mail - 1 LB	2.72	2.61
" 2 LBS	3.22	3.09
" 3 LBS	3.72	3.57
Priority Mail - Flat-Rate /Legal/ Padded	6.45/6.45/6.80	6.45/6.45/6.80
" - up to 1 LB.	6.45 - 10.00	6.45 - 10.00
" - Small Flat-rate Box	6.80	6.80
" - Med. /Lrg Flat-rate Box	13.45 / 18.75	13.45 / 18.75
Postcard (Domestic)	0.35	0.34
Certificate of Mailing (#3817 / 3877 3x min)	1.35 / 0.38	1.30 / 0.36
Certified Mail	3.45	3.30
USPS Tracking		
1st Class Parcel / Priority / Media / Parcel	0.00	0.00
Insurance		
0 - \$50 / \$50.01 - \$100 / \$100.01 - \$200	2.20/2.75/3.50	2.10/2.65/3.35
Registered (Domestic)		
\$0 value	12.20	11.70
\$0.01 - \$ 100 / \$100.01 - \$500	13.00 / 15.15	12.50/14.55
INTERNATIONAL		
Letter & Postcard Airmail		
All Countries (1 oz) or Canada/Mex. (2 oz)	1.20	1.15
First Class Package (1LB Canada/Other)	16.50 - 22.50	16.50 - 22.50
Priority Mail Int'l Flat Rate Env(4LB) /	23.95 - 32.95	23.95 - 32.95
" Canada & Mexico (flt rate legal, padded)	See above	See above
	38.75 - 41.50	38.75 - 41.50

USA Postage Rate Decrease

By Peter Elias

Yes, you read that correctly: postage rate DECREASE! Two years ago the USPS received the ok to temporarily increase rates by 4.3% due to economic issues. Now they are mandated to reduce the rates by 4.3%.

This means that FOREVER stamps that will cost 49¢ on or before Sunday, April 10 will now cost (and be worth) 47¢ starting April 10. My suggestion is to NOT buy any Forever stamps until April 10!

But it isn't just First Class rates that will decrease, so will practically all other rates and service fees with the exception of Priority Mail and Priority Mail Express (which just had an increase in January), which are NOT affected by this mandate.

The ½¢ discount offered for using meters or "PC postage" is also extended for standard first class letter items up to 3.5 ounces.

The "additional ounce" rate is also decreased by 1¢ and the international letter rate goes back to \$1.15. Media mail (and presumably also library mail) rates and auxiliary services such as certificates of mailing and certified mail also see reductions in cost; the table to the left shows all major rates.

The table to the left shows the rates that should be in effect starting April 10. There is tiny chance that the rates may not take effect, since the US Postal Service is supposedly fighting this roll-back.

The USPS will publish an updated "Notice 123", which contains all rates; the current (and to-be-updated on April 10) one can be found at <http://pe.usps.com/text/dmm300/Notice123.htm>

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Stamping Around

Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Peter Elias, Editor (news@mid-citiesstampclub.com)

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2015 - 2016 MID-CITIES OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – Mike Smith
First Vice-President – Skip Ely
Second Vice-President – Richard Hildebrandt
Secretary – Benedict Termini
Treasurer – Judy Christmas

Board of Directors (voting):

Alliene Franklin Ralph Poore Ken Wills

Membership in the Mid-Cities Stamp Club is available to anyone of good character interested in philately. Feel free to attend any of our 3 different meeting sites in the greater Dallas / Ft. Worth area. Dues are \$12 per year. For more information, the editor is reachable during business hours at (972) 671-0077 or e-mail us at:

editor@mid-citiesstampclub.com

For a membership application write to:

Mid-Cities Stamp Club
P.O. Box 2158
Arlington, TX 76004-2158

or visit: <http://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>

Editor's Forum

By Peter Elias

I hope that you all had a chance to go to TEXPEX, the only other stamp "show" in North Texas. Since my own collecting and exhibiting needs are a bit specialized (with material not often found here in the USA), I never-the-less had fun going through stamps and covers at the "beginning collectors" tables. While we're all experts in some areas, we are sure to be newbies in others... So I started "sifting" through the large bins of stamps and managed to "rescue" a few that looked interesting somehow, and will research them later. Who knows, there may be a new area of collecting waiting for me. After all, just 4 or 5 years ago, I knew little or nothing about the alternate postage areas of collecting, those that encompass internet stamps, Framas, ATM stamps, etc. At the time the APC was just some blue machine in the corner of my local post office lobby that dispensed bar-coded postage labels. It wasn't until another collector mentioned that the machines were being converted soon (April 2012) and that there would be all sorts of changes, including new designs. Since I'm a newsletter editor and also exhibitor, I figured that this would be a good way to check out something new and document history while it's developing in front of your eyes (much easier than painstaking research 30 years later...). Thousands of miles of driving and hundreds of hours in front of APC machines has made me an expert in just 4 short years. What will drive your next philatelic endeavour?

