

# Stamping Around

## Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

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

Bob Duncan Center, 2800 S. Center St.

Flower Mound Meetings: Third Wednesday @ 7:30 p.m.

3020 Corporate Ct, Ste 400 (Step Up Sports Medicine)

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

Bentwater Activities Center (adjacent to Bentwater Marina)



Volume 39, Number 1

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

January 2026

Postage Rates & Fees	10/5/2025	1/18/2026
<b>DOMESTIC</b>		
<b>1st Class</b> - 1 oz (retail/metered or PC)	(thru 1/17/26) 0.78 / 0.74	(thru TBD) 0.78 / 0.74
" 2 oz	1.07 / 1.03	1.07 / 1.03
" 3 oz	1.36 / 1.32	1.36 / 1.32
" 3.5 oz (maximum)	1.65 / 1.53	1.65 / 1.61
non-machinable surcharge	+0.49	+0.49
<b>1st Class Flats</b> - 1 oz	1.63	1.63
" 2 oz	1.90	1.90
" 3 oz	2.17	2.17
" 4 oz	2.44	2.44
" 5 oz	2.72	2.72
+ 0.28 per ounce up to 9 oz	+0.28/ounce	+0.28/ounce
+ 0.30 per ounce after 9 oz	+0.30/ounce	+0.30/ounce
" 13 oz (maximum)	5.04	5.04
(if rigid, non-rectangular or non-uniform, must be mailed as Ground Advantage)		
<b>Ground Advantage</b> - up to 4 oz	7.20 - 8.40	↑ 7.30 - 8.75
" up to 8 oz	7.50 - 9.25	↓ 7.30 - 8.75
" up to 12 oz	8.55 - 11.10	↑ 8.85 - 11.95
" up to 15.999 oz	9.10 - 12.45	↑ 8.85 - 11.95
<b>Media Mail</b> - 1 lb	4.47	4.47
" 2 lbs	5.22	5.22
" 3 lbs	5.97	5.97
" 4 lbs	6.72	6.72
<b>Priority Mail</b> - Flat-Rate/Legal/Padded	11.90 / 12.10 / 12.85	↑ 11.95 / 12.25 / 12.95
" Commercial Flat-Rate/Legal/Padded Env.	9.70 / 10.20 / 10.50	↑ 10.30 / 10.80 / 11.10
" Small Flat-rate Box (Ret/Comm)	12.60 / 11.30	↓ 12.65 / 11.20
" Medium Flat-rate Box (Ret/Comm)	21.95 / 19.20	↑ 22.95 / 19.60
" Large Flat-rate Box (Ret/Comm)	31.40 / 28.35	↑ 31.50 / 28.70
<b>Postcard</b> (Domestic)	0.61	0.61
<b>Certificate of Mailing (domestic)</b> (3817 / 3665 or 3877 with 3 piece min)	2.40 / 0.70	2.40 / 0.70
<b>Certified Mail</b>	5.30	5.30
<b>Insurance</b> (up to \$100 is included with GA & Priority Mail) up to \$50 / \$100 / \$200	2.70 / 3.40 / 4.40	2.70 / 3.40 / 4.40
<b>Registered (Domestic)</b>		
\$0 value	19.70	19.70
\$0.01 - \$ 100 / \$100.01 - \$500	20.40 / 23.50	20.40 / 23.50
<b>INTERNATIONAL</b>		
<b>Letter &amp; Postcard Airmail</b>		
All Countries (1 oz) or Canada (2 oz)	1.70	1.70
(variable pricing up to 3.5 oz)	see usps.com	see usps.com
<b>Non-machinable surcharge</b>	+0.49	+0.49
<b>First Class Pkg Int'l (1 to 8 oz)</b>	17.85 - 21.00	↑ 19.40 - 27.75
<b>Priority Mail Int'l Flat Rate Env (Grp2-8)</b>	43.50 - 45.40	↑ 48.80 - 50.55
" Canada (Grp 1)	30.90	32.65
<b>Priority Mail Int'l (1 pound, Grp2-20)</b>	56.70 - 67.60?	↑ 61.45 - 82.30
<b>Certificate of Mailing</b> (3817/3665)*	2.40 / 0.70 each*	2.40 / 0.70 each*
See current <a href="#">Notice123</a> at usps.com ! *FCMI / MinQty 3		

## USPS 2026 Rate Increases

By Peter Elias

First the **good news**: according to the USPS, there will be no increases in first class mail postage rates (i.e.: Postcards, 1st Class Letter & Large Envelopes/Flats), as well as Media Mail.

The **bad news**: many are key postage rates are increasing, such as for the Ground Advantage, Priority Mail & Priority Mail Express rates.

Ground Advantage has some interesting up & down changes in that previously (below 1 lb), it was in 4 ounce increments; it is now in 8 ounce increments (up 8 oz and up to 15.999 oz). Rates for Ground Advantage "commercial rate" are still in 4 oz increments though and are quite a bit less (but you can't use stamps).

The other big changes are in both the domestic & international Priority Mail rates. It is definitely getting pricey mailing heavy items (such as a 4 pound book) overseas.

