



The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

Stan Raugh, Editor
4217 8th Avenue, Temple, PA 19560-1805
Tele: 610-921-5717

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**Most Meetings Held the first Tuesday of Every Month at 7:00 p.m.
Meeting Site: Berkshire Commons, 5485 Perkiomen Avenue (Route 422)
Turn North on Lincoln opposite of the Dairy Queen.
Proceed 300 feet, turn left on Washington and look right of center at the stop sign.**

Tuesday, January 4, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.

AUCTION !!!

"I've got two dollars, looking for three-three-three, I've got three looking for four.
Four-four-four, I've got three looking for four...four...four
SOLD for three dollars."

Auction time! Isn't it exciting? Bring your extras and your wallet
and have fun bidding on new items for your collection.

See you at auction!

Tis the season to pay dues:

Many members have already paid their dues, but if you have not, see Mike Matus at one of our meetings. We make it simple, family memberships are \$10.00. If you cannot pay at the January meeting, mail a check to Mike at 157 Lucinda Lane, Wyomissing, PA 19610.

And...a very big thanks to those who ran the kitchen for our 2010 stamp show. We all enjoyed the food, especially your editor!

Snowy, Snowy Nite

Remember the song! Well, just in case the weather is frightful, the meeting is automatically cancelled if the Reading or Exeter schools close early or for the day.

If the schools are open all day but it looks iffy, it is best for you to call an officer as it is possible we will cancel anyway. We want everyone to be safe.

Linnaeus—

Great Subject for Topical Exhibit

By Stan Raugh

Worldwide there must be thousands of stamps related to Carl Linnaeus, the famous Swedish scientist credited with the binomial system of naming plants and animals.

For example, that is why a Colorado Spruce is known as *Picea pungens*.

But the system is loaded with controversy, such as what exactly is a species, what is a "forma" (the Colorado Blue Spruce should probably be *Picea pungens f. glauca*, for example), what is a subspecies and so forth. Even the overall idea of how the plant and animal kingdoms are organized is questionable.

Linnaeus got the credit for the system of naming life—called taxonomy—even though using two names was a process started by others.

And the life of Linnaeus—in addition to being an excellent philatelic topic to exhibit—was full of interesting stories.

For example, young Linnaeus wanted to marry the daughter of another wealthy Swede. Since Linnaeus was only a college professor the father agreed to the marriage only if the biologist became a doctor.

The future father-in-law agreed to fund two years in the Netherlands to study medicine if Linnaeus would go. At the time, there were no Swedish schools accredited in medicine.

Linnaeus traveled to The Netherlands, and found a college that would grant a

degree if you studied for three days and passed the test. Due to the young scientist's knowledge of biology he did exactly that, and spent the rest of the two years partying and collecting specimens in The Netherlands at his future in-law's expense.

On a side trip to Hamburg he examined a famous seven-headed hydra on display. Linnaeus instantly recognized it as a fake made up of weasel claws and teeth and snake skins. After publicly announcing this, the young man fled the city to avoid the upset mayor who had hoped to make a fortune on the mythical beast.

In another exploit, he talked his college scientific society into financing his exploration of Lapland. It emptied their entire treasury.

When Linnaeus returned, months later he turned in bonus reimbursements for additional expenses and demanded the society pay to publish a book of his exploits. Reluctantly, the skeptical science society agreed to the money but refused to print what they did not believe.

By Linnaeus' account, he traveled Lapland at a Spartan pace--amazing the hardy people of the North. Actually, it would have impressed Jessie Owens.

He claimed to see mountains taller than any known today and brought back a native Sami outfit he wore for presentations that included both men and women's clothing as well as shoes made to impress tourists but never worn by the people themselves.

On the positive side, he did amass a great amount of new natural history research. With some research of your own, you could create a riveting multi-frame exhibit based on his life without a great expenditure.