Members in the News

By Peter Elias

Ken Aldridge wrote a short article about writing as a 2nd career that will appear in the April issue of *The Grapevine*, a monthly publication of the Society of Former Agents of the FBI. The magazine featured artists and sculptures as a second career in the March issue.

Peter Elias contributed information for an article in issue #39 (January 2016) of "Variable", the quarterly journal of Ateeme (the Spanish collecting group that specializes in ATM stamps and other "variable denomination postage"). The article was about the Charlie Brown APC stamps from the US Postal Service "SSK" (automated postal center) machines.

Coming Attractions

2016

- APR. 6** **MCSC—ARLINGTON Meeting**
Program: Ray Cartier presents "The Apollo Manned Flights to the Moon"
Also: Bring items for next month's auction
- APR. 8-9** **TSDA Dealers Bourse**
Richardson Civic Center, 411 W. Arapaho Rd, Fri 11-5, Sat 9-4
- APR. 20** **MCSC—IRVING Meeting**
Program: Skip Ely will give a program
- APR. 26** **MCSC—LAKE GRANBURY Meeting**
Program: TBD
- MAY 4** **MCSC—ARLINGTON Meeting**
Program: Club Auction
- MAY 18** **MCSC—IRVING Meeting**
Program: Geoff Owens will give a program
- MAY 24** **MCSC—LAKE GRANBURY Meeting**
Program: TBD
- JUN. 1** **MCSC—ARLINGTON Meeting**
Program: Geoffrey Owens, Speaker. History, Mystery, & Controversy: The French Marianne Definitives

Secretary's Report

By Benedict Termini

New Members

Donal Green (#578)

Dropped due to non-payment of 2016 dues

See last month's newsletter

Reinstatements

Joe Nazarro

Membership Summary – March 4, 2016

Membership as of February 4, 2016	111
New Members	1
Dropped for non-payment of dues	(11)
Resignations	(0)
Deceased	(0)
Reinstatements	1
Membership as of March 4, 2016	102

Arlington Meeting Minutes March 2, 2016

By Ben Termini

Call-to-Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Club President Mike Smith.

Attendance:

There were 24 members and 1 guest (Donal Green) present. Our guest was introduced and told us about himself and his collecting interests.

Officer & Committee Reports:

- ◆ Secretary Ben Termini reported that we had 101 members, and had lost about a dozen members at the end of 2015 because of non-payment of dues. Some had moved, others were no longer collecting and some were just too cheap to renew.
- ◆ Treasurer Judy Christmas stated that the finances were in good shape.
- ◆ EXPO Committee chairman Ralph Poore was not present, however Mike Smith reminded everyone that there would be an EXPO committee meeting and an MCSC Board Meeting on March 19th. Ray Cartier mentioned that the show theme was "SCIENCE FICTION" and he had sent mail asking for exhibits to ATA members. He is hoping to get an eight frame exhibit on Harry Potter for the show.
- ◆ Newsletter Editor Peter Elias was not present.
- ◆ Sales Books Chairman Skip Ely said that sales were unusually good.

Announcements:

- ◆ Ray Cartier announced that the Arlington Branch of the club had won the Texas Shootout at TEXPEX and that we had received a certificate and a four-margin Penny Black as a prize. He will discuss the disposition of the stamp at the next board meeting.
- ◆ Rich Hildebrandt mentioned that the next auction is in May and he would like members to bring lots for sale to the next meeting in April.
- ◆ Dave Stockbridge mentioned that the Granbury branch would be hosting an estate sale auction at their April meeting and said there was a lot of good material available.
- ◆ Stanley Christmas said that George Kubal (dealer) had donated a framed imperforate sheet of the Wisconsin Tercentenary stamp (Scott 755) to the club, and that it would be put into the silent auction.
- ◆ Mike Smith said we are on the list to get 60 of the new exhibit frames after the NY2016 show.