Of course anything other than 1st class letter or large flats envelopes will require customs forms to be filled out, and those are getting more tedious as well. There are commercial rates for Priority & Express mail as well and they can definitely save you some money, but you can't use stamps.

I'm not covering Priority Mail Express rates in this chart. Please look those up in Notice123.

If shipping your eBay lots, using their postage is even less than that of the USPS "Click-n-Ship" service.

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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))

*Stamping Around* is published monthly by the Mid-Cities Stamp Club. Material in this [newsletter](#) may be reproduced in other philatelic publications if the source is acknowledged. Opinions expressed are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent those of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club or its officers.

### 2025 - 2026 MID-CITIES STAMP CLUB OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President – Rick Howell  
Vice-President (Arlington) – Rich Hildebrandt  
Vice-President (Granbury) – Dave Stockbridge  
Vice-President (Flower Mound) - Dan Golden  
Secretary – Janet Moyer  
Treasurer – Thomas Cunningham

#### Board of Directors (voting):

Peter Elias      Ralph Poore      Ken Wills  
Immediate Past President: Ken Aldridge

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 (which includes an emailed or online color newsletter, or \$22 for mailed black & white 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 write to:

**Mid-Cities Stamp Club**  
**P.O. Box 820784**  
**N. Richland Hills, TX 76182-0784**

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



"Editor At Work"  
LEGO™ MOC by Marcos Elias

## Editor's Forum

By Peter Elias

As we enter the 2026 issues of *Stamping Around*, if you have a personal ad, please let me know if you want to keep it, change it or delete it. Some ads have been there for close to a decade. Sadly, they don't seem to gather a lot of responses (at least in my case and due to my eclectic collecting specialties...).

The APS announced that the 2025 "Star Route" entries (for club newsletter & website evaluations) would be available after the GASS show, but now they stated that they are revamping this and would let us know in 2026.

When reading articles in this newsletter as a PDF file, keep in mind that blue underline text in a paragraph (but not the title) have links to an underlying website that has more information on this subject. With shorter links, I sometimes show them in full, but most website links can be really long, so might just see regular text and if you hover your mouse over that text, you should see where it goes to prior to clicking that link.

For your convenience, a membership renewal form is available in this issue. Please make it easier for the club secretary by paying your dues as soon as possible to avoid being dropped from the membership rolls.



## Secretary's Report

By Janet Moyer

### Applications Received:

n/a

### New Members:

- Jackie Burk (#693) collects: *Wonder Woman, Marilyn Monroe, Cats, Petroleum, Odd Shapes, Fine Arts, Music, Authors*
- Dr. Winston Marshall (#694) collects: *USA, Revenue, Canada, China*
- Allen Brown (#695) collects: *USA, Canal Zone*
- Richard Laster (#696) collects: *Covers*
- David Fanale (#697) collects: *USA & Canada*

### Reinstated:

n/a

### Deceased:

n/a

### Membership Summary – December 3, 2025

Membership as of November 19, 2025	107
Applications Rec'd (counts as member next month)	0
New Members	5
Not Renewing for 2025	( 0 )
Resignations	( 0 )
Deceased	( 0 )
Reinstatements	0
Membership as of December 3, 2025	112

## Coming Attractions

### 2025

**DEC. 17 MCSC — FLOWER MOUND Meeting**

--> NO MEETING, see you in 2026

**DEC. 23 MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting**

--> NO MEETING, see you in 2026

### 2026

**JAN. 7 MCSC — ARLINGTON Meeting**

Program: Clean Out Your Philatelic Closet

**JAN. 21 MCSC — FLOWER MOUND Meeting**

Program: Extended Show & Tell and philatelic discussions

**JAN. 27 MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting**

Program: TBD

**FEB. 4 MCSC — ARLINGTON Meeting**

Program: TBD

**FEB. 18 MCSC — FLOWER MOUND Meeting**

Program: Extended Show & Tell and philatelic discussions

**FEB. 24 MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting**

Program: TBD

**APR. 10-11 TSDA Bourse**

Holiday Inn & Suites, 3220 Craig Dr, McKinney, TX 75070

Hrs: Fri 10-5, Sat 9-4; (take US 75, Exit 39A, El Dorado)

## USPS Large Flats

Peter Elias

USPS "Large Flats" (aka "Large Envelopes") are a particular class of "First Class Mail". As the name implies, they are "larger" envelopes.

By USPS definition, "[First Class Letter Envelopes](#)" have maximum size limits of 6.125" tall x 11.5" wide x 0.25" (~6 mm) thick; can be rigid/stiff (as long as not more than 1/4" thick, it just requires a "non-machinable surcharge", presently 49¢ additional).

