

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)



**CHAPTER
MEMBER**



Volume 39, Number 2

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

February 2026



From The President's Cluttered Desk

By Rick Howell
& Ken Aldridge

I think everyone is aware by now that on Wednesday, March 4th, we are relocating our Arlington meetings from the Bob Duncan Center to the Trinity United Methodist Church in West Arlington. TUMC is located at 1200 W. Green Oaks Blvd in the Northwest quadrant of the intersection of Green Oaks Blvd and Pioneer Pkwy (TX-303). We will be changing our meeting times to start at 6:30 PM and last until 8:30 PM.

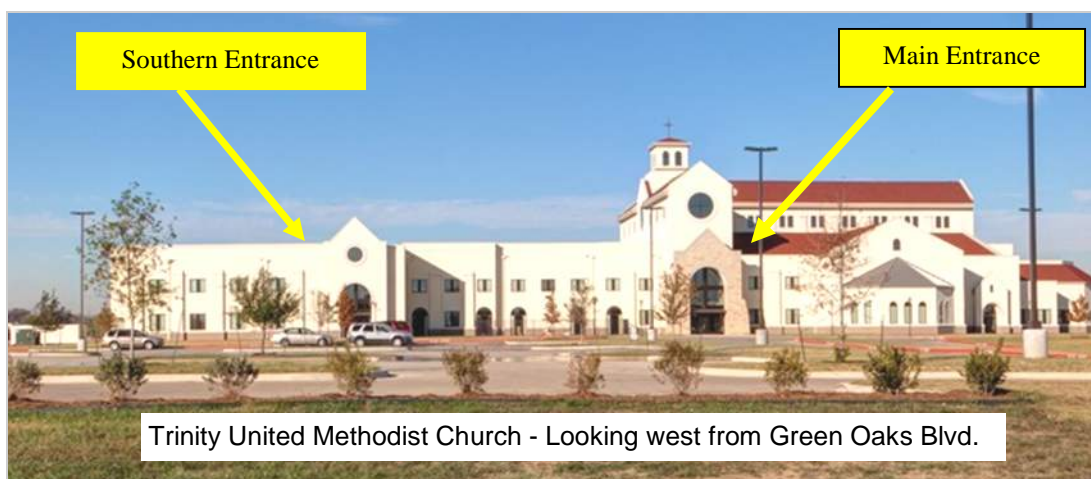
One interesting new benefit to our membership is that on Wednesday nights the church has a dinner prepared by a chef that is open to everyone. The meal includes main course, dessert and drinks all for a low price of \$8.00. This starts at 5:00 PM, so by the time you get your meal, eat and enjoy everybody's fellowship, it will be time for the meeting. So, our Meet-N-Eats for Arlington will be at the church for a couple of meetings so we can determine whether everyone approves of the meals.

The church board of directors has been very receptive to our board of directors and seem to be anxious to help us have a great experience with them. One of the things we will be discussing is the possibility of purchasing a lockable cabinet for onsite location to contain our library materials. This is currently being considered.

We will be meeting in Room 201 (The Koinonia Room) upstairs. You can come in the main entrance and take the elevator or the stairs to the second floor and we

can be easily found. If you are participating in the Meet N Eat, come in the southern entrance on the East front of the building and you will have access to the gymnasium where the meals are served.

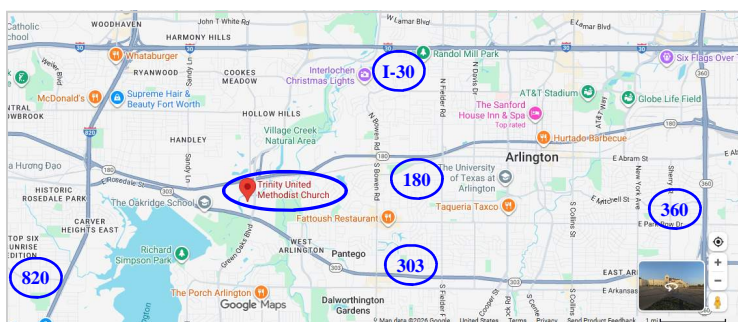
All in all, I think this is going to be a positive step for MCSC and encourage you all to come out and check out the new digs.



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Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

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

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

President – Rick Howell
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Vice-President (Granbury) – Dave Stockbridge
Vice-President (Flower Mound) - Dan Golden
Secretary – Janet Moyer
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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

For a membership application write to:

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

Coming Attractions

2026

JAN. 27 MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting

--> MEETING CANCELLED DUE TO WEATHER! <--

FEB. 4 MCSC — ARLINGTON Meeting

Program: Jimmy Tomchesson of PSAG (Philatelic Stamp Authentication and Grading). Jimmy will be showing some of the new equipment used in authentication and stamp grading and expertization in general.

FEB. 18 MCSC — FLOWER MOUND Meeting

Program: Extended Show & Tell and philatelic discussions

FEB. 24 MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting

Program: Clean Out Your Philatelic Closet

MAR. 4 MCSC — ARLINGTON Meeting

Program: Texas Centennial Stamp by Richard Laster

MAR. 18 MCSC — FLOWER MOUND Meeting

Program: Extended Show & Tell and philatelic discussions

MAR. 24 MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting

Program: Polio by Joe McFarland

APR. 1 MCSC — ARLINGTON Meeting

Program: TBD

APR. 15 MCSC — FLOWER MOUND Meeting



"Editor At Work"
LEGO™ MOC by Marcos Elias

Editor's Forum

By Peter Elias

If you have not already done so, PLEASE pay your annual dues. A convenient renewal form is later in the newsletter (and it'll be the last time for the 2026 membership year...).

Don't forget that next month, the Arlington (March 4) meeting will be at our new location at 1200 W. Green Oaks Blvd!

Rick Howell is looking for people to give programs at Arlington & Granbury.