Show & Tell:

- ◆ Ben Termini passed around some unusual FDCs produced by Hideaki Nakano.
- ◆ Aileen Franklin passed around the Granbury exhibit which was entered in the Texas Shootout at TEXPEX.
- ◆ Ray Cartier passed around a copy of the prospectus for the first MCSC EXPO which was called POSTEX at that time.
- ◆ Dave Stockbridge showed some labels with both Italian and Polish text, issued during WW2 for the war relief services.

Irving Meeting Minutes March 16, 2015

By Skip Ely

Call-to-Order:

The meeting was called to order by President Mike Smith at 7:30 PM at the Garden & Arts Center in Irving.

Attendance:

There were 12 members present.

Officer Reports:

- ◆ Secretary – Mike Smith said we had 101 members.
- ◆ Treasurer – Mike said our treasury was in good shape.

Committee Reports:

- ◆ Sales – Skip Ely reported that Steve Carpenter had offered five packets of the \$2 inverted Jenny to him for half price, reducing by about half our postage needs for the APS books for the next five months. Thanks Steve!
- ◆ EXPO – Mike said that Ray Cartier was pursuing various outlets to support our EXPO theme of Science Fiction (in conjunction with the Star Wars commemorative stamps).

Announcements:

- ◆ Geoff Owens said the Dallas-Park Cities Stamp Club had recently launched a new website hosted by the APS, and could be found on the APS website.

Show & Tell:

- ◆ Ken Wills passed around a stamp he wanted help in identifying.
- ◆ Jack Urish showed an orange stamp that had turned brown from age, which he had restored to its original color by treating it with hydrogen peroxide. He noted that his first attempt failed due to using an old bottle. A fresh solution did the trick.
- ◆ Jack also showed some stamps from Germany, Italy, and Czechoslovakia with portions of a Munich Radio Free Europe post mark.
- ◆ Ken Wills talked about a book he was returning to Jack titled "My Life in Sarawak", which he found very interesting.

Door Prizes:

Gift Certificates were awarded to Sujan Shrestha and Mike Smith. A donated NY 2016 philatelic button was won by Keith Parris.

Program:

The program was the Semi-Annual auction.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned around 8:45 PM.

Door Prizes:

Gift Certificates (\$10) were won by Judy Christmas and Ralph Blackburn. A special prize of covers from AmeriStamp EXPO was won by Steve Carpenter.

Program:

Clean out your closet. Wheeling and dealing by various members.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Been There, Done That

Iguazú Falls

By Pat & Bob Weidman



On our 1994 trip to South America, one of the places we visited was Iguazú Falls (or Foz do Iguacu - the Portuguese name, or Cataratas do Iguazú - as it is known in Spanish). The falls are located at a bend in the Iguazú River where the borders of Brazil and Argentina meet.

In the language of the indigenous Guarani people who name the waterfalls, Iguazu means “Big Water”. It certainly lives up to its’ name.

Iguazu Falls consists of 275 separate waterfalls, although during the rainy season, there may be as many as 350 separate waterfalls. The falls stretch along nearly two miles of cliff faces and plunge more than 200 feet to the rocks below. That makes them taller than the Niagara Falls and wider than Victoria Falls. The average flow is 396,258 gallons per second. The peak flow is 1,717,118 gallons per second. The sound of the water falling to the rocks below is deafening.

We arrived on a very early flight from Rio de Janeiro, where we had started our trip. The tour operator who picked us at the airport dropped us off at the Hotel Cataratas on the Brazilian side where we were staying. It was right across the street from a section of the falls. After checking into the hotel we went exploring.

There were catwalks that actually go out into the water itself so you can get some great pictures. How they built these catwalks is an engineering marvel because the current of the water was fast and strong. There is so much mist from the water coming over the falls that you would think you were in a rainstorm. We were soaked within minutes. The water was also very muddy, so a shower was necessary when we got back to the hotel.



In the picture above, Pat is standing in front of a section of the waterfall. This was taken from the Brazilian side.

In the other picture is a coati, a cousin to the raccoon that inhabits the area around the falls. There are many snack bars in the area and people visiting the falls buy food to feed the coatis. As a result they have lost their fear of humans.