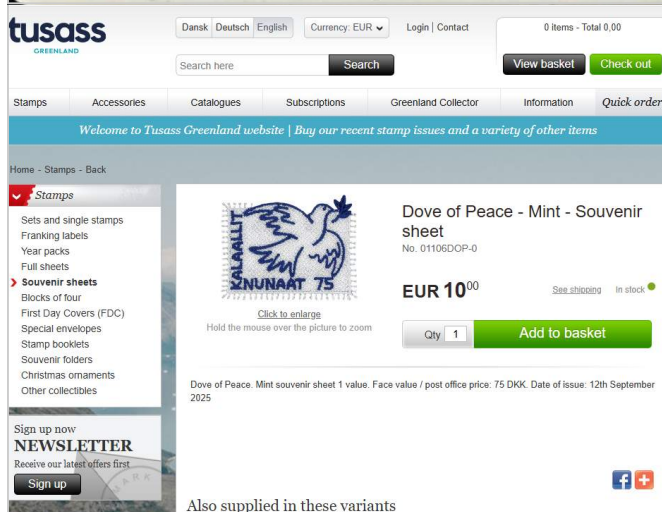
If you exceed any of the previously mentioned dimensions, then depending on what you're mailing, it can either be considered "Large Envelope / Flats" or "Ground Advantage" (which was previously named "First Class Package").

For "[Large Envelope / Flats](#)", the USPS states the following maximum dimensions: 12" tall x 15" wide x 0.75" thick. And it can NOT be rigid / stiff (if so, it has to go as Ground Advantage).

Minimum specifications are 6.125" tall x 11.5" wide x 0.25" thick. If an envelope exceeds any ONE of these minimum dimensions, then it is considered a "large envelope". It also needs to be "bendable", but not to the point where it would "crease" the items in the envelope.

The USPS "template for first class "letters" is shown below. There's also a 1/4" "slot" in the middle for checking thickness.

My dilemma recently was the envelope you see on the template below. Length is ok, and height is right at the 6.125" line! One issue was, I had 4 of these extremely stiff envelopes that all needed to be returned to Spain under cover. Unfortunately, that meant I would have to send these in a "large envelope", but only after I removed all the heavy & thick pieces of cardboard inside each envelope (to make it flexible). I ended up with a mail piece that was 6.5" tall x 10" wide and around 0.25" thick, meeting one of the criteria for "large envelope" for \$5.95 in postage and thus avoiding having to send it as a "package" for \$21.35 (and not dealing with customs forms...)



As shown, the cover above was mailed with a regular Greenland stamp and an embroidered stamp. While the postmark indicates September 12 and I received it early December, I was told that the postmark date was not from when it was actually mailed.

The regular stamp has a DKK (Danish Kroner) value of 4.00 and the embroidered stamp is DKK 75. I don't know what the postage rates from Greenland to the USA are, but DKK 79 is \$12.43 at the current conversion rate! Rather a lot... 1 Danish Kroner is worth \$0.16.

I then went to the "Tusass" (Greenland Postal Service) website at <https://www.stamps.gl/en> and found the stamp at <https://www.stamps.gl/en/dove-of-peace-mint> (a partial screen shot is on the left). As you see, it is a rather expensive stamp at €10.00 (currently \$11.75).

Embroidered stamps are really nice, but generally pricey... I've got some from Switzerland, Austria, Italy & St. Vincent. These are mostly found mint, but it is nice to see them actually get used for their intended purpose: paying for postage! That is after all, what stamps are for, right?



[International Reply Coupons](#) (or IRC for short), is one of the peripheral collecting areas of philately. They are “philatelic” in nature, but are not “stamps” nor “postage”. They are essentially a coupon that can be redeemed for postage for a standard letter to be mailed internationally (generally up to a regular 1 ounce airmail envelope here in the USA, perhaps less from foreign countries, such as only up to a 20 gram / 0.7 ounce letter).

The USPS no longer sells IRCs. However, since the USA is a member of the UPU (Universal Postal Union), the USPS is required to allow redemption of foreign IRC's to cover the postage to international destinations for up to 1 ounce (currently at \$1.70).



The website above is at <https://shop.posti.fi/en/category/stamps/for-letters-and-cards-with-euro-value>

As I was poking around the internet at the “posti.fi” website (that of the Finland Postal Service), I did come across the page (shown partially cropped above) where you could buy their IRCs and other stamps. At €4.05 (= US \$4.72), they are a bit expensive. And they do now expire. The one shown above, the current “Abidjan” design (from 2021), would have expired on 12/31/2025, but this has been extended by the UPU (Universal Postal Union) to 12/31/2026.

**Fun Fact:** Did you know that the original “Ponzi” scheme back in the 1920’s involved IRCs? Charles Ponzi purchased IRCs and exchanged them for postage stamps. I guess at the time he could buy IRCs in Italy for less than they could be redeemed for here in the USA for postage stamps, thus leading to a “profit”. Later, to profit more, he needed funds to invest in buying more IRCs in Europe and reselling them here. At one point he had to invest more & more to just repay previous investors (and thus this “pyramid scheme” is now called the “Ponzi scheme”).

There is a lot of write-up about him and the scheme at the following two Wikipedia pages. Might make for some interesting reading! See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles\\_Ponzi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Ponzi) and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponzi\\_scheme](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ponzi_scheme).

**Back to IRC's:** This is an interesting philatelic sideline to collect, and I've dabbled with it over the years. The IRC is also known formally as form “CN01” (and was called “C22” many years ago). Reduced sized copies of C22 (Barbados), an older CN01 (Cayman Islands) and the CN01 “expires on 12/31/2017” versions (Ukraine) are shown below.