Members in the News

By Peter Elias

The following MCSC member had articles published in a recent philatelic journal:

Peter Elias, in the [Meter Stamp Society](#) Quarterly Bulletin, Winter 2025, Volume 77, issue #350:

- *Festive Season 2025: Wreath & Cardinal*, pg 31-37 in part 1

- *A Collector's Pain with the Gum*, pg 32-45, in part 2

Note: In the 2nd article above, the MSS editor used the word "Gum", while it should technically be "Adhesive". Probably due to the fact the MMS Bulletin editor is German, and their the word "Gummi" is used for "rubber", as well as for "eraser", "rubber band" & "gum". There's also the edible "Gummibärchen" (Gummi bears) And while "gum" is obviously an English word, when referring to the "pressure sensitive adhesive" on these stamps, "adhesive" would be a better word; while I prefer to use "gum" when talking about the "lick 'n stick" (moisture sensitive) type of gum... Aren't languages fun?

Secretary's Report

By Janet Moyer

Applications Received:

Lester J. Edwards (#698) - all stamps!
Larry Sweeney (#699) - USA used, mint blocks

New Members:

n/a

Reinstated:

n/a

Deceased:

n/a

Membership Summary – January 21, 2026

Membership as of December 3, 2025	112
Applications Rec'd (counts as member next month)	2
New Members	0
Not Renewing for 2025	(0)
Resignations	(0)
Deceased	(0)
Reinstatements	0
Membership as of January 21, 2026	112



Zürich & Graubünden

By Peter Elias

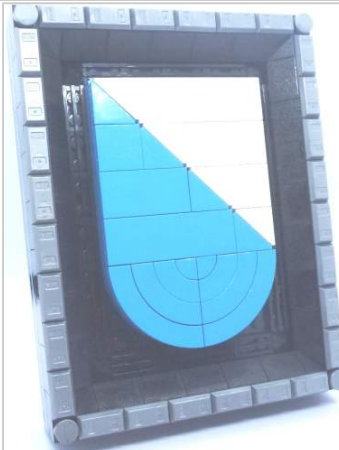
Many of you know that I believe that philately can compliment other hobbies that you have, and that I like to collect things that have meaning in my own life story. And that some of these things can help bring back memories.

In this case, one of my sideline hobbies are Legos™. I grew up with them. The photo below, taken when I was about 4 or 5 years old, shows me (and my German cousin) playing with Legos on our balcony in Switzerland. And you know, I still have these Legos, including those green boxes that held them!



Photo by Hans Elias

So what does all that have to do with stamps? Well, one of the Christmas presents I received in 2025 was 2 Lego frames with coat of arms in them. They are shown to the right and at the top of the 2nd column. The one here shows the coat-of-arms of the canton of Zürich (in which is the city of Zürich, my hometown). The size is about that of a standard size postcard and about 1 inch thick. It is entirely made of Legos. This is not always an easy feat, as there are limits to the colors, sizes and shapes of the various Lego bricks & plates.



stamps.com, that showed the Zürich coat-of-arms!

That all said, this Lego frame with the Zürich coat-of-arms was done by a family member who knew that I would appreciate this gesture. It took them about 20 hours to figure out how to make this (it's not like you can buy this as a kit from Lego...).

The 2nd coat-of-arms frame I received was that of the canton of Graubünden, or "Grisons" as it is called in English.

Grisons is the largest of all Swiss cantons and is in the southeastern part of Switzerland, sharing borders with Liechtenstein, Austria & Italy. It has a population of about 200,000 and a size of 2,743 square miles.

In the photo at right, I've placed the PhotoStamp so that you can gauge the relative size of the Lego build. The actual size stamp itself is shown here.



The animal shown is an Ibex



Switzerland also issued their own stamp series that featured the various Swiss cantons. Shown here are the Zürich (Scott #B16 from 1920) and the Grisons (#B35 from 1925) coat-of-arms issues that are semi-postal stamps from the "Pro Juventute" ("for the Youth") series.

So why is the canton of Graubünden important for me? It is where spent a lot of time on summer vacations when we went back to Switzerland in the 1970's and 1980's, such as to Davos & Flims. I even took my family there in 2013 to experience the Davos area!

Also of note is that these "frames" can be stood on a table top (using fold-out braces) or hung on a wall. There is also a string on the back - and yes, it is an official Lego string! It's a Lego "purist" thing...

While pictures are of course worth a thousand words, stamps & even Legos can also help keep your memories alive!



MCSC Arlington Meeting Minutes

January 7, 2026

by Janet Moyer

Opening:

- President Richard Howell opened the meeting with a "thank you to all in attendance".

Attendance:

- 21 members were present for the meeting, including 2 new members: Larry Sweeney and Lester Edwards.

Reports:

- Secretary Janet Moyer stated that the secretary's report was printed in the previous newsletter. No corrections were noted so they were accepted.
- APS books – Dave Stockbridge reported he will put an article in the newsletter reporting last year's sales.
- Library – It is possible that the library will be moved back to the meeting room when we change to a new location.

Announcements:

- Meeting location change:
We will be moving our Arlington meeting location to the Trinity United Methodist Church at 1200 West Green Oaks (Pioneer Parkway and Green Oaks) for the March 4th meeting. A map will be sent in the newsletter. The rent is reasonable and there is plenty of parking. We are on the second floor but there is an elevator available.
- The church offers a meal at 5:00 PM for \$8.00 which will do away with the "meet-and-eats" at restaurants.
- Gift certificates - There will be a change in the gift certificates awarded at the meetings. Arlington will have 2, Flower Mound will have 1 and Grand Prairie will have 1. The gift certificates will now be \$20 each.
- Cliff Stearns has a book of Australian stamps. If you are interested, he has sheets with pictures and 8 jpg files he will email to you if you ask.
- Peter Elias has an Excel spreadsheet of specialist collectors of individual US stamps in a listing provided by D.A. Lux. Contact Peter if you are interested.
- Jeff Jessop's father and brother passed away in October. Sales were being donated to help with funeral costs.
- Denmark longer has a postal service.

