

# Stamping Around

## Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Arlington Meetings: First Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.

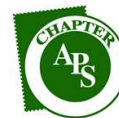
Bob Duncan Center, 2800 S. Center St.

Eules Meetings: Third Wednesday @ 7:30 p.m.

12750 S. Pipeline Rd, #1C (Central Station Marketing)

Lake Granbury Meetings: 4th Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Bentwater Activities Center (adjacent to Bentwater Marina)



#891-076252



CHAPTER  
MEMBER

#90



#53-3364

Volume 34, Number 5

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

May 2021

### Been There, Done That

### Barcode

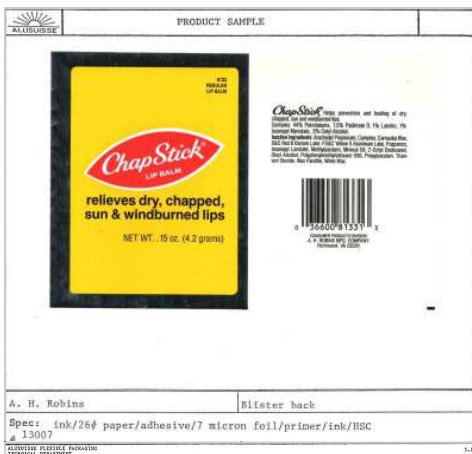
By Peter Elias



In 1982, Great Britain issued the 26p stamp shown above, Scott #1001, to commemorate "Information Technology". Of course, that term means quite a bit more now, 39 years later! I found this stamp attached to a postcard featuring the same image and first-day cancelled (aka "Maximum Card"), and it brought forth a memory! Hence this article! That memory relates to one of the 3 panels on the stamp design: the barcode.

While "UPC" (universal product code) codes had their start in 1973; by 1984, only about 1/3 of stores in the USA were equipped with barcode readers or scanners. In 1987, I worked in Kentucky for a Swiss-based company that produced various flexible packaging items, including some that had UPC codes.

I distinctly remember that at one point I had to purchase a "wand reader" for our QC laboratory so that we could test the quality of the printed codes (i.e.: were they readable?). The wand reader looked like the one in the right panel on the stamp.



One of the biggest problems was getting the code printed properly so that it would decode properly when scanned.

I just now looked through my collection of "product samples" that I had prepared when working as a "QC Engineer" for Alusuisse Flexible Packaging. While

initially I just prepared just one of these huge binders for myself, I soon learned that all of our sales people really liked these and then I had to make a bunch of them.

It was with the packaging that you see above (a "blister pack back") that we had some issues, where the manufacturer of the ChapStick™ product (A.H. Robins) said that our UPC codes weren't always readable.

So, the company had me test all the samples that came of our press (which used engraved/intaglio cylinders - not too different from what is used for some stamp production).

So here's a mini education on some aspects of UPC codes (well, it holds true for pretty much all barcodes...).



What you see above is a magnified portion of the barcode of the Chapstick UPC code. UPC codes consist of bars in 3 different widths (both black & white bars). If the narrowest white bars (such as above the "366" above are too narrow, then the barcode reader may not read them properly, such as thinking that it is a thicker black bar instead of a thinner one. Even here you can tell that the thinnest "white" bars are still much narrower than the thinnest "black" bars. Even today, I see products where the thin white bar is barely discernable, causing the whole code not to scan at the register, forcing the human readable code to be entered manually at the register (i.e.: a "tech fail"!).

As a side note, the barcodes used around the world are the "EAN" (European Article Number) codes, while the USA & Canada use "UPC" (Universal Product Codes). And there IS a difference: UPC codes have 12 digits while EAN codes have 13 digits (these include prefixes, item numbers and a check digit). Strangely enough, the UK stamp only shows a barcode with 10 human readable digits! My brief article is very general, and there's lots more technical info at [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barcode).

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# Stamping Around

## Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Peter Elias, Editor ([news@mid-citiesstampclub.com](mailto:news@mid-citiesstampclub.com))

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### 2021 - 2022 MID-CITIES OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Immediate Past President: Ray Cartier

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 only \$12 per year (higher for mailed newsletters). For more information, the editor is reachable during business hours at (972) 671-0077 or : [editor@mid-citiesstampclub.com](mailto:editor@mid-citiesstampclub.com)

For a membership application (standard dues are \$12) 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

It seems like I just can't seem to get to writing *Been There - Done That* articles that I have had set aside for at least 2 years now! Every time that I'm looking at some old travel photos, or even just sorting through some random stamps, I run across yet another candidate for an article!

Here's the basic ingredients for a *Been There - Done That* article:

- 1) A stamp that shows a person, place or thing that relates to your life somehow.
- 2) A photo that you took (or has you in it) that relates to that same person, place or thing.
- 3) A brief story that ties the stamp & the photo together.

Either 1 or 2 above can trigger the story. For me, many times it is a photo that triggers the thought for an article; the trick then is to find a stamp to go with it! But then, sometimes I see a stamp and go gee, I've been there ... and then have to hunt for the photo! While in a general sense, 1 and 2 above ARE "been there - done that", which by itself is kind of a "dismissive" statement, it only works as a philatelic article if you have something interesting to say about what ties you to that stamp.

To make the article more interesting, it does help if you look up some basic historical facts about the person, place or thing that you are writing about. Other basic information about the stamp itself also helps, such as the catalog number and the issue date (but diving into minutiae about perforations, watermarks, printing methods and so on, are not necessary, since the story is about the design that is printed on the stamp). Keep in mind that while this is "autobiographical" in nature, feel free to put in opinions and humor if they make it more interesting. And I always keep all of these articles firmly grounded in the truth.

## Coming Attractions

—> Due to COVID-19 and city / county / state / national emergency ordinances, many meetings will be held virtually via Zoom at least until through April 2021. Data below is believed to be correct at time of publication; for updated MCSC meeting statuses, please contact club secretary Skip Ely.

### 2021

**APR. 27 MCSC - LAKE GRANBURY Virtual Mtg**  
Program: TBD  
--> It is possible that meetings starting in May might be "in-person again. Watch for messages via email.