The older C22 / CN01 forms were much smaller than the current series. The current series also have a small holographic image (to the left of the right square postmark area) and unique barcodes on the back.



And yes, there is a section for IRCs in the Scott US Specialized Catalog! In my 2026 copy of the catalog, they can be found on pages 815 - 816, and it does cover the general designs for all nations from 1907 onwards, as well as a listing for ones issued here in the USA. Postmarks from the purchasing country are supposed to be applied on the left side.

## Worried About US Tariffs on Stamps?

By Peter Elias

With all the hub-bub about import duties & tariffs these days, it has some foreign sellers not wanting to sell items to US buyers, and in some cases, countries have

porting stamps, and the white “i” in the black circles next to “Rates of Duty” & “Special” state the following:

Rates of duty are divided in to columns 1 and 2 and column 1 is further divided into General and Special. The General sub-column sets forth the general or normal trade relations (GTR) rates which are applicable to all products other than those of those countries with products eligible for special tariff treatment (such as countries with free trade agreements, trade acts, preference programs, etc.) The Special sub-column reflects rates of duty under one or more special tariff treatment programs. These countries are identified in parentheses immediately following the duty rate specified in such sub-column. These rates apply to those products which are properly classified under a provision for which a special rate is indicated and for which all of the legal requirements for eligibility for such program or programs have been met. Where no special rate of duty is provided for a provision, the rates of duty in the General sub-column apply. Rates of duty in column 2 apply to products of Cuba, North Korea, Belarus,...

<

entirely stopped shipments & mail to the USA because of this! Peru did this recently, but has resumed, and I'm told Switzerland is still not allowing parcels to be sent to the USA, but they are working on allowing small parcels containing gifts to be sent to the USA.

As far as stamp collectors are concerned, there are technically no US tariffs on inbound stamps (best as I can tell...).

In reviewing the US “HTS” (Harmonized Tariff Schedule) number 9704 at top (see the actual listing at <https://hts.usitc.gov/search?query=9704>), which is shown at the top screen shot, it states that there no tariffs for im-

The “1/” notations for 9704 columns 1 & 2 give info for looking up further info, which in this case, seems to relate to tariffs relating specifically to stamps from China or Russia respectively.

There is also HTS number 4907, which relates to specifically to “unused postage” (or related items) that is still usable in the country of issue. There's also no tariff listed in column 1; however, a tariff of 66¢ per 2.2 lbs is shown for column 2 (which appears to be for countries from which there are import restrictions to begin with, such as Cuba & North Korea). That said, I've gotten stamps mailed to me from Canada without any problems.



## Stamps in the Wild: Christmas Ornaments

By Dan Golden

This past Thanksgiving, I took my family back to Chicago to spend the holiday with my parents. Like normal, the week consisted of family time spent with loved ones, catching up with old friends, and generally doing fun activities together. One of the things that has become a Thanksgiving-week tradition, purely because the timing of our visit makes us able to help, is setting up and decorating the Christmas tree.

Most years there is the usual order of things to the process; my dad and I bring the tree upstairs from the basement, while my wife and mom start unpacking the ornaments. We reminisce about certain ornaments honoring different occasions, originating from different years, or even laughing at the "homemade" ones that my sister and I made during our time in grade school. Then together we all, somewhat mindlessly, hang the ornaments on the tree while having an entirely unrelated conversation about the Bears, the Fighting Illini, or how things are going in our respective jobs.

As fun as the conversation is, the monotony of the same ornaments year after year causes me to go into a sort of auto-pilot while hanging ornaments and I admittedly do not pay much attention to the activity. That is until, inevitably, one ornament manages to free itself from the branch's grip, falls to the floor, and breaks, accomplishing what seems to be a yearly tradition among the ornaments themselves.

But this year, there was one ornament I had never seen before. Apparently my parents have had this ornament for years, decades even, but no part of me remembers seeing this growing up, or even in the relatively short time that I've had an interest in philately. My dad pointed it out to me, knowing that I might take a special liking to it. And he had every right to think so as, seen here, it was a stamp framed inside of an ornament!



It's a real stamp too, not just a fake one printed on paper for the sake of turning it into an ornament! How do I know? Because when I opened the frame to get a closer look, the stamp still had the original gum on the back of the paper!

The stamp in question is US #1384, which was issued in 1969 and depicts the painting "Winter Sunday in Norway, Maine". This stamp is the perfect example of how stamps themselves are works of art, especially because this one in particular is depicting an actual painted masterpiece! And if I say so myself, I believe it also makes a fine ornament.

I, for one, would love to see this type of thing more often. This was literally the first time it has dawned on me that a stamp could be framed and used as an ornament! Maybe this is already going on. Maybe there are compa-

nies out there that are manufacturing ornaments just like this one by the thousands, and I'm simply not seeing it because I'm not looking in the right places at the right time. Perhaps USPS already sells something like this in their catalogue! From what I can tell though (and someone please correct me if I'm wrong), they do not.

To my knowledge, this is not a common ornament, nor is something like it commonly available for purchase at the store. And when I think about that, I can't help but be frustrated at an incredible missed opportunity. Think of how beautiful some of the latest Christmas stamp issues would

look if they were framed and turned into ornaments!