Show & Tell:

- Ken Aldridge shared a letter received by him with NO postage.
- Dave Stockbridge:
 - Showed a letter from 1978 that has both US and Italian stamps for postage.
 - A Christmas present he received that is a 128-year old complete Scotts Catalogue (1898). Some of the numbering has changed since that edition.
- Peter Elias showed:
 - Personalized postage stamps featuring coat of arms with a postcard rate of 35¢ and a related coat-of-arms made out of Legos.
 - A cinderella stamp from Germany and a brass

doorplate from his grandparent's apartment from the same place in Germany (1930's).

- A fake stamp from Cayman Islands.
- An old (ca. 1910's) picture postcard that he found that shows the "board of education" (i.e.: a school teacher or principal that is paddling the behind of a school child).
- A birthday card that illustrated stamps (printed reproductions).
- Reproduction of a US #122 (90¢ Lincoln) stamps made into a silver ingot.

- Ray Cartier showed a Charles Lindberg cover.

Gift Certificates:

- Gift certificates were awarded using a random number generator thanks to Skip Ely. The winners were Pat Weidman and Tom Turner.

Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 PM

"forever" But Not "FOREVER"

By Peter Elias

We all know that the USPS "FOREVER" stamps are meant to "forever" pay postage domestically for a 1st class letter (of a certain dimension, being "bendable" and not exceeding 1 ounce).

1st class letter mail can go up to 3.5 ounces. Why 3.5 ounces? Why not 4? Well, 3.5 ounces is basically 100 grams, so I think that is a nod to that. While gram postage rates are used in practically every OTHER country on earth (according to the Google AI overview for this, Liberia & Myanmar are the only other countries using the imperial system).

So if you need to pay for an additional ounce, there are "ADDITIONAL OUNCE" stamps available, which are "forever" valid for whatever the current "additional ounce" rate is, presently 29¢ per oz. up to 3.5 oz for letter mail.

"Large flats" envelopes have a 27¢ "additional ounce" up to 4 oz, then 28¢ per oz up to 8 oz, then 29¢ per oz up to 13 oz. What I don't know yet, is whether these 2 stamps (and others like it) also work for "large flats".



RIP: Roberta Hildebrandt

By Rick Howell

Fellow Philatelists,

It is with great sadness that I must report the January 13, 2026 passing of Roberta Hildebrandt, wife of Past-President and Librarian, Rich Hildebrandt.

Roberta had been a club member until last year, and annually helped with the Awards Banquet at EXPO.

Our condolences and prayers go out to Rich and his family. The funeral is on 1/31 at St. Peters Anglican Church, 3900 Morris Lane, Arlington, TX 76016. More info is at:

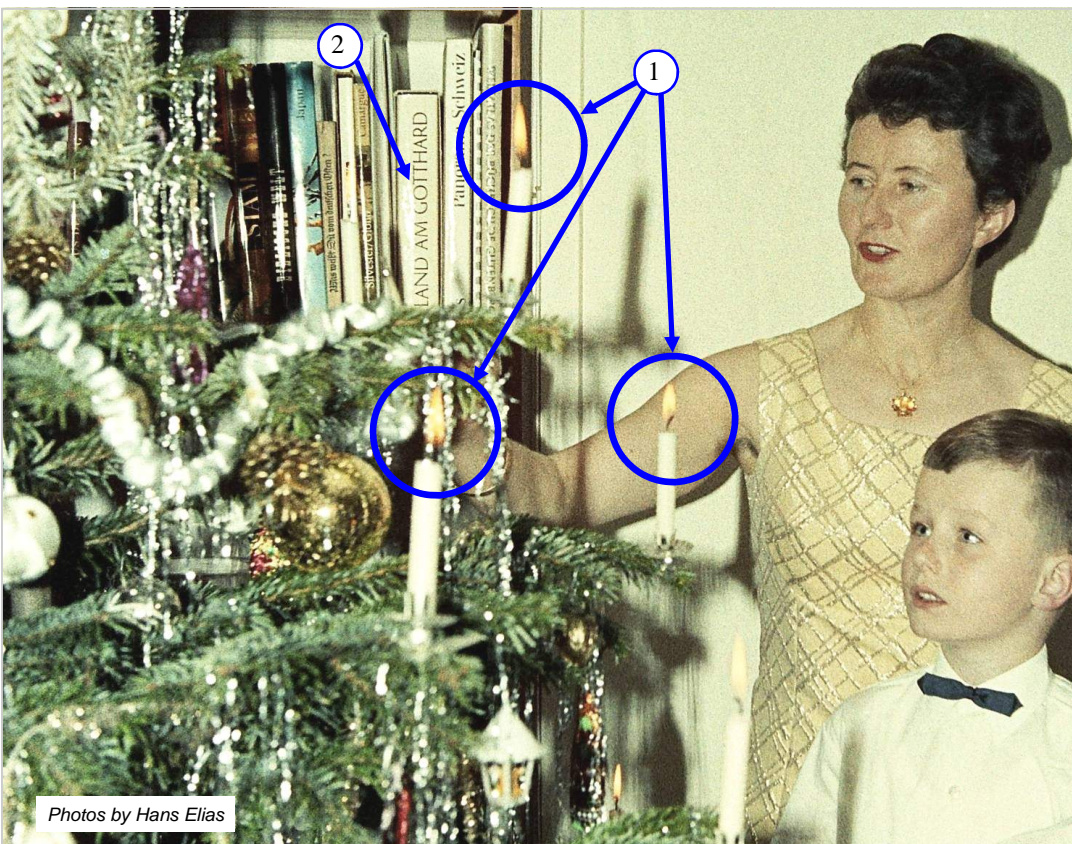
<https://www.wadefamilyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/roberta-hildebrandt>

Christmas Tree

By Peter Elias

Yes, this is the February issue (due out in late January), but I'm writing this 2 days after Christmas...

Ahh, Christmas eve ... Almost ready to unwrap the presents. But first we got to admire the Christmas tree:



What is this (#1) above? Live flames on real candles on a real Christmas tree! Yup, that was a typical Christmas tree in the Elias household. Mind you now, this was the mid-1960's and in Switzerland...

