

# Philatelic Society of Lancaster County



An Affiliate of the American Philatelic Society: James Buchanan Chapter, # 173 Chapter 118 of the American Topical Assn.

## Club Picnic: Wednesday, 10 August 2011

### 6:00 PM

## Millersville Freedom Memorial Park

### Message from the President

Hello to Everyone! I'm sure by now you're anxiously awaiting our upcoming picnic. I know I can't wait for the August heat to be over. Anyway, it's been oppressively hot here lately, so you should have had a chance to work on your selections for the September Auction since you were most definitely not outside (at least I wasn't).

I've been looking online with limited success to find those elusive foreign Souvenir Sheets that aren't listed in *Scott's*. I guess a trip to Bellefonte will be forthcoming. I did have a friend bring over a sampling of stamps that her friend thought were just fantastic, that they could possibly bring in a nice little windfall. Well, I had to break her bubble and tell her that they would not finance a trip to the shore, but rather possibly a

meal at McD's. There were bad scissor perf cuts, torn obverse and reverses, "mint" stamps that had gotten stuck to something, and just plain old extremely common pieces and space fillers. I attempted to explain this to her, but I'm not sure she got it, so I did ask that she bring over the balance in order that she not possibly "give away" an item of value. Perhaps her perception of what looked valuable was different than ours, and she might yet reap some rewards.

My friend queried what the value of my collection was, and I found that hard to answer. The catalogue value is "full retail" value, yet I can still purchase the majority of the stamps for "face" value or just above. My albums probably cost more than the stamps they contain. Their true worth seems to be in the acquisition

of each item and the knowledge gained from it. There is also an album to pull out and recollect past memories while looking at something pretty. Also, let us not forget that the dissemination of this knowledge to others is our "duty" and could, in a way, perpetuate the hobby that we share and spend our valued resources (time & money) on. See you at the picnic. *jmb*



Forever Stamps-Pg. 3

Volume 74, No. 8

August, 2011

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PSLC Meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month (except August) at The Bluebird Commons / Woodcrest Villa, 2001 Harrisburg Ave, Lancaster, PA at 7:00 PM. For club info, call Lucy Eyster 717.735-2586

President:

John M. Bray

Vice President:

Vacant

Secretary:

Joy Bouchard

Treasurer:

Lou DiFelice

Newsletter Editor:

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pcpetersen@comcast.net

## Picnic Time!

Wednesday

10 August 2011

6:00 PM Millersville Boro Park

*Please bring an appetizer, a salad, a side dish, or a dessert*

**Burgers, hotdogs, and drinks will be provided.**



**Directions:** Driving west into Millersville from Lancaster on 999, the Park is on the north side of 999 just across from the intersection of George Street. Also across the street from the park is the Barn Door Restaurant. The club's pavilion is adjacent to the parking lot. Just follow the aroma of freshly seared burgers and hotdogs by grillmasters Mike, Ed, and Jim.



### Save the Date

Wednesday, 13 October: Club trip to NYC for the ASDA Stamp Show. Sign-up now. See the "Minutes" On this page.



### Panama Canal Commemorative Stamps

The 100th Anniversary of the opening of the Panama Canal is 15 August 2014. The *Canal Zone Study Group* is recommending a series of stamps to commemorate the canal. Immediate input is needed-on or before 15 August 2011. If you would like to see these stamps, please send a letter of support to:

#### The Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee

c/o Stamp Department  
U.S. Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW  
Room 3300  
Washington, DC 10260-3501

## July Minutes and Treasury

Joy Bouchard and Lou DiFelice

**Opening:** President John M. Bray opened the meeting at 7:08 PM..

**Reports:** The secretary's and treasurer's reports of July were accepted as written by voice vote.

**Membership:** There were 40 members and guests in attendance including Morgan Kaspar's sister Brandi who is starting to collect postage stamps and Morgan's cousin, Karen.

**American Topical Assn:** Lucy Eyster recently returned from the *National Topical Stamp Show* in Milwaukee and added that it will be held at The Host (Rt. 30) on 22-24 June 2012. She will meet after the meeting with those interested in developing the theme and generating excursion ideas for before and after the show for the out of town participants. Lucy also passed around a

copy of *Topical Time* that comes with the club's membership in ATA.

**Lancopex:** Lou DiFelice announced that a contract has been signed for the 2012 show to be held on Fri. and Sat., 27-28 April.

**Drawing:** This was won by Bob Paire.

**Pre-Cancel Door Prizes:** RD Noble announced the winners who will receive a certificate and packet of pre-canceled stamps.

**Some New & Old Business:** Paul Petersen gave an update on his contact with LCDS and Bob Eppler's status for club VP. He is circulating a card for the Shirleys and is seeking input for the next newsletter regarding the "Forever" commemorative stamps.

**Upcoming Shows:** Jim Boyles announced that the next *Some Sunday Stamp*

*Shows* will be on 21 August.

