



# The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

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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, May 1, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.**

## *Philately and the Russian Civil War*

**Don't know much about the Russian Civil War and philatelic history?  
Neither does your editor, which is why we will all enjoy this program!**

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### ***We're in the money, Honey!***

**The last two months our 50/50 drawings have brought in nice prizes, \$19 and \$25 as I recall. Remember, the club gets just as much money as a donation.**

**The attendance drawing winner in March was Austin Schaeffer, who won \$5. There was no April winner as Andrew Galen was not present. The May drawing will be for \$10.**

### ***Magic Bus Ride***

**Roy Baardsen invited members to offer suggestions for a philatelic bus trip, possibly this fall. If you have any ideas, let him know.**

### **Volunteers Welcome!**

**This is a special note for members who have difficulty attending most meetings but may be able to contribute.**

**The club is always interested in future programs and there may be a member or two who can only attend on occasion, but do a presentation.**

**Programs can include presentations, philatelic trivia games, or something we never have thought of before.**

**Roy Baardsen is also looking for an assistant to help him with program development ideas.**

## *Where are all the post offices going?*

In the 1960's, we wondered where all the flowers were going.

Today, we wonder where all the post offices are going.

As first class mail volume drops and the cost of fuel and labor rises, first class mail becomes more expensive. The more expensive basic services become, the less folks are inclined to send mail.

Also, the internet as well as wireless communications are providing instant response between people worldwide.

About ten or twelve years ago I did a program on running your own, legal post office. At the time, I said this was partly motivated by the fact that first class mail will probably soon share a fact with dinosaurs, namely, extinction.

At the time this shocked club members, but in this day and age I think most philatelists are coming to grips with the fact that first class mail and stamps will become collectibles like Big Little Books, "Indian" head cents, and butter molds.

At one time, I thought this might give all stamps a certain patina of respect. Stamps would become museum pieces and new collectors would glory in owning them much as an old master's painting.

But I underestimated the benefit of how ongoing programs inspire interest in past collectibles. The success of the new quarter programs is encouraging people to collect coins when they have never done so before.

And new stamp issues seem to be a catalyst to promote philately. If there will be a day with no first class mail and no new stamp issues, how are new collectors going to be enthused about our hobby?

## *The other side of the coin, Here comes stamp collecting!*

On the left side of the page, we mourn the end of stamp collecting as we know it. Not much of a future...or, is there a bright light at the end of the tunnel?

After years of studying hobbies, I believe stamp collecting could have a different, but brighter future.

It lies outside the United States. I believe philately may be in the hands of foreigners...and for these reasons:

For one, with dozens and dozens of foreign nations, there are that many experimental labs to test how to keep stamp collecting alive. Not all nations run their stamp program like we do.

The United States Post Office sees income from philately as minuscule and a nuisance.

However, many foreign countries see revenues from stamps sold and never used as a big plus. Many governments go to greater lengths to make innovative products available to collectors.

Some governments cooperate with stamp exhibitions and share a greater, more frequent burden of the costs.

I predict that in the future, engraved stamps are going to pull well ahead of stamps printed by other means and some foreign nations may accommodate collectors to an increased degree by issuing large numbers of engraved stamps.

In addition, it is the nature of folks outside the United States to pursue more classical interests. From what I see, foreigners value stamps over coins and I believe it is because intellectual interests dominate stamps. In addition, as wealth shifts to other nations, they will have the money to buy stamps.