Real flames on real candles can present a real danger though. While my memories are a bit fuzzy, I vaguely remember that one year, something caught on fire in our apartment as a result. Whether a candle just drooped over onto a twig, or a twig above it caught fire from the candle underneath it, I don't remember, but there ended up some being black soot on the ceiling. No picture of the event though...

That got me thinking though... Are there stamps showing real candles on a Christmas tree? There are several that show candles on or near wreaths, such as



#1205 from 1962 shown at left, but not any I could see showing what would appear to be real candles on a tree.

At right is USA #1508 from 1973 that does show a drawing of a Christmas tree, but only with ornaments and no candles...



At right is USA #5148 from a 2016 booklet, it shows a tree with lighting, but it appears to be just string "lights", not candle-shaped.

Once we moved to the USA in the early 1970's, and given that house construction here is mostly wood (versus concrete



in Switzerland), my parents wisely opted to use "electric" candles. The picture above shows one of our Christmas

trees from the 1970's. Some of those "candles" are leaning rather precariously, don't you think? Good thing they were electric ones!



Another US stamp with a Christmas tree (albeit the large White House outdoor one in Washington DC) is 1963's #1240 at left. Lights, but no real candles, given that candles wouldn't work well outdoors...

So, while this has not been an exhaustive study about Christmas trees and their candles on stamps; please feel free to pursue this topic further if you are interested!

So what is "#2" identified in the top left photo? When I first looked at this photo, that book looked familiar, and I remembered that I actually still have this book: "Uri - Land Am Gotthard" ("Uri - Land at the Gotthard") on my shelf now. The book has a publishing date of 1965, so that somewhat helps date the photo! Have I been to the Swiss canton of Uri? That'd be another article...



Switzerland #1860q from 2022 -->

USA #C90

By Peter Elias

At right is an Art-Craft FDC that features USA #C90, issued 50 years ago! I was just a teenage stamp collector back then!

This is a typical cachet cover that was produced at that time. However, if it had been produced today, I'd be inclined to say that the cachet was designed by "Al" that was "hallucinating"!

Now why would I say that? The cachet seems to look ok as such. But look a bit closer. First, at the bottom it says "Loading the mail".

If they were truly loading the mail, shouldn't there be an open cargo hatch on that side of the plane near the top



end of the bag conveyor? Or at least show the seams of the hatch door (as it does with the incredible short boarding door shown at the front of the plane)?



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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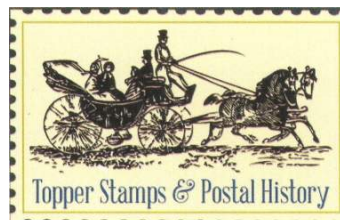
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Exp. 12/26

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Philatelic Big Year - Final Report

By Dan Golden

At the beginning of last year I wrote an article entitled "A New Challenge and a Big Year", in which I described my intention to combine two hobbies into one, philately and birding. The goal was to see every bird depicted on a US postage stamp and then collect a stamp corresponding to each of those bird species seen. I intended to write quarterly updates on the progress of that challenge, but then I changed jobs, became short on time, and life generally got in the way. As such, I only have this one update to share, and it may be considered a final report on the success of my mission.

Put simply, I bit off more than I could chew and I utterly failed at my challenge. As it turns out, birding is a lot harder than I anticipated. I only saw 27 out of the 142 birds on my list, about a 19% success rate. And it was not from a lack of effort. My father-in-law and I went out to nature preserves, on birding hikes, and even traveled to other states in pursuit of this endeavor. And yet I was unable to achieve what I had set out to do.

The biggest issue was an inability to identify which bird species I was looking at. You see, even when I would catch sight of a bird from a distance and be certain that it was probably a bird on my list, I would be without any sources to immediately help identify it. Seeing a bird is the easy part, determining what I was looking at was much harder. This situation of seeing a bird while being unable to identify it occurred countless times, enough so that I almost dropped the project entirely around mid-summer. In October I still only had seen about 25 birds and I felt like a failure.

So I did what many students in high schools across the country do when faced with likely failure: I cheated. Or more specifically, I amended the rules and allowed myself to use other sources to view birds, namely natural history museums where stuffed specimens would be on display. The Perot Museum in Dallas and the Field Museum in Chicago proved invaluable in expanding the number of birds seen, and when counting these species seen in-person but not alive, the number of birds seen increased to 78, raising my success rate to about a 55%. To use the school analogy again, this meant that I had gone from an F at 19% to... still an F at 55%. Hopefully my imaginary professor is willing to grade on a curve!

An added difficulty was the need to acquire the corresponding stamps out in the "wild," i.e.: stamp shows, club or APS sales book and regular old trading with collectors. Even when making it "easy" on myself and only counting the bird species I had seen, I only managed to acquire 24/78, a 31% (rounded up) success rate. Again, this can be described as a failure. The biggest issues with this step in the process was that every dealer booth I sat down at in any given show always seemed to have all of the stamps around the one I was looking for, but not the one I needed. Furthermore, the APS and club booklets rarely had anything I needed or had seen yet, making those avenues fruitless as well.

As such, my year-long project can be considered a flop. However, there is a bit of silver lining. This challenge, while a failure, gave me a sense of purpose that, when two hobbies were aligned into one activity, facilitated a greater enjoyment of them both. In fact, it gave me an idea for the future.

Sure, I failed at this year-long challenge. But who says that the challenge should have only been limited to a single calendar year? Dan Golden? That guy's a clown and you can't trust anything he says! *Dan Golden* says that I can remove that restriction and change a year-long challenge into a years-long project, essentially building out a topical collection while going birding at the same time. I'd rather listen to that version of myself any day of the week.

Now that I have justified my failure and encouraged myself to continue the pursuit anyway, I'd like to take the rest of this article to highlight four bird species and/or their stamps that I encountered, or wished to encounter, while on this journey.