Pat wanted a Coke, which cost a dollar (a lot of money for a soft drink in 1994). When she bent down to pet the coati, he snatched the bottle out of her hand and began drinking it himself.

The stamp at top left is Argentina Scott #639, issued in 1955 which shows the Iguazú Falls.

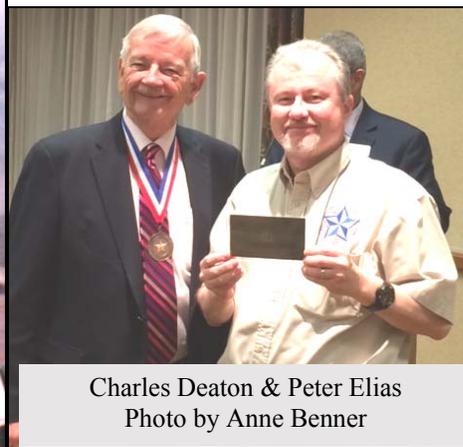


TEXPEX 2016

By Peter Elias

Several MCSC club members exhibited at TEXPEX 2016 (February 26-28, 2016):

- ◆ Ben Termini - “**Birth of the Palestinian Authority Postal Service**” (Gold and APS Post-1980 Award)
- ◆ Ben Termini - “**Porte De Mar Stamps of Mexico 1875-79**” (Gold and APS Pre-1900 Award)
- ◆ Stanley Christmas - “**The 4½¢ White House of the Presidential Series of 1938**” (Silver and Women Exhibitors Sterling Achievement Award)
- ◆ Peter Elias - “**Introduction to Spanish Thermal ATM Stamps, Their Varieties and Usages**” (Silver and AAPE Award of Honor)
- ◆ Peter Elias - “**The Brooklyn Postage Dodgers**” (Vermeil and AAPE Creativity Award)
- ◆ Ray Cartier - “**Apollo 13: Failure is NOT an option**” (Silver and Space Unit Award)
- ◆ Ray Cartier - “**Flight: Flown Mail & Messages**” (Silver-Bronze)
- ◆ Peter Elias - “**The Spidey Stamp and Its Promotion**” (Silver-Bronze)



Charles Deaton & Peter Elias
Photo by Anne Benner

The MCSC (Arlington branch) won his year’s “Texas Shoot-Out” exhibit (where clubs presented 1-frame exhibits that were judged mostly by a “fun factor”). The prize was a Great Britain #1, which Peter Elias accepted on behalf of the club and was presented by Charles Deaton.

Overall, the show went well (no ice storms this year!) and attendance was approx. 350. My “mission” at the show was to “rescue” certain stamps; more about that in next month’s newsletter!

Been There, Done That

Columbia River Gorge

By Peter Elias

In 1989, I found myself with a “free” ticket on USAir, courtesy of being “bumped” on a previous flight). So what, what was I going to do with a free ticket on USAir?



At the time, a friend of mine was living in the Seattle area, and seeing as that I had never been there before, I figured, why not check it out!

So off I went to Seattle from Louisville (via Pittsburgh - ah, the things we have to endure for a free ticket...). During the week or so that I spent in the Pacific Northwest, I sure got to see lots of places: Mt. Rainier, Mt. St. Helens, British Columbia and even the Columbia River Gorge (which separates Washington from Oregon).



My friend stated that he and some of his friends were going to go Windsurfing in the Gorge, so I said “sure”, well, the going along part, not actually windsurfing myself... So the guy windsurfing in the picture is obviously NOT me... but my friend.

My rental car on that trip was a 1989 Mercury Cougar, shown here on custom “Zazzle” stamp from a photo I took somewhere in Canada later on that trip. I really liked how this car drove, and took a mental note of that...



At that time, I was driving my Audi Coupe GT, as well as a Dodge Monaco station wagon that was my “daily driver”.

Little did I know at the time, that this rental car would influence my choice in 1994 when I was looking for another vehicle and ended up with the Cougar shown to the left and that I had for over 10 years.



Stink Free for Stamps

By Peter Elias



The “Stink Free” UV lamp that I ordered came in the other day. What is “Stink Free” you may ask? It is a product sold to help find and eliminate pet odor (such as cat urine). It comes with a neutralizing solution, but more importantly, a long-wave UV lamp, that looks exactly like the ones that Leuchtturm sells to the philatelic trade.