**MAY 5 MCSC - ARLINGTON In-Person Meeting**  
Program: Clean Out Your Closet

**MAY 19 MCSC - EULESS In-Person Meeting**  
Program: Philatelic discussions / show & tell

**MAY 25 MCSC - LAKE GRANBURY Virtual Mtg**  
Program: (in-person or Virtual is TBD)

**JUN. 19 MCSC - EXPO Planning Meeting (11 AM)**  
Spring Creek BBQ, 3608 S. Cooper St, Arlington

**JUN. 25 - 26 TSDA Stamp Fair (Fri 10-5, Sat 9-4)**  
Bluebonnet Room, DoubleTree Hotel, 1981 N Central Ewy, Richardson, TX 75081 (SW corner of US75 & Campbell Rd)

**AUG. 27 - 28 TSDA Stamp Fair (Fri 10-5, Sat 9-4)**  
Bluebonnet Room, DoubleTree Hotel, 1981 N Central Ewy, Richardson, TX 75081 (SW corner of US75 & Campbell Rd)



## Secretary's Report

By Skip Ely

### Applications Received

n/a

### New Members

Christine Mays (#634)

### Deceased

n/a

### Reinstatements

n/a

### Membership Summary – April 21, 2021

Membership as of March 17, 2021	95
Applications Received	0
New Members	1
Dropped for non-payment of dues	( 0 )
Resignations	0
Deceased	( 0 )
Reinstatements	0
Membership as of April 21, 2021	96





## The Legend of Betsy Ross

By Ray E. Cartier

According to legend, a Philadelphia seamstress named Betsy Ross, was responsible for designing the first American Flag in 1776. On January 2, 1952, the 200th anniversary of the birth of Betsy Ross, the U.S. Post Office released a stamp picturing her showing the flag she had sewn to Gen. George Washington, Robert Morris and Col. George Ross, from a painting by Charles H. Weisgerber which he entitled, "Birth of Our Nation's Flag. However Betsy Ross wasn't credited with designing this work until her grandson, William Canby, publicly relayed the following story to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania a century later in 1870.



According to Canby, Ross had often recounted a visit she had received in May or June of 1776 from George Washington, Robert Morris and a relative, Col. George Ross. During this meeting she was presented with a sketch of a flag featuring 13 red and white stripes and 13 "Six-pointed" stars. She agreed to sew the flag, but suggested that the stars be five pointed and placed in a circle.

In a letter, written in 1780 to the Board of Admiralty, New Jersey Congressman Francis Hopkinson, who was a delegate to the Continental Congress and signer of the Declaration of Independence, requested Congressional recognition for the design of the new U.S. Flag of stars and stripes. In this letter he further commented that he had not been paid for this and asked, "—whether a Quarter Cask of the public wine would be too much to ask in return." He further stated that in addition to the flag, he had designed various other seals for the United States.

Congress forwarded the claim to the Board of the Treasury. There were a number of rejections and appeals by both parties and the Board eventually ruled that in regard to the design, Hopkins was just one of many individuals consulted and as such, he was not entitled to his request. Although he did design the flag with 13 stars and stripes, Betsy only amended the stars and their pattern, rather than being the flag's designer. She did, in fact, sew the first American Flag. Betsy Ross was acquainted with Washington and Morris as they attended the same church as she did. On June 14, 1777, the Congress officially adopted the Stars and Stripes, designed by Hopkins and amended by Betsy Ross as the national flag.

Hopkinson never received compensation, but his opponents never refuted his claim of creating the original design. In addition, all records of the Continental Congress plainly acknowledge him as the architect of the flag of the United States.

## Mosaics...An Ancient and Unique Art Form

By Ken Aldridge

Thought to be first developed in the 4th Century BC in Greece, the use of colored pebbles for art illustrations and stories became very popular with the Romans. As the Roman Empire grew, the art of mosaics covering floors, walls and public baths also grew.

Mosaics were expensive to install so most were done for aristocracy, in government buildings and churches.

Discoveries of mosaic artwork are happening almost every day as renovations, excavations and new building takes place everywhere the Empire existed.

Stamps featuring mosaics started being issued by various countries in the late 1960's. Most all were of actual mosaics found within their own countries. Mosaics on stamps, singles or as part of a set are relatively cheap to buy and can be found on most of the currently popular buying and selling websites.





## Over To Dover

By Peter Elias



Stamp image from [Colnect](#)

On August 19, 1991, four guys found themselves in Calais, France. I was one of those four guys; the others were my brother and two friends from high school & college days.

So what do you do when you're in Calais? Why, you go have dinner in Dover! No problem, that's only 20.7 miles away. Oh wait, there is a minor problem: our rental cars couldn't cross the English Channel, and at that point, the "Chunnel" (Channel Tunnel) did not yet exist!

But luckily, there was surface transportation. Well slightly "off the surface" transportation. Having never been on one, we all thought it would be neat to take a hovercraft



"over to Dover". Above is a photo I took of the Hoverspeed that we took to Dover. My round-trip ticket (below) cost 110 French Francs (roughly \$18); that's assuming that my mem-

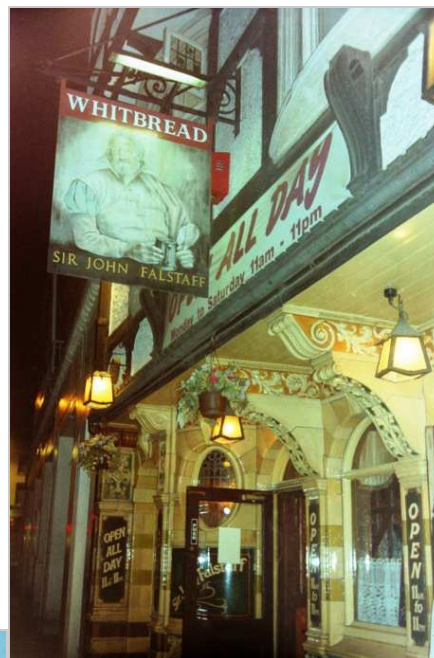
HOVER SPEED				Passenger Coupon				E 15 62	
FROM	TO	SERVICE NO.	DATE	DEPART	LOCAL TIME	TARIFF	ADULTS	VEHICLE	FARE
OUT	Calais Dover	621	19 AUG 1991				CHILD (4-16)	INCLUSIVE	FARE
IN	Dover Calais	622	19 AUG 1991				CARAVAN/TRAILER		
Registration No.	Designation	Agents A/C No.		Form of Payment		ADULTS			
Type of Motor		Booking Ref./Endorsements		Issuing Office Date Stamp		CHILDREN (4-16)			
Category	Freight Vehicle	Car & Trailer		HOVER SPEED (1981) LTD		STUDENTS SEN. CITS.			
Car	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		19 AUG 1991		INFANTS (1-3)			
M/Cycle	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		CALAIS		NO SEAT ALLOCATED		FREE FREE	
Vehicle Length	Trailer/Caravan	Length				GROUP COURIER etc.		FREE FREE	
Name of Driver/Party Leader							TOTAL PAX	TOTALS	
						OUT IN		TOTALS	
						TOTAL FARE		110	110

ory is correct and the "110" shown on the ticket is French Francs, not British Pounds or US Dollars (I just don't really remember, but since we were in France, I'm assuming it's Francs..., otherwise it would be well more than \$18!).