The one I fell in love with: the **Red-Bellied Woodpecker** (USA #3611c). Other than blue jays, robins, and cardinals, I must have seen the red-bellied woodpecker more than any other bird depicted on an American postage stamp during this challenge. It's unique in the sense that it is not an overly common bird like the cardinal or blue jay, nor is it dull or plain in appearance. The orange above the beak, flash of red on

the back of it's head, and the white and black pattern on the wings makes the red-bellied woodpecker quite pretty to look at. Plus the sound of it pecking against the wood was a pleasing noise to hear, always alerting me to the bird's presence nearby. My one regret with this bird is that I was never able to acquire its stamp.

The one that got away: the **Guam Micronesian Kingfisher** (USA #5799m). This bird is extinct in the wild, but still exists in a handful of zoos around the country aiming to recover the population. While neither the Fort Worth Zoo nor the Dallas Zoo have any of these birds in their collection, the Brookfield Zoo near where I grew up in Chicago does! We tried to see it while visiting my family for Thanksgiving, but by the time we got there the bird exhibit was closed for the night. However, I did have one other chance earlier in the year to see the Guam Kingfisher at the Cincinnati Zoo while I was in town for a wedding. However, prior commitments, i.e.: going to the wedding and spending time with old friends, prevented me from making a trip to the zoo. This makes me 0 for 2 in prime opportunities to see a bird that is extinct in the wild and difficult even to see in captivity. Therefore, the Guam Micronesian Kingfisher sticks out in my mind as the one that got away.



(continued on next page)

Philatelic Big Year - Final Report, *continued*



The one most deserving of a stamp: the **Belted Kingfisher**, seen here is a photo that my father-in-law took. It's a beautiful bird characterized by its orange, blue and white feathers, a color scheme match-

ing that of my alma mater, the University of Illinois (I-L-L!!), closely enough that there is even a student movement to make the belted kingfisher the new mascot for the university's sports teams. Considering how popular this bird is and how prevalent it is in the northern US, I'm amazed that there is not a stamp depicting it!



[Editor note: The design for #6036 was also the basis for the "CVP" version available at the USPS self-service kiosks during the 2025 holiday season]

Yet we have 17 different stamps that show a cardinal, including USA #6036 (seen above), released just last fall for the 2025 holiday season. The cardinal is a pretty bird and I like it as much as anyone else, but did we really need to honor it 17 times?

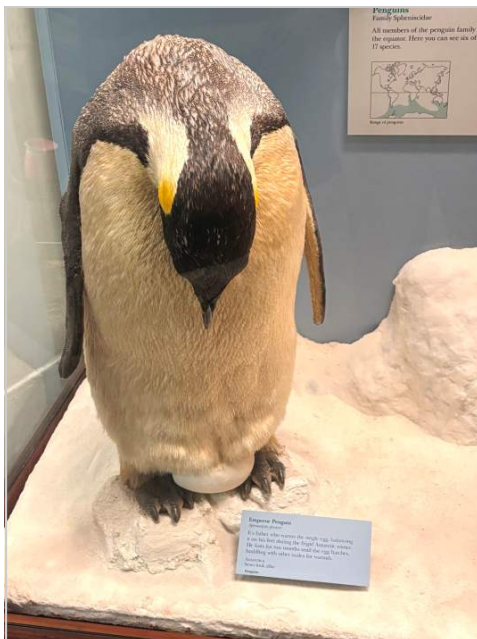
Couldn't it have given up one of its philatelic spots to the belted kingfisher?

The one not meant to be: **Emperor Penguin** (USA #4989). This here is a stamp showing an emperor penguin. I was unable to see this bird in the wild during this year, the most obvious reason for which is because I live in Texas and the emperor penguin, well, does not. I could not justify the expense, nor do I think my wife would have appreciated it had I attempted to convince her, of a trip to Antarctica. However, there is actually one zoo in the United States that houses emperor penguins: the San Diego Zoo. That being said, a trip to San Diego, while significantly less expensive than going to Antarctica,



was equally out of the question. Still though, as can be seen in this photo, the Field Museum does in fact have a specimen on display that appeared to bow to me as I passed it. However, this was among the birds that I "cheated" in order to see it, since it was seen in a museum rather than alive in the wild or in captivity.

Alas, perhaps someday I will get to pay my respects to such fowl royalty, but for now the emperor penguin and I will have to meet another day. Luckily, the continued pursuit of this project in the future may very well lead me to one day visit this flightless ruler's imperial court.



What Does The Real Stamp Look Like?

By Peter Elias

Will the real stamp please stand up! As part of creating & editing this newsletter, I get to work with lots of items that need to be illustrated. If it isn't already a digital photo that I took or have, I'm left with a couple of options:

- 1) Scanning it on my flat-bed scanner (if it is a stamp or cover)
- 2) Digitizing it (if it is on 35 mm slides or negatives)
- 3) Photographing it (if it is 3-dimensional item)

In some instances, I can use either methods 1 or 3. I can scan a coin or photograph it. If photographing, I can just take a digital photo as is, or I can use the aid of a light box, such as shown below (there's a strip of LED's underneath at the top).

At left are 4 images of a "tiny" stamp shown at actual size. Yes, it is really that small!

The top image was done via my scanner. The 2nd image was a photo taken through the top of hole of my light box. The 3rd image is a photo was taken (Panasonic ZS10 digital camera) with ambient room lighting. The bottom image was a photo taken near a window. Amazing how different they all turned out!

Which is closest to what my eyes actually saw (in terms of the color)? The bottom one! So why is the scanner so far off in color? So it must be the pigment reacting to the LED scanner light as it passes over the stamp at top.

Unfortunately, with a camera, getting a "flat" image is difficult, so a scanner is better, but you might have to tweak the color a bit to have it match real-life.



Don't Trust A.I.

By Peter Elias

listing of number of each stamp issued by the USPS, specifically Scott #1036

AI Mode All Shopping Images Videos Short videos News More Tools

AI Overview

The 4-cent Abraham Lincoln stamp, designated as Scott #1036 in the US Liberty Series, was issued on November 19, 1954, in New York City. It is a definitive stamp printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing using a rotary press (perf 11 x 10½).