Now, lets look at the photo of the 3 different UV lamps that I have in the photo above.

The 2 UV lamps at the top are from Leuchtturm (“Lighthouse”), the German-based philatelic supply company ... The top lamp is their “long-wave” only UV lamp, while the middle one is their “dual short/long wave”. The bottom one is from “Stink Free” and looks *exactly* like the middle one from Lighthouse, except that in place of the short-wave bulb at the right end they replaced it with a standard white LED bulb... and the long bulb one side in the center is long-wave instead of short-wave (both of the black-bodied lamps are made in China).



I compared the output of all 3 long-wave lamps, and they all look like the photo of the Charlie Brown stamp above that has the “clear stripe” on the left glow a nice yellowish color!

So, the Stink-Free kit goes for \$16.22 at Amazon (prices may vary up to \$89!), but certainly beats the Lighthouse version for something like \$26+ !

CLASSIFIED BOURSE

Announcements

All club members that are current with their dues payments are entitled to FREE ads in this space! Please send ad to: Peter Elias, P.O. Box 940427, Plano, TX 75094-0427, give it to me at a meeting, or e-mail me at: peter@pcelias.com

For Sale

US POSTAGE – from our huge surplus: 1c – 20c : 70% of FV; 21c – 50c : 80% of FV. Send any amount (min \$10), specify group (70%, 80%), and receive mix of values back in FV as indicated above. Clean, F/VF only. Plate or Zip block included for every \$10 remitted. Remit (check or MO) to: J. Myers, P. O. Box 2047, Coppell, TX 75019. TX orders, add 8% sales tax. We cover return postage, S/H charges. Can also take PayPal (same terms). jasdmyers@earthlink.net 5/15

Wanted for MCSC Mixture Picks

Good US Material on Paper. We need commemoratives (32¢ to present “Forever” values), Airmails, Semi-Postals and high-value definitive stamps. Please no common stamps such as Christmas, Love and other “special” issues. The club will pay \$20 per pound for needed material and may pro-rate smaller quantities. Contact Bob Weidman at (817) 292-4954.

- NOTE -

Donations of any US on paper are graciously accepted! 1/16



Internet Stuff

By Peter Elias

An excellent site that showcases stamp forgeries from all over the world is located at <http://stampforgeries.com>. This site is run by someone out of Denmark and would seem to be similar to a site created by Bill Claghorn a few years ago. Bill Claghorn's site had been called the “Comparative Forgery” website and was an excellent tool for comparing real stamps to known forgeries. I had downloaded Bill Claghorn's Comparative Forgery website into a PDF file back in 2011 and can make it available if anyone wants it, although at about 77 MB in size it is a bit too large to be emailed. I've tried downloading the stamp forgeries site into a PDF file, but it is difficult since it's structure prevents me from doing that easily. This is one of the issues with the internet: sites like the Comparative Forgeries website may simply disappear one day (for a variety of reasons, such as lack of interest, non-payment of domain registration & hosting fees, or bankruptcy of “free website” services, and so on...) and then another great resource is lost! So it is important to be able to capture these kind of sites for posterity. This site so far has over 4,500 forgeries shown!

For Sale

Do you collect **used USA Plate Number Coils**? Select what you want from my [extensive](#) inventory at 1/3 of Scott catalog value. They are listed on my website at <http://web2.iadfw.net/wills/> and from there you will find links to other countries too. Also interested in trading. Ken Wills 9/11

Philatelic Reference CD's. The following self-running, philatelic reference CD's, each containing hundreds of scans, are now available:

- [St. Vincent Philatelic Reference Scans \(1,700 items!!\)](#)
- [Usage of British Empire War Tax Issues](#) (exhibit)
- [Airport Philately](#) (800+ scans of Airports on Stamps)
- [4 Rings—The History of Audi \(Great for any car lover!\)](#)
- [St. Vincent Postcards](#) (300+ postcards from 1900 to 2007)
- [My Life on Wheels](#) (autobiography via USA personalized postage)

• [Vintage Swiss Postcards](#) (700+ from 1898 to 1959)
Special MCSC Member price is only \$ 4.95 each. Non-member price is \$9.95 (+ \$2.85 domestic or \$6.00 international postage) each. PayPal to peter@pcelias.com are accepted. Peter Elias, PO Box 940427, Plano, TX 75094-0427 4/14