The Hoverspeed hovercraft were of the "Mountbatten" class; they were 185 feet long and 78 feet wide and had 4 gas turbine engines with 3,800 horsepower to provide lift and propulsion (via propellers) and it could achieve speeds of up to 85 mph.



Good thing I kept a part of the (unused) "barf bag" as a souvenir (left)!



Picture from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoverspeed#/media/File:Seacat\\_rapide\\_calais.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoverspeed#/media/File:Seacat_rapide_calais.jpg)

Seating on our "Princess Margaret" hovercraft was similar to that in an airplane and was on the left and right sides of the hovercraft, while vehicles are parked in the middle.

When we "landed" in Dover, we unfortunately didn't really get to see those "white cliffs" that are shown on the stamp at the top left, since the sun had set!

So, we took a bus into Dover and walked around a bit.

When in Britain, do as the Brits do, and had "a pint" and some "fish & chips". The picture to the left shows on the pubs we visited.

My friend is shown to the left, enjoying his fish & chips (for the uninitiated, British "chips" are basically "french fries"... and the fish is generally cod).

So after enjoying ourselves for a couple of hours in Dover, we had to catch our ride back to Calais. But this time, it wasn't the hovercraft, it was a "Seacat". The Seacat was a high-speed catamaran similar to the one shown to the left below.

On our return trip, there were only 3 guys. One somehow didn't make it to the Seacat on time (last ship for the night!). Yet he showed up at the hotel around 3 AM.

We still don't know how he did that (although we tried to guess) ...

Sadly, I was just reading that the "Princess Margaret", one of the last Cross-Channel hovercraft, was dismantled and scrapped in 2018 after sitting in a British Naval Base since 2000. Hoverspeed ceased operations in 2005.

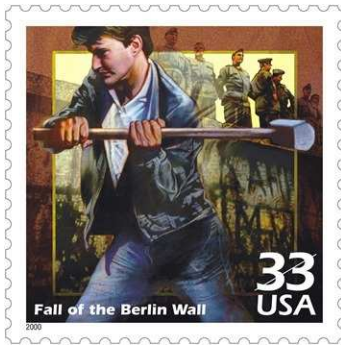
In any case, it was an extremely interesting little side excursion that we did (and totally unplanned!) and definitely worth it, especially considering that to cross the channel now means being under it for 20+ miles.



## Fall Of The Wall

By Peter Elias

so most of what you see in this article are screen shots from my 8mm video camera.



On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall fell, and the "Cold War" started to thaw. East & West Germany would officially reunite almost 1 year later, on October 3, 1990. In between that, my brother and I had a trip to Europe in early 1990. On May 23, we ended up in West Berlin.



Getting to West Berlin from West Germany meant driving through a kind of "no-mans land" freeway, that up until that point did NOT allow you to exit until you reached West Berlin. The picture (a screen shot from a video I took) to the left shows us driving just a bit over 205 km/h (~127 mph) somewhere on the German Autobahn (although not necessarily on the stretch between West Germany and West Berlin.



We did manage to briefly exit the freeway and drive through some East German town. I felt like I was transported back to the 1950's and it seemed depressing. The photo above shows mostly "Trabant" cars parked on the sides, although the first car on the left side is a Borgward. All fine examples of East German automotive engineering...



Entering West Berlin was easy, and watch towers, which up until recently had guys with machine guns, were empty. The "Victory Column" greeted us on the way in ...

I have relatively few photos from that trip,



Countries from all over the world used this occasion to issue stamps to commemorate the fall of the wall, such as Ghana above, and even the Vatican issued a



stamp showing a picture of an elderly woman taking a whack at the wall for a 25-year anniversary of the fall of the wall.

Even I got in on that game (although it had been a few months since the fall of the wall...). Never-the-less, after going past the old "Checkpoint Charlie", we found an enterprising guy that was renting a hammer and chisel in 15 minute increments, so we decided to get our own piece of the wall.



The original Checkpoint Charlie, gateway to East Germany!

On the left below, you see me chipping away at the wall. I did end up with a small piece of red spray-painted concrete, which up until recently was sitting on a shelf in my house (albeit NOT identified as such, and as result, was tossed by someone, thinking it was some piece of junk...). Bummer...



-- next page --



## Fall Of The Wall (continued)



Backtracking to getting into East Germany to begin with... After we had entered West Berlin, we had to cross the border. While the wall had fallen, East Germany was still a separate nation at that point, and the main gateway was near the Brandenburg Gate, shown on East Germany #2834 issue on July 2, 1990, one of the last stamp issues before the re-unification in October.

Since it was a border area, I didn't want to take any photos of the Brandenburg Gate (since that might have annoyed the border guards...). The Brandenburg Gate is a neo-classical monument that dates back to 1791.



One of the things we got to witness in East Berlin was the changing of the guard at the tomb of the unknown soldier. The East German stamp



(#2158) above shows the typical uniforms worn by the "people's army", and you can see similar uniforms in the video that I took of this ceremony (just not long trench coats).



Scott #1617 issued in 1990 commemorates the 1st anniversary of the German re-unification on November 9, 1989.