- **Color:** Red violet.
- **Series:** 1954-1968 Liberty Issue.
- **Purpose:** The 4-cent denomination was primarily used for postcards, letters to Canada and Mexico, and other mail requiring the 4-cent rate during that period.
- **Production Note:** The stamp was produced using both "wet" and "dry" printing methods during its run.
- **Varieties:** A tagged version (for automated mail handling) was issued later, on November 2, 1963, identified as Scott #1036b.

While the total exact, final number of all Scott #1036 stamps printed over their production life is not specified in the search results, it was a "workhorse" definitive, produced in massive quantities for daily use in the 1950s and 1960s.

While I didn't get an answer about my specific question, Google's "AI Overview" provided some useful information and one outright incorrect answer (some would call it a "lie"...).

According to my 2026 Scott catalog, #1036b is the booklet pane version of that stamp.

The actual "tagged" version (and AI did get the "1963 part correct) is #1036e. So why is it stating that 1036b is the tagged version by AI? What is the source of this false information?

As a certain former President once said: "Trust by Verify" ... So, I tried to verify where AI got this bit of erroneous information. After digging a bit, it says the tagged version is listed as #1036b in the "US Specialized List of Tagging Varieties of US Stamps", which is a PDF file available at <https://www.usca.nl/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/USA-Checklist-Tagging-Update-okt-2020.pdf>. On page 5 of this document it states that the tagged variety is #1036b! Aha!

I did contact the creator of this document, Hans van Gils (in the Netherlands) and let him know that the info is incorrect. He replied that he'll change it, but did mention that apparently in some older Scott catalogs, this was actually listed as #1036b.

So I guess that "trust but verify" is the operative phrase here... That said, in looking up this phrase, while Ronald Reagan is credited with saying this in the 1980's during nuclear disarmament negotiations, it is (according to the Google AI overview) that he supposedly learned this phrase from Russian scholar Suzanne Massie (who stated it was an old Russian proverb: *doverayay, no proveryay*). Now, should I trust but verify THIS bit of information? I won't climb down that rabbit hole...

Mid-Cities Club Sales Department Update

Dave Stockbridge

In 2025, club members bought nearly \$2,500 from American Philatelic Society sales books. The club receives about 16-18 books monthly, except for December from APS. Books are kept for about a month and efforts are made to get them to each of the 3 monthly club meetings. APS books can not be taken home and all sales must take place at club meetings. I would like to thank Skip Ely and Rick Howell for helping to get sales books to the Flower Mound meetings and assisting with sales at Arlington and Granbury.

In addition to the APS sales books, the Club Sales Department currently has 36 club sales books available that were submitted by members. All members are encouraged to put excess or stamps they no longer collect in club sales books for other members to buy from.

Empty club sales books can be purchased for \$1.00, which is about the cost of printing. Books have spaces for up to 192 stamps. Most sellers price their stamps at no more than 30% of catalog value. The best sales occur with stamps priced at no more than 20% of catalog. Please do not put the most common or minimum priced stamps in a sales book. Most of our members have this common material and are looking for less common and harder to find stamps.

At this time the best sales are occurring with US stamps before 1930 and US BOB (back of the book) material. Books are kept in circulation for 2 years and then retired and returned to owners. Considerable interest has been shown with British and British Colonies stamps. We have collectors of almost every country in the world as well as several collectors that specialize in old covers, topicals, perfins and pre-cancelled stamps.

Club sales books may be signed out at meetings and taken home for examination for up to a month. This allows members to examine their collections and identify exactly what they need. Please consider preparing some sales books.

Buyers for all stamps are required to record their purchases on club sales sheets where book number, booklet page, space number, and net price are recorded. Members are encouraged to initial or put an identifying mark in the empty space when a stamp is purchased. A small "buyers fee" of 10% is added to all purchases which helps to pay for club sales expenses. If you have any questions about "selling" or "buying" please just ask.

Postcrossing

By Peter Elias

<https://www.postcrossing.com>

is the website you want to go to and sign up (for free) to receive postcards from random people around the world (you've got to send some as well...). I've done about 29 so far. They have 805,466 members around the world!



CLASSIFIED BOURSE

Announcements

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

For Sale

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

Wanted 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 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 8/14

Thank You!

By Peter Elias

Many thanks to Byron Sandfield for a donation of various “philatelic stuff” (old albums, loose stamps, FDC’s, etc) on January 22. As always, I’ve pre-sorted & consolidated these items for Skip and will bring them

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 Contact me at 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](#) (received the 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](#) (over 1,700 stamps & philatelic items!!)
- [St. Vincent Postcards](#) (300+ postcards from 1900 to 2007)
- [Vintage Swiss Postcards 1898-1959](#) (900+ post-cards !!)

Special MCSC Member price is only \$ 4.95 each + TX sales tax (regular price is \$14.95 to \$19.95). PayPal accepted. Contact peter@pcelias.com 02/26

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: jstrubelboy@aol.com 12/14

to the February Arlington meeting.

Any items not suitable for club & EXPO uses (such as the Beginning Collector table, Silent Auction or Chance Board) will be discarded (if in REALLY bad condition) and/or re-donated to [Pegasus Creative Re-use](#) in Dallas so that artists, scrap-bookers & junk journalists can use them for their projects.



Warning On Purchasing Stamps Online

By Larry Reid

I have bought many stamps online over the last couple of years and I have had problems with altered and misidentified stamps.

Collectors of classic stamps often encounter situations where stamps are incorrectly identified, for example, assigned to a higher-value Scott number, mixed up with similar types, or described as mint despite having been used. Many types of transactions can be considered fraudulent. I cannot say for sure if sellers have done this on purpose or not (I will list later the dealers I think sell fraudulent stamps). The challenge with stamp certification is that it takes a long time to receive the stamps back, while both eBay and HipStamp require returns to the seller within 30 days to qualify for refunds. The certification process requires at least 30 days to complete. You can pay extra to get it back sooner. So, you really need to be careful about your purchases.