MOVED, BUT SALE CONTINUES! Special discounts to MCSC members for Swiss, Austria, Liechtenstein issues, @ 1/3 and LESS of catalog values. Also will accept US postage (any values) @ 50% of catalog. All orders postpaid! I also accept PayPal if you wish! John Barrett, Ph.D. Contact info: jstrubelboy@aol.com 12/14

Want to have your own **self-running virtual stamp album on CD, DVD or BluRay disk** with scans of your stamps, exhibits or even digital photos to give to your friends? With just a few simple steps I can create a self-running CD-ROM for PC's or a DVD or BluRay disk for your TV viewing pleasure! Contact me at peter@pcelias.com for more details. 4/11

Wanted to Buy

Interesting “stuff”, such as:

- ♦ Worldwide Revenue stamps on document
- ♦ Worldwide ATM stamps, such as those from Frama, Klüssendorf, Epelsa, Mobba Postage Vending machines and other “on-demand” printed postage (but NOT “ATM Booklet stamps”) from around the world.
- ♦ CVP and custom order stamps, such as the “PhotoStamps” from Zazzle, Stamps.com, Endicia, etc.

Contact me at peter@pcelias.com with scans. 4/14

U.S. Liberty Series precancels. Unsorted, on paper, quantities okay. Contact Gene Atkinson at atkinson@our-town.com. 4/15

Postally used “ATM” stamps (i.e.: machine vended), such as Framas, from around the world; would prefer on cover or postcard if possible. Peter Elias, info@stvincentstamps.com 8/14

President's Letter

by Mike Smith

We had a very productive EXPO meeting last Saturday, and are looking forward to the 2016 show being one of the best yet.

Ray Cartier is doing a terrific job in reaching out to other clubs and groups who might be interested in this year's theme, Sci-Fi and Fantasy, to provide some new competitive exhibit frames. Invitations were sent to ATA members and to three of their study groups on topics related to our theme, and a number of philatelic publications will publish a publicity release asking for thematic EXPO exhibits. Ray also invited Van Siegling to bring his Diamond Award winning 8-frame exhibit on Harry Potter from Ohio and to be the Speaker at this year's Awards Banquet. Van's exhibit will be the first Court of Honor Exhibit in MSCS history.

Peter Elias has arranged another outstanding three-judge panel that includes several new faces, and the other EXPO committees are in good shape with the usual requests for good-quality material needed for the Silent Auction and for the Beginning Collectors table. Finally, the Board approved the monthly rental of a climate-controlled storage unit located by Ralph Poore for EXPO and other club material now being stored at some members' homes.

MCSC again provided two 1-frame exhibits made up of single pages for the TPA Stamp Club Shootout at TEXPEX 2016. The Arlington frame with a theme of humor in stamps won the Grand Prize, a Penny Black the world's first postage stamp, and I thought the Granbury frame on philatelic terms was also an excellent exhibit. Last year the Oklahoma Stamp Club won the USA Scott Nr. 1 first prize and raised a lot of money selling about 800 \$1 raffle tickets for it, so the Board voted to try a similar raffle at EXPO with our prize.

Stamp of the Month: (I wrote this last month but couldn't finish it due to a computer mishap.) Everyone knows that March 17th is Saint Patrick's Day, thought to be the date of his death. Patrick was a fifth century Christian missionary, the first bishop of Armagh (the Primate of All Ireland), and is the primary patron saint of Ireland. According to legend, Saint Patrick banished all snakes from Ireland by chasing them into the sea although there is no geologic record that snakes ever inhabited the island. Still, Saint Patrick is as much a patriotic symbol of Ireland as the color green and the shamrock. France issued Scott Nr. 2508 [shown below] on March 16, 1996 in honor of Saint Patrick and Ireland Scott Nr. 96-98, 121-123, 179-181 issued on the 1,500th anniversary of his death, and several more recent stamps also commemorate him. A joint issue, Mexico Scott Nr. 2049 and Ireland Scott Nr. 1085, on September 12, 1997, celebrated the 150th anniversary of the San Patricio Battalion. Most of its members were young men from Ireland who fought with distinction "for the cause of Mexico".

Keep on Collecting! Mike

[The stamp image is from www.stampworld.com]



The Legend of the Siren of Warsaw

By Karen Cartier

The first known mention of a Siren, (aka a mermaid) as the symbol of [Warsaw](#) can be traced to a Royal Seal that appeared around the year 1390.