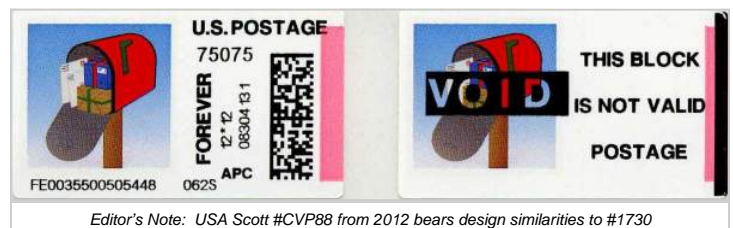
Take US #5941-5944, seen at left, which were issued for Christmas in 2024 and literally show ornaments on two of the four stamps! How great would each of those have looked on a Christmas tree! Or going back a little further in time, how about US #1730, seen below. Imagine



the bright red mailbox complimented by the deep green background of the Christmas tree branch, and tell me that doesn't look good in your mind's eye!

When it comes to stamp collecting, half the battle of attracting new people to the hobby is simply getting stamps in front of them. The more often somebody encounters a stamp, be in on a piece of art, or on a display at a museum, or on a greeting card they receive in the mail, the more likely it is that it will light a spark in them that becomes a full fledged love of philately.

But in a world that is increasingly paperless and increasingly casts aside snail mail in favor of faster communication and instant messaging, those opportunities are getting harder to come by. That is why something like this, stamps framed nicely and made into Christmas ornaments, is such a neat idea. I just wish it didn't take me 30 years to see it.



Editor's Note: USA Scott #CVP88 from 2012 bears design similarities to #1730

## MCSC Arlington Meeting Minutes December 3, 2025

by Janet Moyer

### Call-To-Order:

- After a wonderful dinner catered by David's Barbecue and many dishes brought by members, the meeting was opened at 7:20 PM by President Rick Howell. He thanked all who came.

### Attendance:

- Twenty-one members were present for the meeting.

### Officer Reports:

- **The secretary's report** was printed in the newsletter. No corrections were noted so they were accepted. We have 107 members.
- **Newsletter** – Peter is working on it.
- **TSDA Bourse** is Dec. 12-13 in McKinney.
- **The Club** has purchased a 2026 Scott's US Specialized Catalogue for the library.
- **2023 Scott Set** was auctioned to Richard Kincaid.

### Show & Tell:

- There was no Show & Tell due to the EXPO meeting to follow.

### Gift Certificates:

- Were won by Bob and Pat Weidman.

### Adjournment:

- The regular meeting was adjourned and the EXPO meeting started.

## MCSC EXPO Meeting Minutes Wednesday, December 3, 2025

submitted by Janet Moyer

### Call-To-Order:

- Chairman Ralph Poore called the meeting to order and acknowledged all the work done by the chairs and volunteers to make the EXPO a success.

### Chairmen Reports:

- **The secretary's report** was printed in the newsletter. No corrections were noted so they were accepted..
- **Janet Moyer** acknowledged all the volunteers who worked to make the EXPO a success.
- **Tom Cunningham** gave the treasury figures. We cleared a little more this year than last year.
- The attendance was higher on Friday than last year but lower on Saturday.
- The dealers were pleased with their business.
- **David Stockbridge** thanked Rich Hildebrandt and Rich Howell for taking over while he was out with health issues.
- **Kathryn Storey** will add the Security Guards to the lunch list next year.
- A deposit will be made in January to reserve the center for next year. The dates will be Nov. 13-14 with set-up on the 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Ralph Poore will send a thank-you note to the TPA for their sponsorship.
- There is a request from TPA to participate in the Numismatic Association. There would be no cost to our club but it would require some volunteer work.

## MCSC Flower Mound Meeting Minutes December 17, 2025

by Janet Moyer

No meeting this month.

## Granbury Meeting Minutes December 23, 2025

By Joe McFarland

### Call-To-Order:

- Vice President Dave Stockbridge called the Granbury Mid Cities Stamp Club to order at 7:00 PM on November 27, 2025.

### Attendance:

- 10 members and 1 guest attended.

### Show & Tell:

- For Show & Tell, Les Barton showed a 2020 Austrian stamp made of wood, metal, and plastic.

### Other reports:

- Members who went to the Expo reported a success despite a 10% decline in attendance.
- The silent auction raised over \$1500.
- Peter Elias showed 6 frames of exhibits, each with 16 pages. *[Editor's Note: Exhibits were also contributed by Dave Stockbridge, Skip Ely, Ken Wills & Pavan Ahluwalia.]*

### Where In The World:

- Les Barton brought a Where in the World series of questions to reveal San Marino as the country.

### Program:

Jim Myers quizzed the members with questions relating to Scott catalog entries & Where in the World geography:

- Texas history on stamps.
- Certified mail fee. The answers were the 15¢ 1955 certified mail stamp, a fee that now costs \$5.30.
- The 1911 Vin Fiz Flyer as the first stamp to show an airplane.
- Togo.
- The first US triangle stamp.
- Georgia as the state with the most casualties at the Goliad massacre.
- Somalia as a country without a functioning government.
- The advent of US special delivery stamps.
- Tristan de Cunha.
- The inverted Jenny plate block.
- The Democratic Republic of Viet Nam.