Classic stamps can be misidentified as a variety of a stamp worth more than what the stamp actual is. I have encountered many dealers where the cancel has been removed, the stamp cleaned or bleached to appear unused. There are many stamps listed as having original gum and they are re-gummed to appear unused. I am still learning all the different ways to determine if a stamp is re-gummed.

On purchasing the revenues listed as imperforate or partial imperforate you really need to be careful. Often, people trim the edges of stamps to make them look like rarer, more valuable ones. I am not an expert on identifying stamps which have been trimmed, but with the help of an expert grader for revenues I have really learned a lot. To determine whether a revenue stamp has been modified, look at fully perforated examples for comparison. If the stamp is smaller than the real fully perforated stamp it is probably fake or altered. Another problem is they use a newer stamp to trim, and it is made with a different paper than the original issues.

Issues with sellers offering stamps where cancels have been removed to make them seem unused. One dealer selling these stamps is [MomenStamps](#) (on eBay and HipStamp) would not refund my money; HipStamp did refund it to keep my business. He is rude and does not care about the buyers in my opinion.

[New York Stamps](#) on eBay is the one I have had the most problems with, about fifty stamps have come back as altered or misidentified and I consider this as fraud.

[Editor: presumed to be "NYStamps" on eBay]

Elpapy on eBay only had a couple (these were stamps with removed cancels to appear mint), but he would not answer emails or take any action of refunding the money.

[Editor: could not find Elpapy on eBay]

PZNRJ58 on eBay also had two stamps, with removed cancels or bleached stamps appearing unused and would not refund the money. I have filed fraud charges on two of the dealers with eBay and am getting ready to file on the last one. I would not buy from these dealers ever. Funny, I now cannot purchase from them now, as they all blocked me.

[Editor: couldn't find PZNRJ58]

A friend of mine who has bought and sold hundreds of collector cards on eBay for about 20 years, told me the reason they blocked me was I found out about their fraudulent activities and confronted them, and they did not want to sell me again, as I would have more evidence of their schemes.

Several dealers quickly returned my payment once they got the stamp and certification, and some even covered my certification and shipping costs as well. Each of these exceeded the 30-day time limit. All these dealers were very apologetic. Despite everything, I was still responsible for covering the costs of certification and round-trip shipping for most of the stamps.

I would not buy a classic stamp or a revenue stamp with a purchase price over \$50 without a certification accompanying the purchase. I would not buy from a dealer who isn't a member of ASDA, TSDA, or a similar association. For any of these, you can contact the association about them.

Rare Stamps

By Peter Elias



I'm sure you all recognize this stamp, USA Scott #1036 - the 4¢ Lincoln stamp from the 1954 definitives series.

Whether on eBay (see below) or Facebook Groups / Marketplace, someone always seems to have this "RARE" stamp for sale (and for which the sellers below don't even seem to know the catalog number!) and they think they've hit the jack pot! I certainly hope no one buys these stamps ... Looking at the "sold" listings at eBay though, I did not see any there for #1036. So it seems to be a lot of wishful thinking on the sellers part.

	<p>STAMP US POSTAGE 4 c. purple Abraham Lincoln "RARE"</p> <p>\$3,000.00</p> <p>or Best Offer</p> <p>+ \$5.20 delivery</p> <p>Located in United States</p> <p>chem2725 0% positive (0)</p> <p>Item: 156904671703</p>
	<p>RARE USA 2 available stamps 1954 Abraham Lincoln 4c</p> <p>\$2,523.96</p> <p>or Best Offer</p> <p>+ \$27.29 delivery</p> <p>Located in United Kingdom</p> <p>3 watchers</p> <p>kerrhewit-6 100% positive (11)</p> <p>Item: 315925793188</p>
	<p>USA President Abraham Lincoln 4 Cent 4c US Postage Stamp Purple</p> <p>\$2,500.00</p> <p>or Best Offer</p> <p>+ \$4.88 delivery</p> <p>Located in United States</p> <p>petrytiffany 0% positive (1)</p> <p>Item: 405351615441</p>

USA President Abraham Lincoln 4 Cent 4c US Postage Stamp Purple

Informed Delivery

By Peter Elias

As they say "curious minds want to be know" (or be informed) ... or something like that. That said, if you're not already familiar with the USPS "Informed Delivery" service, it is useful. And free!

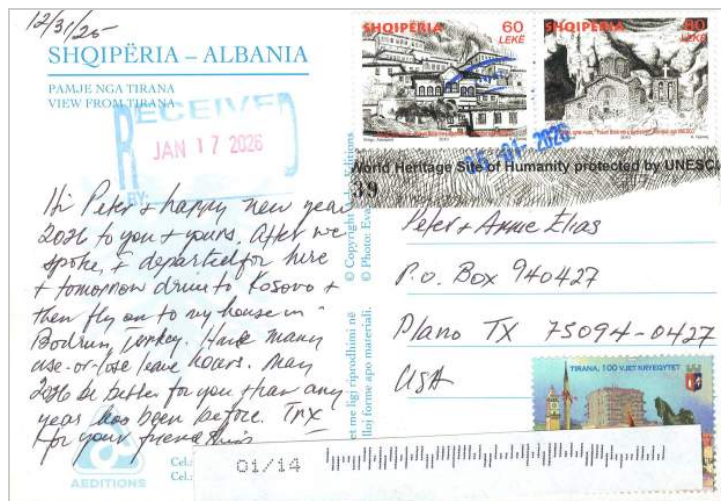


Every day, early in the morning, I receive an email from the USPS telling me what I should "expect" to receive that day (or the next) in terms of 1st Class Mail and/or tracked mail & packages.

They'll display up to 10 black & white scans of those 1st class mail pieces. While 10 doesn't sound like much, these days I'm lucky to get 4, and in this case, 3 items. "Yesterday" as shown on the left was January 17. One of the

items (the screenshot above is cropped) was the postcard that you see. Actually very readable, but it had me baffled, since the signature was covered by the USPS "Postnet" code on the adhesive strip of paper.