As the first of two versions of the mythological feisty, and busty beauty with the tail of a dragon go, Prince Kazimierz, while hunting in the marshlands with friends, saw a large animal and rode off alone to follow it. But as the cold night closed in he lost his bearings and faced a dangerous night in the open. As he approached the edge of the Vistula River, miraculously, a mermaid emerged and guided the prince to safety by telling him that she would shoot a golden arrow into the woods and he must follow it. The arrow went a great distance and when he found it, he also found a small hut where a fisherman and his family lived. They took him in and gave him food and treated him kindly. In repayment, he thanked them and gave them a piece of land near the river, later encouraging the building of a town on that site. Prince Kazimierz named the town after the twin children of the fisherman: Wars, a boy and Sawa, a girl. Therefore, Warsaw was founded out of gratitude, and the mermaid adopted as its emblem.

A second story suggests that the Siren of Warsaw originally hailed from a foreign land. She and her twin sister swam across the Baltic Sea, arriving in [Gdańsk](#), Poland. Here the sisters split, one swimming to Copenhagen and the other down the Vistula (aka Wista) river. Local fishermen soon noticed someone tampering with their nets, freeing the fish in the process, and teamed up to catch this pesky vandal once and for all. They soon changed their minds once they saw her, and her siren like singing voice soon made her a firm favorite among them. That is, all except for one, a greedy merchant who decided to trap her and take her on tour, Elephant Man-style, around the sideshows of Poland. His plan was soon foiled though after the son of a fisherman heard her haunting voice wailing from a shed. Alerted to her kidnap the fisherman hatched a successful daring plan to free her. They did, and in thanks to the townspeople who rescued her the Siren, whose name was Syrenka, swore to make it her life's mission to protect Warsaw. It's this defensive stance of hers which explains why you'll see her armed with a sword and shield.



EXPO/Board Meeting Minutes March 19, 2016

By Skip Ely

The Mid-Cities Stamp Club EXPO Committee and Officers and Board members met March 19, 2016 in the meeting room at the Pizza Garden Inn in Bedford.

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 AM by EXPO Chairperson and Board Member Ralph Poore. Others present included club President Mike Smith, First Vice President Skip Ely, Second Vice President Rich Hildebrandt, Treasurer Judy Christmas, Board Member Alliene Franklin, EXPO Vice Chairperson and Past President Stanley Christmas, Newsletter Editor Peter Elias, and EXPO Committee members Ray and Karen Cartier, Ray and Janet Moyer, Ken Aldridge, Tom Cunningham, and Bob Weidman

Exhibit Judges – Peter Elias said he had commitments from three APS judges. Ray Cartier said ATA member Van Siegling would be attending and suggested we invite him to give a short talk at the Awards dinner with a \$100 honorarium. This was approved.

Cachets – Peter said he had mailed Diana Davis some ideas for the Cachets, but had not heard back from her yet. A discussion followed about how to offer the cachets for distribution (with or without stamps, for sale or give away, and whether to keep a separate table or try to do it at the registration desk). Ray Moyer agreed to explore options and organize the details.

Dealer Bourse – Tom Cunningham said almost all the dealers at the last EXPO expressed interest in coming back this year. A discussion ensued about getting more or different dealers, but it was ultimately decided that the current arrangement is optimum for our current needs and capabilities.

Awards - Alliene Franklin led a discussion on what form our new five-level Exhibit awards should take. It was decided to go with a medallion that could be hung from a ribbon. Alliene will investigate and decide on the specifics.

Exhibits and Publicity – Ray Cartier said he has been soliciting potential exhibits from fantasy and science fiction philatelic groups. He has also been exploring participation by the same or similar interests to attend EXPO. He led a discussion on several issues that have been brought up to him relating to people attending in costumes. It was determined that further research was needed before we committed to anything in this area.

Mail-Out – Stanley Christmas said we still had enough donated postage to handle the mail out this year, so the only cost would be for the 1500 envelopes.

Other EXPO Areas (Chance Board, Beginner's Table, Silent Auction, Security, Snacks, Lunches, etc.) were noted but not discussed at length. The following topics were subsequently discussed in combination with the Board meeting.