**10 August Picnic:** John Bray passed around sign-up sheets for food choices and asked members to bring a salad, dessert, appetizer, or side dish. (See page-1 for details.)

**13 October Club Trip to NYC Stamp Show:** Please send \$45 per person to Roy Bardsen at 379 Sioux Court, Sinking Spring, PA 19608. Make out checks to the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club.

**Program:** David Hunt of Denver, PA gave a presentation on Errors, Freaks, & Oddities. He had unsold auction lots for sale and past issues of *The EFO Collector*.

### Treasury Report

Opening: \$3,645.02 (1 Jun)  
Income: \$0.31  
Expenses: \$268.73  
Closing: \$3376.60 (30 Jun)  
3-CDs valued at +/- \$6461.85

## To attract new collectors, it's time for Plan B

Al Schaub

**Editor's note:** Member Al Schaub suggested revisiting an opinion column he published in the 12/06/99 (Pg.12) *Linn's Stamp News*. The information remains valid today. This article is the first in the series which will continue in the next several issues of this newsletter.

The impending death of the stamp hobby has been forecast many times since the first regular stamp was issued in 1840.

Our hobby is nowhere near the brink of extinction, but many indicators do reveal a dwindling interest in stamps and philately.

Most constructive efforts to stimulate interest in the hobby and introduce new collectors have gone into "Plan A"

Plan A involves creative efforts to interest children and young people in stamp collecting. It includes the formation and support of school-based stamp clubs and youth tables at stamp shows, the warm welcome given to the young people by most stamp clubs, and philatelic merit badges awarded by Scouting organizations.

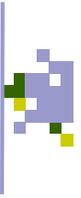
Not to be overlooked are the youth-oriented efforts of the APS the USPS, and the ADSA. The gains from Plan A have

been quite modest.

The stamp hobby has difficulty competing against sports cards, TV, and video games. Most young collectors lose interest as they enter the challenging worlds of dating, higher education, careers, marriage, and family life.

Should Plan A be scrapped as a failure? My answer is an emphatic "No."

However, in the face of such feeble results, perhaps it is time for a major campaign to implement "Plan B." (To be continued in the September issue of this newsletter).



## PSLC on the “Forever” Commemoratives

“Forever” is the designated name for a U.S. postage stamp which is non-denominated and will carry first class domestic mail. The word “Forever” replaces the monetary denomination, and any stamp with this designation will be



good forever, meaning that even with rate changes in the years to come, the “Forever” stamps purchased today will be good to mail one’s letter in the future.

There has been lots of discussion in the philatelic press, both pro and con. The clarion went out last month for input, and several club members responded.

“Since I don’t collect U.S. anymore, I don’t care as a collector.” **Roy Baardsgen**. He goes on to note that the creation of these stamps may be a USPS mistake, as anyone rich enough can stock up now and be able to profit. Further, he has not purchased stamps in over six years, preferring to use stamps from his plate block and Mr. Zip holdings which are now worth face value.

**Diane Meek** wrote that “Forever stamps were issued and sold at a time when you could purchase them for less than the 44 cent value when used! Wanting to take advantage of a savings on postage, I started to stock up whenever I was in a PO. It didn’t take long to find out the Forever stamps now cost 44¢, which meant no savings! However, the Forever stamps are still being issued with all kinds of themes and so... Forever is still forever, and we don’t know when Forever will not be forever.”

Editor **Paul Petersen** enjoys using some of his older but favorite commemorative stamps on letters and bills along with some smaller denomination stamps to make up the rate, especially the Prexies or Liberties. If he doesn’t have several stamps per cover, he feels he is short-changing the hobby! He will need to be a little more creative to continue this with Forever commemoratives. He further notes that an early function of postage stamps was to promote a country on its worldwide mail, and our U.S. commemoratives did just that. However, the undenominated “Forever” commemorative stamps cannot be used on int’l mail due to a lack of a printed monetary value on a stamp’s face, a UPU regulation.

**Greg Macaluso** likes them and wishes that it started earlier. It is convenient for both the POs and customers. Greg found that with the small first class rate changes, it was hard to find POs with the 1¢ and 2¢ stamps. Further, the PO had the trouble of stocking low values and of seeing that the customers were franking correctly. They also had the trouble of collecting and disposing old value stamps. Greg sums it up as a win-win situation as to efficient use of man hours.

PSLC member **Sherm Foote** likes these stamps but wishes that USPS could supply them to all post offices and “encourage” the clerks to push or at least offer them to customers. He thinks the word “Forever” is invasive on the design, especially on a small stamp. He recommends a “Ist” like the U.K. or a P like Canada use on their stamps. Here the “P” is inside a maple leaf and stands for permanent.

Club president **John Bray** thinks that the “Forever” commemorative stamps are good for customers but that they may be a financial loss for USPS. They lose billions a year, yet they still give some steep discounts. John would also like to see more exciting designs on the U.S. stamps, and he still longs for the good old days of non-adhesive stamps.