Based on reading this postcard from Tirana, Albania on screen at first, the sender must really know me, as it was also addressed to my wife, and he mentioned talking with me prior to his trip. But



it just didn't click at the moment, since I didn't recall anything about him having a house in Turkey... At home, when I peeled back the sticker, I obviously saw who it was! And yes, I do know him and had met him in Washington DC and had dinner with him and his wife there as well as when they visited in Dallas a few years ago, I did speak with him prior to his trip.. He's a fellow collector and also advises Scott's on matters of the USA "CVP" catalog listings.

I do find the blue "postmark" (a standard date stamp) interesting, perhaps that's all that was available at the Albanian post office? So, January 1 to 17 seems about right for delivery time from Europe. It would be interesting to know the routing!

To sign up for Informed Delivery, go to <https://www.usps.com/manage/informed-delivery.htm>

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

Flower Mound Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2026

By Skip Ely (filling in for Janet Moyer)

Attendance:

- We had 9 members attend the opening 2026 meeting at Flower Mound.

Call-To-Order:

- Vice-President Dan Golden called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM.

Announcements:

- President - Rick Howell gave a short briefing on the new Arlington meeting venue that will start in March. He also talked about our speaker for the February Arlington meeting.
- Secretary - Skip Ely said he was collecting membership dues.
- Future Meetings - Dan Golden briefly mentioned future meetings.
- Newsletter - Peter said the next one is almost completed.

Show & Tell:

- Skip Ely talked about the U.S. Purple Heart stamps. He had a handout listing some of the details about the various issuances.
- Perry Singer showed a framed souvenir sheet with 6 stamps from Curacao (former the Nether-

lands Antilles).

- Peter Elias had several items:
 - An old 1950's U.S. passport book with a documentary revenue stamp.
 - A shrink-wrapped pane of the U.S. 1¢ American Kestrel definitive stamps that were sold by the USPS as "sticker stamps".
 - A partial sheet of reprinted "Basler Taube" (Basel Dove) stamp from Switzerland by the Rowland Hill Company; the original is in Switzerland.
 - A very large accumulation he has of USPS "Certificates of Mailing".
- Lester Edwards showed a cover he had obtained that from the FDR collection that was mailed from Vienna to the U.S. State Department in 1940, with Hindenburg stamps.
- Ken Wills talked about the plate numbers that show up in the scroll works on the Great Britain Penny Reds. He then showed some plate number blocks of more modern British stamps. This led to a discussion on the U.S. plate number coils.

Gift Certificate:

- Was awarded to Steve Carpenter.

Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at about 8:35 PM.

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PHILATELIC STAMP AUTHENTICATION AND GRADING

Philatelic Stamp Authentication and Grading
P.O. Box 410880, Melbourne FL 32941-0880

Phone: 305.606.4337 E-Mail: info@psaginc.com

Certification and Grading - Excellence Since 1987

Founded by noted U.S. Classics Expert, J. Randall Shoemaker, PSAG commits to providing unparalleled certification and grading of all United States, Canada and Canadian Province stamps. Guided by newly appointed President Jimmy Tomchesson, PSAG enters its next chapter of excellence in expertizing and grading.

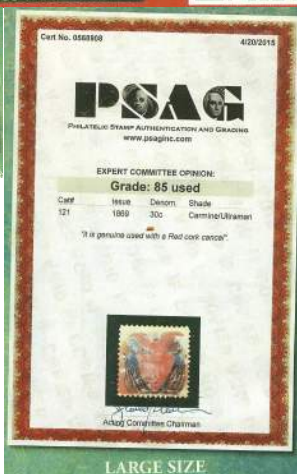
Finest US and Canadian Experts, 40 Years of Expertizing Experience
Competitively Priced Graded & Ungraded certificates at the same price

Grading singles, pairs, blocks, plate blocks, booklet panes and souvenir sheets for US & BNA
Consistent Standardized Third Party Grading

Comprehensive References
Best Turnaround Time in the Trade



SMALL SIZE



LARGE SIZE



DEALER

FEE SCHEDULE (All United States, Canada & Provinces, Canal Zone & Hawaii)

SERVICE	FEE	ITEMS THAT CAN BE SUBMITTED	MINIMUM QUANTITY	MAX SCOTT VALUE	MAX FEE	APPROX TURNAROUND
ECONOMY	\$20	1932 to date (US#643 to date, C19 to date, RW35 to date, E14 to date) No ERRORS, FREAKS & ODDITIES	10	\$100	\$20	30 Business Days
REGULAR	5.5% Scott Value (Min \$38.50)	1847 to 1931 (US# 1-642, C1-18, RW 1-34, E1-E13, J1-J78, Revenues, etc)	1	No Max Value	\$250	30 Business Days
SPECIALIZED	5.5% Scott Value (Min \$50)	1847 to date (Private Vending Coils, Postal Stationary, Postmaster Provisionals, Special Printings, Covers, Locals/Carriers)	1	No Max Value	\$250	Varies
EXPRESS	Add \$25 to each item		1	No Max Value	\$30	20 Business Days



MEET & EAT for February 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 (5:30 PM for 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

February 4 Moni's Pasta and Pizza
1730 W. Randol Mill Rd., Arlington
(817) 860-6664

FLOWER MOUND

February 18 Corner Bakery, 3640 Justin Rd., Ste 190
Highland Village
(972) 317-0378

GRANBURY

February 24 Palio's Pizza Café, 3710 E. Hwy 377
Granbury

*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" at
the Feb. 24 Granbury meeting

Wanted to Buy

Texas Precancel Stamps. Contact Rick Howell at:
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 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 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 4/24

Large accumulation of stamps from many countries both mint & used. This includes full dealer boxes, bulging glassines, binders with album and Vario pages, and old albums with collections. All stamps are no more than 20% of catalog price. Request stamps by country and I will determine the best way to get them to you for examination. You select what you want, write down catalog price, adjust for condition, and pay me when you return the material. What do you want, need, or desire to look at? Dave Stockbridge; stockdave44@yahoo.com 2/26