While we were in East Berlin, we had some afternoon "coffee & cake" and happened to be seated at the same table with another gentleman. He turned out to be a local preacher, and we had an interesting conversation with him. While I don't remember all the details, I do recall that he mentioned living in a fairly a

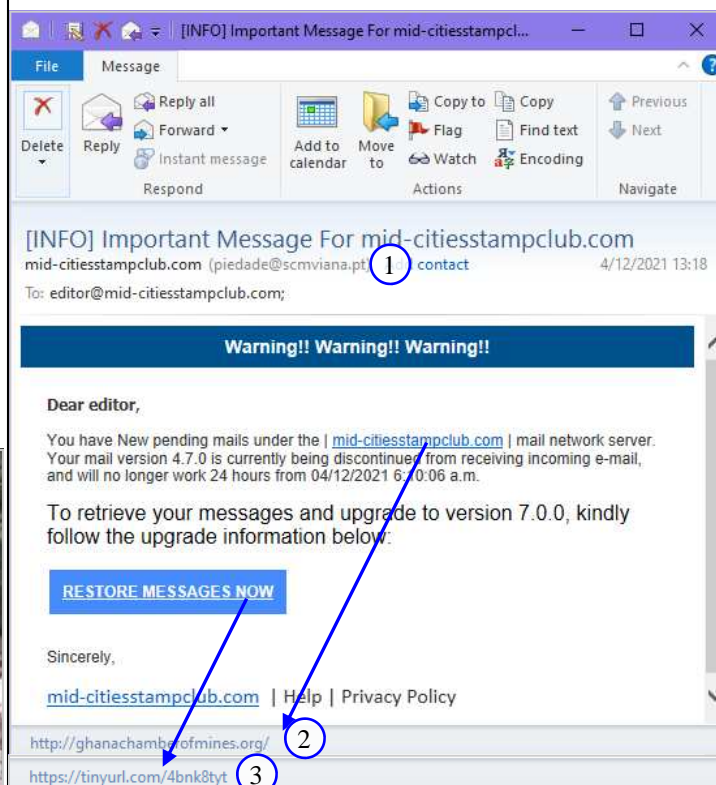
large apartment that only cost a pittance in rent each month (something like \$100 per month or thereabouts...). Of course, after re-unification, economic realities of living in a western democracy would take place and his rent would surely end up costing a more "realistic" amount that West Germans had been paying all along (\$1,000+ per month).

As an actual German (and I had at that point, probably spent less than 4 months in Germany all my life), I found it interesting to see all of this and take it all in!

## MCSC Phishing & Spam/Scam Emails

By Peter Elias

It is good to have an official email address to use for club purposes, such as "editor@mid-citiesstampclub.com". Unfortunately with that, comes spam, scam & phishing emails. Below is the type of message that I have to contend with (although not too often):



For me at least, it's to spot this as totally fake.

- 1) First (as indicated on the line that has the circled "1"), it says that the message is from "mid-citiesstampclub.com", but next to it also says it's from "piedade@scmviana.pt" (which makes it Portugal). Last time I checked, the email network server for the club's domain wouldn't send a message from a Portuguese domain. And that email address is in plain sight (albeit light gray). I also checked the header record for the message and it stated that the message was received from a server in Portugal called mail.geoparqueitoral.viana.pt and other indications (such as the IP address) that all of this originated in Portugal.
- 2) When I "hover" the mouse over the blue "mid-citiesstampclub.com" in the text, at the bottom it says that this link really goes to the "Ghana Chamber of Mines"
- 3) When I hover over the "Restore Messages Now" box, it goes a "TinyURL" link where I have no clue what will happen when I land there. It could range from junk advertising to something that would try to download malware to my computer.

Such is life in the digital age. We need email addresses to communicate with, but there's no good way to stop this kind of stuff. And no, "white listing" doesn't work ... and while I can "black list" this sender, doing that gets tedious after a while. Of course, depending on the email software (or app) that you use, you may not easily see the fake email address displayed in #1 above.

So where do they even get our email address of "editor@mid-citiesstampclub.com"? Simple: it's listed on page 2 of this newsletter (which is of course publicly available online) or several other methods such as compromised email accounts! And then the spammers/scammers sell/trade your email address amongst each other... Stopping this is like playing "whack a mole"... The basic lesson here: Don't click on links in emails! Or at least use the basic "hover the mouse cursor" method before doing so!

## Submarines

By Pat & Bob Weidman

On one of our many trips to Hawaii we stayed at a resort on Maui. One day we took a day trip over to the island of Lanai. To get there, we had to take a short boat ride. On the way over we spotted the submarine that is in the picture below.



Submarines are ships that can travel under water. The length of a submarine can range from 200 to 530 feet. The rounded hull is thirty feet in diameter. There can be up to 150 crew members on board a submarine.

There are two types of subs. The attack subs carry a crew of 130 and their mission is to search and destroy the enemy at sea and on land. They go on patrol two to three months at a time and can make port calls like any navy ship.

The mission of ballistic missile subs is to attack the enemy's cities and bases. They can dive to over 100 feet in less than a minute and can operate below the surface for sixty days at a time.

Back in 1968 while I was in Uncle Sam's Navy, we pulled into Singapore and tied up at the British naval base. On our way into town, a friend and I stopped at the small diary store on base for a cold beverage. A British sailor came in and we invited him to sit with us. He was on a British sub that was tied up at the base and he invited us over to check it out. All I can say is that it was a very confining space, definitely not a place for someone who is claustrophobic.



The stamp is USA Scott #3372, issued on March 27, 2000.

## President's Letter

By Richard Hildebrandt

I think that the time has finally arrived to allow us to resume in-person meetings in Arlington. The Bob Duncan Center is available and the consensus is we should try for the May 5 meeting to gather as we used to.

The Center has a requirement for masks and distancing but that is nothing new. I know that Eules was hoping for an in-person gathering this month but several of the regulars were not going to be able to make it so they opted for one more Zoom meeting. Hopefully they will resume face-to-face meetings in May.

Dave is already planning for Granbury to resume in-person meetings this summer.

Relating to the Arlington meetings, we will also plan on a pre-meeting restaurant gathering ("Meet & Eat"). We will start with the ever popular Jay Jays on Bowen Road. If that goes well I will try to set up a schedule for the rest of the year. There is no formal program planned yet so I will call this a clean out your closet program. After all this isolation time I suspect that many of you have items you wish to divest yourselves of. I am also asking those of you who do attend to come prepared to provide some show and tells and other philatelic topics of interest. Looking forward to the rest of the year, I desperately need some folks to volunteer to present programs.

We will resume our live auctions soon also. Most likely with the July Arlington meeting. All members are invited to bring their lots to Arlington for May so we will have time to organize the auction. Also for this meeting, Skip will have the club circuit books and possibly some APS books.