Storage Unit – Ralph Poore said he had located a small climate-controlled storage unit in Arlington (at Green Oaks and Arkansas) for about \$100 a month with no long term contract (month to month). After a brief discussion about the size of the unit and what we might put in there, a motion was made and approved to rent the unit. Ralph will handle the details.

Penny Black Disposition – As noted elsewhere, the club won the Penny Black offered at TEXPEX for the best club exhibit. It was determined that the club might benefit most by offering the stamp as a raffle item at EXPO. Alliene Franklin

agreed to attend to the details. She suggested allowing club members to purchase tickets prior to EXPO, while all other tickets would be available only at EXPO. There was no objection to this arrangement.

Additional Club Donation - Karen Cartier offered to donate 32 copies of her new book (Tales by Mail, a re-telling of stories depicted on stamps from around the world) to the club for resale, with the benefit going to the club. She offered another ten books to be given away as door prizes. The club accepted her generous donation.

New Exhibit Frames – Our request to get 30 new double frames from NY2016 has been accepted. Yet to be determined are the costs, as well as our shipping options. Some cost may be defrayed by selling some of our old frames.

Sales – Skip Ely said that he had accepted Steve Carpenter's offer of five packets of the \$2 inverted Jenny stamps at half price for use on the APS circuit mailing. Skip also made available a spreadsheet of sales income and expenses for the first three months of the year.

The next Board and EXPO meeting was tentatively scheduled for 11:00 AM, August 20, 2016, at the Pizza Garden (although alternative sites were discussed). The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 PM.

Granbury Meeting Minutes February 22, 2015

By Eugene Atkinson

It was a dark and stormy night as host David Stockbridge welcomed twelve members and guests to the Lake Granbury Branch, Mid-Cities Stamp Club on Tuesday, February 23. The group assembled at the Bentwater Activities Center, 1800 W. Emerald Bend Ct., in Granbury at 7:00 pm. Inclement weather kept the Fort Worth and Weatherford members away that evening.

Combining ANNOUNCEMENTS with SHOW AND TELL, Alliene Franklin discussed the upcoming TEXPEX show in Grapevine, Lloyd Willis showed a Canadian air mail envelope, Ken Jones had an early use of the "flying eagle" meter cancel, Gene Atkinson showed an antique stamp hinge dispenser, and Dave Stockbridge had a 1945 Polish, Italian, United States Relief effort cover. Brian Smith reminded members of the beginners' table at EXPO in November and urged donations of philatelic items for it as well as for the club "mystery box."

After a sugar-free, gluten-free, calorie-free BREAK, David introduced a video of John Hotchner's banquet talk from the November EXPO. Hotchner encouraged members to exhibit at local shows, stressing the creative aspects of displaying philatelic knowledge and the fun of meeting new people.

David Stockbridge announced that the March program would be from Bob Coleman and Denny Ludlow regarding naval ship covers.

And, in April, the club will host a large estate auction--albums, collections, accumulations and more. The event should attract considerable interest and will require expanded hours and early arrival to view all the material that will be offered.

In CLOSING, Edith Willis and David Stockbridge won door prizes.

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For Sale

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USPS Commemorative Yearbooks with stamps at face value of postage. For listing of what years are available and price e-mail Dave at stockdave44@yahoo.com 8/11

MEET & EAT for April & May 2016

by Judy & Stanley Christmas

“Meet and Eats” are before the club meetings. All club members and their guests are welcome. We will gather between 5:00 and 5:30 PM. The group will start ordering at 5:30 PM. Latecomers can order when they arrive or just come by for a visit (check with the restaurant first if it serves buffet style). Meals should be over around 6:45 PM.

Meet and Eat locations will be included the club’s broadcast messages. NOTE: All locations are subject to change.

ARLINGTON

- April 6 **Jay Jay Café**, 1001 S Bowen, Arlington, TX
(817) 861-1060
<http://www.yelp.com/biz/jay-jay-cafe-nbr-2-arlington>
- May 4 **Campo Verde**, 2918 W Pioneer Parkway,
Arlington, TX 76013, (817) 275-7003
<http://www.campoverde.us/>

IRVING

- April 20 **Angelo’s Pasta**
1330 West Pioneer Parkway, Irving.
- May 18 **Mama’s Daughter’s Diner**
2412 West Shady Grove (at Story Rd), Irving
phone: 972 790-2778

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