## Miscellaneous Club Notes: Programs/Hosts & Shows

### 2011-12 Programs and Hosts

- 10 August:** Picnic at Millersville Boro Park  
**14 September:** Club Auction. **Host:** Lou DiFelice  
**12 October:** Show ‘n Tell: Your Best Stuff. **Host:** Lucy Eyster  
**9 November:** The First Aerial Post in England (9/1911), Mike Bach. **Host:** John R. Ahlfeld  
**14 December:** Dinner  
**11 January 2012:** Club Auction. **Host:** TBA  
**8 February 2012:** Swiss Philately, a DVD by the Helvetia Society. **Host:** TBA  
**Show Reminders:** *Some Sunday Stamp Shows*, Farm & Home Center: • 21 August, • 2 October, • 4 December (Please verify ahead with Jim. Boyles - 394-5118.)  
**Balpex:** 2-4 September. Marriott’s Hunt Valley Inn. I-83, Exit 20, Shawan Rd. www.balpex.org

### What’sit?



012-0002  
 Petersen  
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After soaking off a stamp from a charity solicitation cover, the editor found the image to the left. It was located right underneath the stamp. Does anyone have any idea what these are all about?

### From the Wall Street Journal (22 July 2011)

Greg Macaluso submitted an article about the **Citizens’ Stamp Advisory Committee**, those tasked with deciding the subjects on U.S. postage stamps. Other than the bare statistics, records are not made public. Meetings are not open, and members are sworn to secrecy. The CSAC receives 5000 new proposals each year, and this adds to the 45,000 annual resubmissions of topics/subjects of which the senders are most passionate about. Only 25-30 new stamps are printed per year.



## Musings:

### *Where will the USPS be in 2021?*

Earlier I looked through a copy of *Apple* magazine, one promoting their upcoming technology. “Wow!” There are some working prototypes of gizmos that will soon be on the street. These devices will be doing things that I never thought needed doing perhaps until a few years ago. But as has been stated in this newsletter, technology is here to stay. I still use my gag line that “They will have to pry my cold dead fingers from my princess phone when I am gone...”

Remember that replicator machine from Star Trek decades ago? One merely told the machine what was wanted, and it was created! Typically the show confined the instantly created items to foodstuffs as not to be too outlandish in their science fiction stretch.

Even now we have a philatelic replicator! We enter a few numbers into our computer, and it gives us stamps, or CVPs to be more accurate. And then there is machine automation of the mail. Well, that was starting up over 50 years ago.

So the question to you is: **Where will USPS be in ten years (2021)**. I was thinking of making it 25 years from now (2026!), but this would put it into the realm

of real science fiction - that is if the post office’s technology in 2021 won’t already be science fiction as we know it.

But don’t think merely in terms of technology. What will the PO look like? How will it be serving us? What’s in store for our future communications. Manpower, job descriptions? Will there be stamps? Mailmen and mailwomen? Public vs. Private? How about a North American Postal Service (NAPS)?

In an earlier column, I mentioned European hybrid mail where one sends an email to Aunt Gretel via the post office in Austria, who print it and deliver it as a letter. It is more expensive than an email but faster and less expensive than an air mail letter.

Now we are seeing another technical step forward as reported in the 4 April ‘11 issue of *Linn’s* (pg.14). To preserve the mail in Sweden and Denmark, they are following what Germany has been doing for a few years. One sends a text message on their phone to the PO and receives a code number back. They write this number on a letter’s upper right corner, and place

it in a letter box. The PO takes care of the rest.

A new U.S. Postmaster General was appointed last year. While noting the difficult financial situation for USPS, he stated that even with shrinking mail volumes, some mail will remain viable, and it will be important that it gets to its destination.

What promoted today’s column was an article in the 4 October 2010 *Linn’s* (pg. 10) by Bill McAllister, and I want to share part of it here. He discussed remarks from Robert Setrakian, a former member of the Postal Service Board of Governors and a real visionary regarding postal service affairs.

Long before the Internet’s influence on our communication, Setrakian saw rough times ahead for the post office. He looked well beyond postal economics, and his view skipped the rose colored glasses. In the early 1990s, he shared with McAllister that if mail service dries up, the government should do nothing about it. The PO was there to move the mail that came through the system. They

were not to keep investing billions in a service that may not be needed! Is this hard-line pragmatic or what?

This vision won’t do much for the stamp hobby or postal unions. It is not a very popular view for an expanding enterprise that depends on an ever-growing volume of mail. If Setrakian had his way, PO management would have been required to provide an emergency plan to guide the organization if or when the mail volume declined and dried up.

Understanding Setrakian, one would think that the USPS was caught napping. Looking at the crisis from hindsight makes him dead right. Right or wrong, mail service is in deep trouble in a variety of spheres. I believe that they desire to continue to do a first class job in delivering our mail, but it will be different because of a number of issues based on economics, technology, mail trends, labor, and dollars.

Share your views with me. Consider email, letter, smoke signals, semaphore, telegram, cable, or even my princess phone. Ed □



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