On the EXPO front, planning is well underway for the show this fall. Ralph is doing an excellent job of staying on top of the various tasks that need to be accomplished for our show to be successful. It does take a great many people to make a great show, please consider participating in some way to help the club. Also, it is not too early to start putting your exhibits together.

I am hoping to see all of the Arlington regulars on May 5.

## Thank You!

By Peter Elias

Many thanks to Thomas Krause of Frisco, TX who donated a medium sized box of mostly worldwide stamps (sorted by country in #6 envelopes), a couple of covers and a couple of supplies (color gauge, mounts, etc). I've given the box to Skip who will either use it for the EXPO "Beginning Collector Table" and/or go to the silent auction.



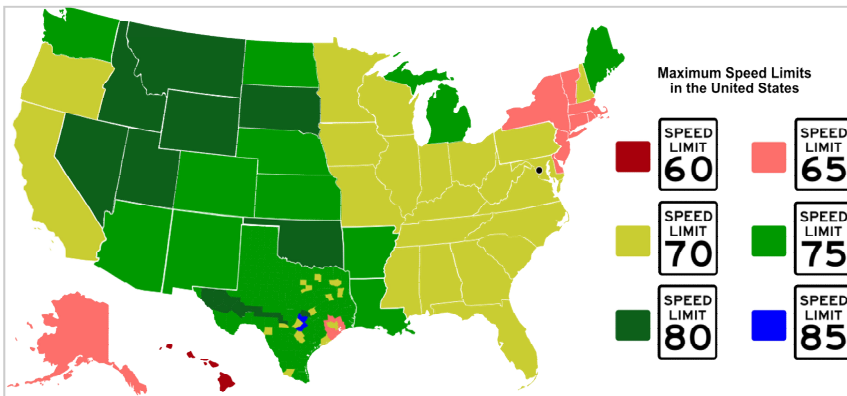
## Speed Limits

By Peter Elias



This stamp almost made me feel like I was in Germany, where technically, the “suggested” speed limit is 130 km/h (or approximately 80 mph)!

For long distance driving, especially in sparsely populated areas with relatively little traffic, the standard 70 mph is just too slow. For me, a good long distance speed is about 85 mph (if the conditions warrant it).



The map above (courtesy of Wikipedia at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speed\\_limits\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_by\\_jurisdiction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speed_limits_in_the_United_States_by_jurisdiction)) shows the general highway speed limits in various parts of the USA. It certainly shows that many of the central/western (and generally less densely populated) states have higher speed limits based on the green or dark green colors.

In fact, the only spot that I see in blue with a legal 85 mph speed limit is in Texas! But it is only on one road, State Highway 130 (also known as the “Pickle Parkway”), which bypasses Austin (starting from the north side at I-35) and ends on the I-10 just east of San Antonio. It is 130.6 miles of blissful 85 mph driving (and let's be honest, people do drive faster than that - ahem ...). But, in order to play, you gotta pay! SH-130 is a toll highway. Parts are operated by *TX Tag* (northern section) and *SH-130 Concession Companies* (southern section). Best I can tell is that it's around \$6.48 in tolls to drive the entire length (which I have done - anything beats the stop & no-go traffic on I-35 in the Austin area).

The few times I have driven SH-130 in the past with my Audi A6, while it's nice to get the “autobahn” feel of driving, my gas mileage dropped quite a bit when going 85+ mph for this far. With having to get premium gas, my gas tank wasn't the only thing getting drained... Unfortunately I don't have a picture of the 85 mph signs from SH-130 (only the 80 mph one at the top, which I took on I-20 just west of Odessa). It's kind of hard to take a photo of a rapidly approaching speed limit sign when you're doing 85+.

Anything beats the “fuel saving” snooze of 55 mph that we all had to endure starting in 1974! Of course back then, the average “land yacht” that many people were driving barely got 10 to 15 mpg to begin with, so that was one of the reasons for the lower speed limit, although our 1972 Audi did manage to get about 26 mpg on the highway, so that did help a bit. Of course, cars back then had (compared to today), horrible suspensions,

steering and brakes. I can't imagine driving a 1972 Chevy Impala at 85 mph for 130 miles on SH-130, but would do so in a 1972 Audi 100LS. Luckily the 55 mph law was officially repealed in 1995. And I have enjoyed driving 125 mph on the Autobahn once or twice (although usually I don't have a picture of it - seems a family member doesn't like me to take photos at those speeds...).



That said, above is a screen shot of a video I took on the Autobahn shortly after leaving the Swiss border and heading north towards Frankfurt in 2010, doing 164 km/h (about 102 mph) in this car (and it had a fuel range of 684 miles - 1100 km as shown above):



Our rental car was a Citroen C5, a mid-size diesel-powered car that easily got us over 40 mpg average over the entire 2,000 mile trip. Since Chrysler (part of the Fiat group) merged with PSA (the Citroen / Peugeot group) in early 2021, they're now collectively known as Stellantis.



To the left is a typical European speed limit sign, this one being 130 km/h, which is the “advised” speed limit on the Autobahn. (which is about 80 mph), or gasp, the same as the speed limit in west Texas. However, due to many construction zones on the Autobahn, there are often signs that read “80” (50 mph). I think in the USA we're the only ones that do NOT use round signs with a red circle and a number to designate the speed limit.

A sign I'd rather see on the Autobahn is the one to the right. It essentially means that “all speed limits are lifted”. Then it's “pedal to the metal” (if traffic conditions allow for it). Of course for many smaller cars, you're really lucky to be able to get up to 100 mph. ...AND you'd better have your eyes constantly looking in the rearview mirror. What appears to be a brief flash of light that might seem miles behind you will quickly materialize as someone doing well over 140 mph! And in Germany, if you impede the flow of traffic by hogging the left lane, that's cause for a ticket!

And if you are caught speeding in a marked speed zone, they don't pull you over; you (or the vehicle owner, such as the car rental company) will get the ticket mailed to you.

Collecting stamps with speed limit and other traffic signs is fairly easy, I found these two from Turkey & Greece while going through my growing collection of “Traffic Safety” stamps.