His quiz revealed that we may know stamps, but we don't know geography!

### Next Meeting:

- Our next meeting will be January 27<sup>th</sup>, with Joe McFarland presenting Polio on Stamps. Anne McFarland was the recipient of the ten-dollar gift certificate.

- Ralph is asking everyone to notify him of dates they **CANNOT** be available for meetings next year. He would like to get the calendar set.
- A motion for adjournment was made by Rick Hildebrandt and seconded by Dan Golden.



## Thank You!

By Peter Elias

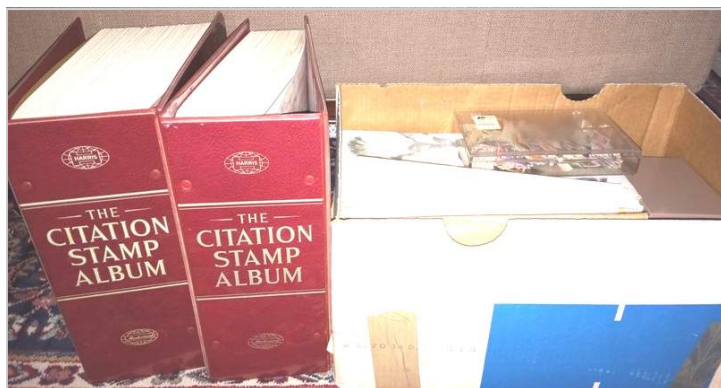
Thank you to Byron Sandfield for donating 2 boxes of various philatelic items, which consisted mostly of a couple of older albums and loose stamps (both on and off paper) in various envelopes and cigar boxes. There was also an unused Canada album and an FDC album. These items will end up at EXPO either at the Beginning Collector Table, the Chance Wheel or the Silent Auction.

One older album in the above donation had EVERY stamp held in place with cellophane tape, ruining both the stamps & the album; those and other stamps in uncollectible conditions and albums in unusable conditions will be re-donated to [Pegasus Creative Re-use](#) and the rest will end-up at the EXPO beginning collector table and possibly as silent auction lots.

Another donation (see picture at right) came from Gary Steiner of Wylie (who was moving out of the country) and gave us his collection from earlier years that had been stored since apparently the mid/late-1970's. It consisted of 2 large Harris "Citation" albums that have a some worldwide stamps in them (a couple

hundred common items perhaps) and some post-1930's US stamps in both used and mint condition. There was also a box with some misc. items such as a couple of covers and loose stamps.

Skip also reports that he took in a donation to the club from Dianne & Mike Cowell. This consisted of various items: Mint US stamps, Mystic Stamp Albums, some covers including on with the International History of Flight, various used stamps in tubs, stamp supplies and various philatelic literature and catalogs. All these items will end up at various places at the next EXPO (or for mailings in the case of mint USA stamps).



Be sure to visit the Club website on the Internet:

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

For recent online newsletters see the club website above or:

<https://BetweenThePerfs.com/MCSC> →

(for older newsletters please contact the newsletter editor)



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### EXPO 2026 Set-up Photo

Shown are Geoff Owens, Randy Blackburn, Donna Howell & Alliene Franklin preparing the show programs.



Photo by Peter Elias





## From The President's Cluttered Desk

By Rick Howell

Well, here it is. 2026 is looming large and we're getting ready to do it another year. I am currently trying to fill up our event calendar for 2026 and am in desperate need for some of you guys to step up and volunteer to make presentations to the club. Don't forget that we have three meeting locations and like to try to make it interesting for everyone.

So, if you can do a program for us, please consider also presenting at our alternate locations as well. If you can't, well that's fine too. I do need to fill out that calendar though. If you have any ideas for a program, please contact me and I will see what I can do to make it happen. I would surely like to hear from some of our more experienced members on this as well.

We are currently considering moving our Arlington meeting location to the Trinity United Methodist Church at 1200 W. Green Oaks Blvd, in Arlington. This is approximately 5 miles west of our current location at the Bob Duncan Center. I would like to hear feedback on this as well.

The club library has been moved to a location away from the Bob Duncan Center and has grown somewhat with donations. We are currently trying to put together a listing of all our philatelic library holdings and will make that available to everyone via a blanket email as soon as possible. Bear with us as this is a considerable undertaking and we will all have to make adjustments after being ostracized by the city of Arlington.

I want to say thanks again to all our members who continue to step up and help out in jobs as needed throughout the year, not only at EXPO, but also in the continual operations of the club. It is our great membership that continues to keep this club a great resource for the hobby in our neighborhoods. You guys are all GREAT!!!

See y'all at the meeting!

## Flying Turtle

By Ken Wills

Here's one of those combinations of a stamp and cancel that just happen to coincide in a humorous way!



[Editor's Note: If you find items like this, please feel free to submit them! To see these, try a "Google" (or other search engine) search, type "postage stamps with humorous cancels" and then go to the "image" tab]

## Not Chile

By Peter Elias

... And not "Chili" either... When I ordered the Zazzle Stamp shown below a few years ago (before the USPS Personalized Postage program was shut down), I did so "tongue-in-cheek".

