

OCTOBER 2005

Editor: Bill Snyder

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An Op-Ed Article from Al

One of my favorite newspaper sections, second only to the comics, is the opinion--editorial section. Some of the editorials and letters to the editor are logical and enlightening. There are also some that are a joke in regard to common-sense and logic. Needless to say, those lacking in logic are ones with which I disagree!

This month I want to contribute to the op-ed movement with a letter to the editor of the L.C.P.S. Post Gazette.

Dear Editor (a.k.a Big Bad Bill from Willow Hill):

On a regular basis most of the philatelic newspapers and magazines publish letters to the editor written by lifetime, dedicated stamp collectors who declare that they are quitting the hobby. The reasons given include too many new issues, the high cost of new issues, and the difficulty of mounting mint, self-sticking stamps.

Without question, these writers are raising valid points. During the year 2004, the U.S.P.S alone issued a total of 148 stamps and stationary items. A total of 140 stamps and stationary items are expected this year and 127 are projected for next year. A further complaint is the near impossible task of getting full sets of used stamps when all the stamps on a pane differ.

Although having just reason to be distressed by the flood of new issues and their cost, it is my opinion that people who quit collecting because of it are not true, dedicated philatelists! Rather, they are dedicated new-issue collectors!

Since Rowland Hill rolled-out the penny black, in 1840, over two million stamps have been issued worldwide. Thus, floating around are more than enough older issues to keep a true philatelist busy for a lifetime without making a trip to the post office. Best of all, a very large number of older, existing stamps are less expensive than many new issues.

In advocating the collecting of non-new issues, some ideas worthy of consideration are:

- Supplement pages for new issues are very costly and are often loaded with unwanted specialist pages.
- As is presently the case, years from now many new issues will have little or no economic value beyond their use as postage.
- In my opinion, the ultimate collection is one that is topical in nature and assembled through the use of creative imagination. Thus, once a topic is declared, the millions of existing stamps become a fun-filled hunting ground for collection development.
- Homemade pages and clean stock pages, mounted in a loose-leaf binder, are very inexpensive alternatives to expensive albums and supplements.
- Topical collections can fill volumes or can be just a few pages. In other words, your collection is complete when you say it's complete. Lacking is some postal authority telling you that, even as you continue to subsidize them, your collection will never be complete.

At a personal level, one of my favorite collections is a two page collection of Heroes of the World War II French Underground. This mini collection has a total of twenty-three mint stamps with a catalog value of \$23.80. However, my actual cost was under \$20.00. Included in this collection is the bonus of a lifetime of research and study related to these resistance fighters and their deeds.

To sum-up my point of view — don't quit, instead get creative!

Editor's Notes: My actual address is in Willow Valley, not Willow Hill. In the spirit of poetic license, however, I accept being moved to Willow Hill because hill rhymes better with Bill than Valley!

My investigative sources tell me that next month Al is going to rant and rave about the U.S.P.S. Let's see if he makes any sense?

Minutes, LCPS Meeting, September 14, 2005

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. New member Dave Kenawell was introduced (35 Edgehill Drive, Lancaster 17603). Dave's telephone: 396-8932; email address: kenamaro@onemain.com.

If you did not receive a new club membership list, Marilyn Shirley will bring copies to the October meeting.

The Treasurer reported a balance of \$2,962.57 and the report was accepted. The Secretary's report was accepted.

The Club will hold an auction at next month's meeting. After some discussion it was decided that there is a limit of 10 items/consignor, with a minimum value of \$1.00 for each item. Please provide a description sheet for items and the consignor's name. Purchases should be paid for in cash.

At our next meeting we will need nominations for Vice President. The election will be held at November's meeting.

Lou is making plans for next year's programs including: 1) Kent Weaver – Liberian Stamps; and 2) John Miller – an expert on German stamps.

At the Washington 2006 stamp show Jim Boyles and Dick Colberg will assist with the free APS table. A motion was made and approved to spend \$100.00 for a deposit on Elite Bus to attend the show on Thursday June 1, 2005.

A motion was made and approved to send \$50.00 to APS Library – honoring deceased members Reid Slick and Mark King.

Walter Moreau was not present for the \$5.00 drawing.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m. Eleanor Wheeler, Secretary

From the Editor

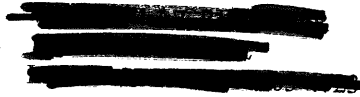
Death of Don Weber--It is with regret that I report the death of long-time LCPS member Don Weber. Don was a graduate of Harvard Divinity School and had served as a Presbyterian minister at churches in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. He had been in poor health for some months before his death in Reading Hospital on 23 September. Don was an avid collector, and had served for several years as the Treasurer of the LCPS. The Society extends its sympathy to Don's wife, Helen, and to his family.

Katrina and Rita—The recent Gulf Coast hurricanes have caused an estimated \$150 million in damages to postal facilities in Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi. Over 250 postal facilities have been destroyed or damaged, the USPS reports, and service to as many as one million addresses has been affected. As recently as a week ago, about 2,000 postal workers remained unaccounted for. The USPS has imposed a ban on advertising mail and periodicals in the affected areas.

Postal service is slowly being restored, except for New Orleans and those parts of Louisiana and east Texas hard hit by Rita. The Postal



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17603-4723



Service intends to ask Congress for emergency aid to help it recover and repair its facilities.

New Stamps—Two interesting stamps panes will soon be issued by the USPS. The first, a set of 11 stamps featuring Jim Henson and ten of his Muppets, will be issued on September 28. Miss Piggy, Kermit the Frog, and the rest of the gang are long-time children's favorites from the TV series *Sesame Street* and *The Muppet Show*. The second, a pane of four stamps, features four constellations popular with star gazers: Leo, Lyra, Orion, and Pegasus. This set will be issued on October 3. Interestingly, this set also features what is in effect an advertising slogan—and something of a breakthrough for the USPS. Printed in the selvage is the following:

“Discover the universal language of stamps!” “Visit the Washington 2006 World Philatelic Exhibition May 27-June 3, 2006 in Washington, D.C.”