# 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](mailto: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](mailto:jasdmyers@earthlink.net) 5/15

## Wanted to Trade

I have general (unsorted) worldwide & used USA stamps (mostly beginning collector material) available to trade for your items such as worldwide revenue stamps & Framas. Contact Peter Elias at [peter@pcelias.com](mailto:peter@pcelias.com) 9/16

## Wanted

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

## For Sale

I now have a new website in which I have listed all my used **duplicates (many thousands)**. They are arranged in Scott number sequence within country. Do take a look, and select any that you want. I charge 1/3 catalogue value, post paid. The URL is [www.kenwills.net](http://www.kenwills.net) Contact me at [wills@airmail.net](mailto:wills@airmail.net). Happy hunting! 3/19

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

- **APC Conversions 2012-2014 (NY2016 Vermeil Award!!)**
  - **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!)**
  - **My Life on Wheels** (autobiography via USA personalized postage)
  - **St. Vincent Philatelic Reference Scans (1,700 items!!)**
  - **St. Vincent Postcards** (300+ postcards from 1900 to 2007)
  - **Vintage Swiss Postcards 1898-1959 (900+ postcards !!)**
- Special MCSC Member price is only \$ 9.95 each. Non-members -> please inquire. Contact [peter@pcelias.com](mailto:peter@pcelias.com) 1/21

**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: [jstrubel-boy@aol.com](mailto:jstrubel-boy@aol.com) 12/14

**Canadian Collection housed in Scott Specialty Single Country Album.** Starts with Scott#18 through 1970. Mostly mint, some used. 2013 Scott catalog value is \$4,100, now reduced to \$775 OBO!. Will accept US postage at face value as part payment. Contact Dave Linn, (903) 785-7864 or at [dklgonefishing@yahoo.com](mailto:dklgonefishing@yahoo.com) 8/19

## Comic Strip - Mother Goose & Grimm (Bit the PMG)

By Peter Elias

This Mother Goose & Grimm comic strip was published in the Dallas Morning News on March 16, 2021.



investigate the problem of a dog biting a postal employee? Of course, mail delivery persons getting bit by dogs is a fairly big problem according to the USPS.

Based on the drawing, I can't really tell whether those are regular police officers or "postal inspectors". And yes, postal inspectors and "PPO" (postal police officers) are considered "federal agents", do carry firearms, make arrests, and execute federal search warrants and serve subpoenas! But a dog doesn't know about this...

If you read the Mother Goose strip, you've probably noticed that there are several strips where the dog (Grimm) seems to have something to do with biting postal personnel or related topics.

What this one brings to mind is, would the postal service actually send a police officer to investigate the problem of a dog biting a postal employee?

## MCSC Granbury Zoom Meeting Minutes

March 30, 2021

By Eugene Atkinson

### Welcome:

- David Stockbridge and Rick Howell hosted a Zoom meeting of thirteen members of the Lake Granbury Branch, Mid-Cities Stamp Club on Tuesday evening, March 30.

### Show & Tell:

- Beginning the evening, Gene Atkinson exhibited an antique Stanley Gibbons stamp hinge tin.
- Ken Aldridge discussed Danish holiday and charity seals.
- Skip Ely described an unusual Washington-Franklin definitive with unlisted perforations. He is also offering "starter" sets of U. S. stamps for anyone interested.
- Christine Mays explained her interest in special occasion and famous Americans stamps.
- John Withers complimented the Lake Granbury programs in the age of COVID and is continuing to tell his family story through stamps.
- Rick Howell is sorting "thousands" of two cent Washington varieties from the 1920s and found a history of the British Post Office at a bargain price.
- Dave Stockbridge asked for information regarding a 1904 McKinley postal card with RPO cancel from Vermont.
- Bob Coleman called attention to a shop along Route 199 in Azle that specializes in all sorts of paper collectibles.

### Announcements:

- Ralph Poore noted that the EXPO Committee will meet in April, that the Grapevine Convention Center contract is completed and that storage costs for exposition materials have increased somewhat.
- Jim Case asks for donations to the EXPO "Mystery Box".
- Ben Termini is offering free stamp packets in exchange for an SASE.
- Dave Stockbridge announced that the club will resume in-person meetings in June, still observing all COVID safeguards. It is possible that the club auction can occur in September though it is not certain Wi-Fi connection is possible for those who cannot attend.
- Judy Christmas reminded the group that the Arlington club meets next week in person and by Zoom.

### Program:

- Rick Howell screened an APS program titled "What Are Cinderellas?" With illustrations, these collectibles embrace registry and air mail labels found on mail, Red Cross and other charitable stickers, propaganda pieces, Easter and Christmas seals, and a host of other types, often resembling stamps but lacking postal validity and revenue value.

### Closing:

- Club gift certificates as door prizes went to Dave Stockbridge, Bob Coleman, Skip Ely, John Withers, Christine Mays, and Ralph Poore.
- The next Lake Granbury meeting will be on April 27.

## MCSC Eules Zoom Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2021

By Skip Ely

### Call-To-Order:

- First Vice President Stanley Christmas called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### Attendance:

- Attending via Zoom were Rick Howell, Peter Elias, Ken Aldridge, Evan Islam, Scott English, Art Von Reyn, Judy & Stan Christmas and Skip Ely.

### Officer Reports:

- Stanley Christmas said we were planning an in-person meeting at Arlington on May 5.
- Treasurer - Judy Christmas gave the Treasury amount. A discussion followed about including that portion in the Zoom recordings.
- Secretary - Skip Ely said we had no changes this month, giving us 96 members.

### Committee Reports:

- EXPO - Stanley mentioned the EXPO meeting Saturday at Spring Creek BBQ. Peter Elias said that he had secured two judges for EXPO, and was waiting to hear from a third.
- Website - Evan Islam said his team had made some cosmetic changes in the new website (like changing the square screen to a wide screen format) and were waiting for Jim Myers to give his OK.
- Sales - Skip Ely said APS books had been ordered for the May meeting in Arlington.
- Newsletter - Peter said he had fourteen pages again this month and would likely wait until getting the minutes for the EXPO meeting before going to press.

### Show & Tell:

- Rick Howell began by showing a new book he had purchased called "Paper Trails" by Camryn Blevins.
- Art Von Reyn gave a short summary of the 1960 Federal Boating Stamps.
- Skip Ely said he had completed making up ten starter sets for give away at the Beginners area. He said because each set comprised over 2,000 stamps, he was considering breaking them up into sections.
- Peter Elias showed an *Egg Candling Certificate* (a short discussion followed). He also talked about the new U.S. Coffee Drinks stamp booklet, which he will use as a new "Been There, Done That" article.
- Ken Aldridge showed a couple of the old Elvis vote cards from 1991, where people could vote for one of two images for the proposed Elvis stamp. He also showed an old USPS "Stamp Decoder", which showed hidden images in select stamps 1997-2004.