As an Audi owner, and someone who does on occasion greet people with "howdy", I figured what you see is appropriate!

Given that I live in Texas, I also used the Texas flag as part of the stamp design.



When I attached the scan of this stamp in an email message to a fellow collector, they asked why I used an image of the flag of Chile (South America).

So, for anyone that hasn't seen the national flag of Chile, it is shown at left. The Texas flag is below that.

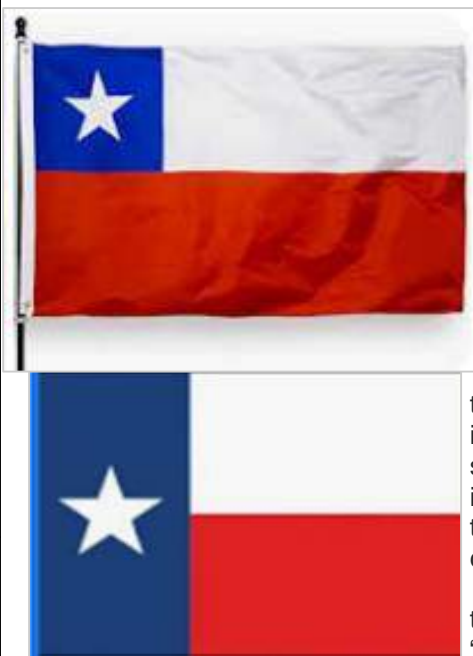
I could certainly see that this is a bit confusing for some people, and I'm sure you can see the subtle difference in how the "lone star" and blue field is placed, as well as the size of the 3 colored fields.

We know that Texas is the "Lone Star State", but why does Chile

use one star on their flag? Google's "AI overview" answer was:

*The star on Chile's flag, known as "[La Estrella Solitaria](#)" (The Lone Star), symbolizes a guide to progress and honor, representing Chile's unity as a single, indivisible state, while also pointing to hope and the nation's path forward. Set in the blue canton, it signifies guidance, with the blue itself representing the sky and Pacific Ocean, the white stripe the snow of the Andes, and the red stripe the blood shed for independence.*

So as they say: "there 'ya go"!



# 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

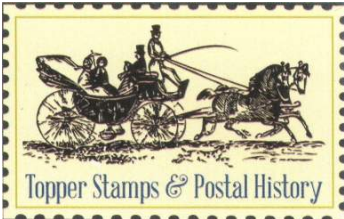
**Postally used “ATM” stamps** (i.e.: machine vended), such as Framas, from around the world; would prefer on cover or postcard if possible. Contact Peter Elias at [info@stvincentstamps.com](mailto:info@stvincentstamps.com) 8/14

### Christmas Party Pictures

By Peter Elias



Exp. 12/26



**Jonathan Topper**  
13100 Wortham Center Drive  
3rd Floor Suite 45  
Houston, TX 77065  
832.518.6558

[jonathan@topperstamps.com](mailto:jonathan@topperstamps.com)  
[www.topperstamps.com](http://www.topperstamps.com)

### 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!)
  - **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 \$ 4.95 each (Regular price is \$14.95 to \$19.95).. Contact [peter@pcelias.com](mailto:peter@pcelias.com) 11/24

**MOVED, BUT SALE CONTINUES!** Special discounts to MCSC members for Swiss, Austria, Liechtenstein issues, 25% and LESS of catalog values. 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

Here are the 2 photos that I took at the club's Arlington Christmas Party & EXPO Recap meeting on December 3 .

21 members attended, a bit lower than usual, despite the weather being good. After the meal & EXPO recap meeting, there was a gift exchange (and some spare chocolate chip cookies!).





## USPS Terminology Confusion

By Peter Elias

When you go on a trip for 3 or more days, the USPS can “hold” your mail as a service. So in my case, at usps.com, I entered the date that they should start “holding” my mail, which was Tuesday, November 25. Since I would be returning on Sunday, November 30, I wanted them to start re-delivering mail again, including any “held” items, starting Monday, December 1.

Identity Verified!

### Step 3: Choose the dates for your USPS Hold Mail request.

Let us know how long to hold your mail and how you'd like to get your mail on the last day of service. If need instructions.

#### Select the first and last days of your USPS Hold Mail® request.

We can hold your mail from 3 to 30 days in a row. For hold times greater than 30 days, please sign up for a [USPS forward mail service](#).

\*Indicates a required field

\*First Day of Service

11/25/2025



\*Last Day of Service

12/01/2025



How would you like to receive your mail on the last day of USPS Hold Mail Service?

Carrier delivers accumulated mail



Confirmation #: CAH54

Hello PETER C ELIAS,

Your USPS Hold Mail® request for 11/25/2025 - 12/01/2025 is ending. On 12/01/2025, we'll resume your regular mail delivery. We'll deliver all your held mail (unless you chose the option to pick it up yourself at your Post Office™ location).