### Program:

- Rick Howell showed a short video on the Zeppelin stamps.

### Gift Certificates:

- ...were awarded to Ken Aldridge, Rick Howell, Scott English, and Evan Islam.

### Adjournment:

- The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.



# MCSC Arlington Zoom Meeting Minutes

## April 7, 2021

By Skip Ely

### Call-To-Order:

- President Rich Hildebrandt called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

### Attendance:

- Attending via Zoom were Rick Howell, Stanley & Judy Christmas, Peter Elias, Dave Stockbridge, Gene Atkinson, Ken Aldridge, Ralph Poore, Gene Pfretzschner and Skip Ely.

### Officer Reports:

- Treasurer** - Judy Christmas gave the Treasury amount. Subsequently there was a discussion about the high balance. Dave Stockbridge talked about the rent for the Granbury meetings at the Bentwater Activities Center.
- Secretary** - Skip Ely said there were no changes since the last report.
- Website** - There was a short discussion about the timetable for the new website. Rick Howell said that he had purchased an alternate (but similar) domain name as a backup to our current one.
- EXPO** - Ralph Poore said there would be another EXPO planning meeting on Saturday, April 24. This will hopefully be an in-person meeting. The location was still to be determined.
- Newsletter** - Peter Elias said that the next newsletter was well underway. He then elaborated on his "Been There, Done That" articles. He said while he had many more personal ones stockpiled, he hoped more people would submit their own.

### Show & Tell:

- Dave Stockbridge showed a cover with mixed postage - an old U.S. two cent stamped [postal stationery] envelope, with a fifteen cent Netherlands Queen Wilhelmina stamp (from the mid 1920s). There was some speculation on the reason for it.

- Peter Elias showed several satirical Cinderella stamps from the Wilksburg Stamp Club (Pennsylvania). He also had a clear plastic flat rate priority mail envelope (that was used for mailing annual meeting notices from stock & mutual fund companies) that he had not seen before. He then compared an old Greek coin he had to a Greek stamp depicting the same coin. This segued into a discussion of scanning stamp images vs. using a digital camera to photograph them.

### Program:

- Ken Aldridge presented the program titled "Mosaics and the Roman Empire (and their depiction on stamps)". Very interesting.

### Gift Certificates:

- ...were awarded to Skip Ely, Rick Howell, Dave Stockbridge, Gene Atkinson and Ken Aldridge.

### Adjournment:

- The meeting adjourned at 7:58 PM.

*[Editor's note: during the Zoom meetings, I occasionally do a random screen shot after all attendees are online. As such, it is really a snapshot in time as with regular photos that are done impromptu, people sometimes are looking away, have their eyes closed, etc. It happens...]*

### Errata

In the January 2021 issue, page 8, the article about the Faaa airport stated that the stamp was #C18; it was in fact #C28.

### Holden: RIP

By Peter Elias



Australian automobile manufacturer "Holden" (since 1908), a division of General Motors (since 1931), was shut down as of 2021. Over the years, several of Holden's car models resembled those built by Opel in Germany, also a previous GM division, Opel is now part of Stellantis (previously known as PSA, which also owns Fiat, Chrysler, Jeep, Peugeot, Citroen, et al).



## MCSC EXPO Meeting Minutes Saturday, April 24, 2021

By Skip Ely

The Mid Cities Stamps Club held an EXPO Planning Meeting at Spring Creek BBQ on Cooper Street in Arlington on Saturday, April 24.

Attendees were Ralph Poore (Expo Chairperson), Stanley Christmas, Judy Christmas, Tom Cunningham, Katherine Story, Rick Howell, Janet Moyer, Ray Cartier, Karen Cartier, Rich Hildebrandt, Diane Davis, Anne Moxley, Peter Elias and Skip Ely.

- Ralph Poore called the meeting to order around 11:35 AM.
- Reading of the previous meeting minutes was suspended.
- It was confirmed that our regular dates for EXOI (the second weekend in November) had been confirmed.
- Ralph distributed a handout of Committee chairpersons, asking for any additions or corrections. He pointed out we had an important need for an awards chairperson. A discussion followed as to the location of existing awards. Ralph also said that we needed an Exhibit coordinator. Ray Cartier offered to fill that position.
- A survey of committee chairs was conducted:
  - Stanley Christmas said that a floor plan for the show had been submitted and that it called for 60 exhibit frames in a separate room, allowing for 26 dealers in the main hall.
  - Rich Hildebrandt said he had not started working on the awards banquet, but didn't anticipate any issues.
  - Skip Ely said he had plenty of material for the Beginning Collectors Table and continued to assign other donated material to the Silent Auction, Mix Pick and Chance Board.
  - Ralph Poore said Diana Davis had agree to do the art work for the Program Cover and any cachets.
  - It had previously been suggested we look into getting a first day of issue ceremony for the Western Wear stamps, which we had selected as our theme. After some discussion it was decided to take advantage of any opportunity that came our way, but that we wouldn't aggressively pursue it.
  - Judy Christmas passed around a proposed budget and asked for any changes.
  - Peter Elias said he had confirmed two judges and hoped to hear from a third soon.
  - Ralph said he had confirmed with Evan Islam our transportation needs for the frames.
  - Tom Cunningham stressed the need for labor to help several dealers with loading and unloading their material.
  - All other committee chairs either were on track or had previously indicated no issues.
  - Rick Howell talked about a booklet called "Hidden Objects - Stamp Collecting and Bird Watching", and urged we consider purchasing a number for distribu-

tion at the Beginning Collectors Table and the Chance Board. After some discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and approved to appropriate \$150 for acquiring some of the books.

- Finally, Peter Elias showed a mesh tote bag he had previously proposed be used as a judges gift. A discussion of merits and alternatives followed. A motion was made, seconded and approved to table the issue but continue to research it.
- The next meeting was scheduled for Saturday, June 19, at 11:00 AM at the same Spring Creek BBQ in Arlington.

## StampWorld.com

By Peter Elias

In case you are not already familiar with it, [stampworld.com](http://stampworld.com) is the world's largest online stamp catalog! At least that's what the main page says. But with over 750,000 stamps listed and over 700,000 color illustrations, I don't doubt it. And at the time I took this



screen shot, there were almost 470,000 registered members and over 6.4 million stamps for sale.

The catalog itself is available for free to anyone that registers at the site (which is also free).

The big advantage of this online catalog over traditional catalogs such as Scott's, is that you see ALL of the stamps that make up a set, not just one, and that makes looking for stamps easier when you try to find them by color, design cues, etc (or if you happen to have the one horizontal stamp in a set and Scott's only happens to show the vertical one ...).

Browsing generally starts by choosing the country, then the decade and then drill down to the year. You can also search for stamps by topic and other factors.

But in addition to the catalog, there is also a forum for members, philatelic news & events, a listing of clubs around the world, a listing of dealers, auctions, postal services, philatelic links and videos.

Some of the stamps shown in the catalog are also available from various dealers around the world.

I find this site to be invaluable when searching for some stamps in Scott's gets me frustrated. While [stamp-world.com](http://stamp-world.com) does use a different numbering scheme than the Scott catalog, at least I can figure out much quicker where to look for the stamp[s] in question in Scott's!

Did I mention that this site is free?

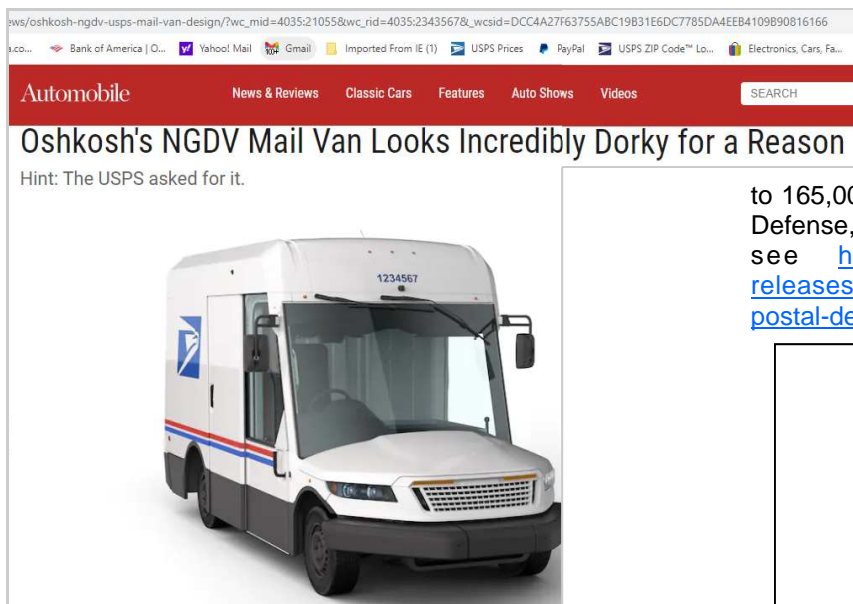


## New Postal Trucks

by Peter Elias

something you'd see in the "Cars" series of animated films where the vehicles have got eyes as part of their windshields.

But, according to the article at <https://www.automobilemag.com/news/oshkosh-ngdv-usps-mail-van-design>, this vehicle design is exactly what the USPS specified. These Oshkosh NGDV (Next Generation Delivery Vehicles) are supposed to cost no more than \$35,000, and up to 165,000 will be built over the next 10 years by Oshkosh Defense, with the first ones estimated to appear by 2023; see <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/national-releases/2021/0223-multi-billion-dollar-modernization-of-postal-delivery-vehicle-fleet.htm> for more info.



When I first saw the picture of the new replacement postal delivery trucks, I got a good chuckle out of it. I mean, this thing reminds me of a cartoon truck, sort of like



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Be sure to visit the Club website on the Internet:

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

For recent online newsletters see

<http://BetweenThePerfs.com/MCSC> →

(for older newsletters see the club's private groups.io website)



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## MEET & EAT for

May 2021

by Judy & Stanley Christmas

"Meet & Eats" are held before our club meetings. All club members and their guests are welcome. We will gather at 5:00 PM and start ordering at that time. However, latecomers can order when they arrive or just come by for a visit. Meals should be over around 6:15 to 6:30 PM with the Arlington new meeting start time now being at 7:00 PM rather than 7:30 PM.

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

--> Official Meet & Eat get-togethers prior to any in-person club meetings are cancelled until further notice due to COVID-19 precautionary measures.

### ARLINGTON

May 5

Jay Jay Cafe

1001 S Bowen Rd, Arlington, TX 76013

### EULESS

Cancelled until further notice

### GRANBURY

Cancelled until further notice

--> Please watch for email messages from the club secretary regarding upcoming meeting schedules (including links to virtual Zoom meetings).

*Mid-Cities Stamp Club "Stamping Around" Newsletter  
c/o Peter Elias  
PO Box 940427  
Plano, TX 75094-0427*

**Don't Forget:  
Arlington May 5 Meeting is  
"In-Person"!**

## Wanted to Buy

Texas Precancel Stamps. Contact Rick Howell at [Rick.howell1@tx.rr.com](mailto:Rick.howell1@tx.rr.com)

5/19

Wanted to buy or trade for: Worldwide unusual EFOs, postal counterfeits. Odd US 20th century auxiliary markings, US 1934 and 1935 Christmas Seals on and off cover and publicity material, Korean War postal history from US and other UN contingents, and any other US philatelic material with an interesting story. John Hotchner, PO Box 1125, Falls Church, VA 22041, or [jmhstamp@verizon.net](mailto:jmhstamp@verizon.net) 2/15

Various USA Scott #C2 & C3 on covers & cards are needed for my U.S Air Mail collection. Please forward scans of the covers / cards along with asking price(s) to Don Jones at [adjaams@aol.com](mailto:adjaams@aol.com) Thank you. 2/21

## For Sale

I have over 10,000 auctions on delcampe.com @ 35% of Scott or less. Worldwide & US stamps, covers and FDCs. For more info contact Denny Ludlow @ (713) 898-1872 10/15

FREE 111-page (all varieties) or 26-page album (basic version) of Spanish ATM stamps (provided as a PDF file) with purchase of at least \$4.00 in Spanish ATM stamps (which are only 15¢ each!) Contact Peter Elias at [peter@pcelias.com](mailto:peter@pcelias.com) 1/21

--> YOUR FREE AD COULD BE HERE <-- !  
(for MCSC club members only)