Sounds simple enough, right? The “hold” service period is November 25 to 30, with deliveries resuming on December 1. What is confusing is that what I would consider the last day of the “hold service” to be November 30, they call the “last day of [hold] service” to be December 1 (left)! What? To me that is expressed wrong somehow. They should label that “last day of service” as November 30 or just say “restart delivery date” and call it December 1.

At top is the email I got on November 30 which states my mail hold request period of 11/25 to 12/01 is ending and that on 12/01 they would resume delivery. Just a bit confusing.

On a similar note, the Dallas Morning News website has an option to hold the newspapers (and then redeliver them), and they very specifically state not just the “start hold” date, but that in the end, what is a “restart delivery” date, rather than calling that an “end of service” date. To me, the USPS is just phrasing this wrong. I mean “stop on THIS date” and “Redeliver on THAT date”; it should be as simple as that! What do ya'll think?

## 2026 Mid-Cities Stamp Club Membership Renewal

# \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_ Mr. \_\_ Mrs. \_\_ Ms. \_\_ Miss Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
(First) (M.I.) (Last) (Complete if under 18)

**Check here if information is unchanged from 2025 and skip to the signature line below.**

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Collecting Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Stamp Organizations with membership numbers (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_ APS # \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_ ATA # \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_ TPA # \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Permission is granted to make the information above available to other club members. Indicate anything you do NOT want shared: \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

### Membership Level:

\_\_ \$12 Regular Adult (emailed or online colors newsletters) \_\_ \$22 Regular Adult (with mailed black & white newsletters)  
\_\_ **\$25 Sponsor Membership** \_\_ \$35 Sponsor (with mailed black & white newsletters)  
\_\_ \$ 6 Additional Adult (no separate newsletter copy) \_\_ \$ 4 Youth (under 18; add \$10 if printed newsletter is desired.)

**Make check out to ‘Mid-Cities Stamp Club’ and mail this form with payment to:**

**Mid-Cities Stamp Club, PO Box 820784, N. Richland Hills, TX 76182-0784**

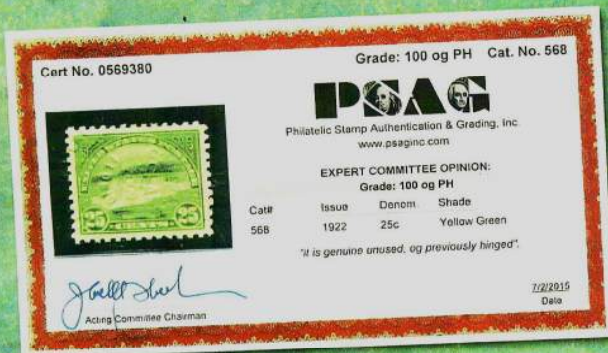


# Certification and Grading

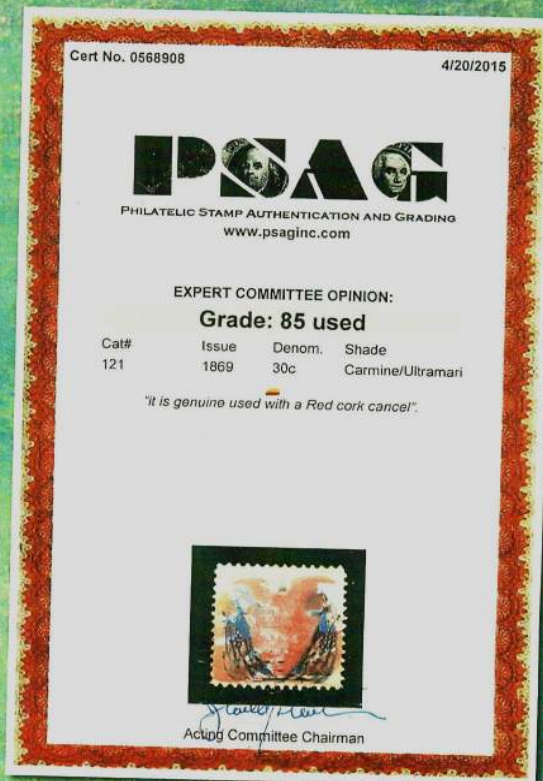
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## MEET & EAT for January 2026

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 (Arlington & Granbury) or 5:30 PM (Flower Mound) 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.

### ARLINGTON

January 7      Jay Jay Café, 1001 S. Bowen, Arlington  
(817) 861-1060

### FLOWER MOUND

January 21      Jason's Deli, 6020 Long Prairie Rd.  
Flower Mound, (972) 355-3867

### GRANBURY

January 27      Grump's, 3503 E. Hwy 377, Granbury

## Wanted to Buy

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

**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 \$3.00 in Spanish ATM stamps (which are only 15¢ each)! Contact Peter Elias at [peter@pcelias.com](mailto:peter@pcelias.com) 4/24

**United States Booklets.** large selection of unexploded booklets for sale at just above face value. Starting with booklet #BK104 to #BK259. Identify booklet number desired and send an email to Dave Stockbridge at [stockdave44@yahoo.com](mailto:stockdave44@yahoo.com).

Dave will send you a price, if booklet is available and payment instructions. 4/23

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

**Don't Forget:**  
**"Clean Out Your Philatelic Closet"**  
**sale at the Arlington meeting - Jan. 7**