

Stamp



Chatter

Volume 55 - Issue No. 2 w337

April - June, 2024

Sequoia Stamp Club

APS #687-54588

Club meetings are held every **second and fourth Tuesday** of each month at the Community Activities Bldg., 1400 Roosevelt Ave. Redwood City, at 7:00 PM.

Mailing Address:

P. O. Box 235
San Carlos, CA 94070

Refreshments are served and visitors are always welcome.

More info at:

www.penpex.org/ssc

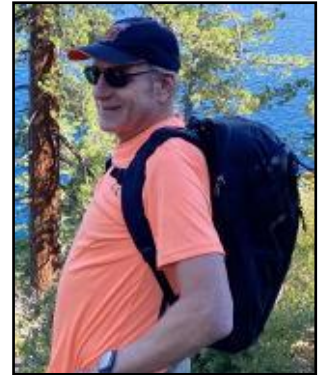


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President's Message

We are enjoying exciting times in the world of philately. Our Sequoia Stamp Club continues to thrive with fascinating member presentations and a variety of trading, plus live and silent auctions. Recent member presentations included a Valentines Day "Design Your Own Love Stamp" interactive activity by our Program Chairman Tom Hayes. A few weeks later, Norman Bardsley presented "Searching for Social Justice in Stamps" which generated many questions and comments.



In just a few weeks most of us will be able to attend the WESTPEX show in Burlingame. Our volunteers will be manning a booth near the entrance to the show with the benefit of additional exposure for our club as part of our new member outreach. I find WESTPEX to be a fascinating stamp show with the benefit of it being right in our backyard. Most likely every one of our members who attends the show ends up leaving with stamps that were on our want lists. My weakness is bidding at the Schuyler Rumsey auction which is held on the ground floor over 3-4 days. I enjoy viewing the collections in advance, then buying a collection to keep what I need and hopefully sell the rest on eBay and to our club members.

Please feel free to reach out anytime to our Governing Board and myself with suggestions and ideas for new programs and activities.

Respectfully,

Jay Strauss, President

Calendar: Club Meetings (in black), Stamp Shows (in red), & Other Events (in green)

- ◆ **Apr 5 & 6:** **Spring 2024 Stamp Show, Arden Christian Church, Sacramento.**
- ◆ **Apr 9:** "Stamps of King Edward VII, 1902-1910, by Alan Smith. Silent Auction
- ◆ **Apr 20:** **Western Philatelic Library Open House, Redwood City, Silent Auction.**
- ◆ **Apr 23:** **6 PM SSC Board Meeting (all welcome).** 7 PM, "India's Special Edition Stamps" by Dr. Sulekha Chaudhuri. Silent Auction.
- ◆ **Apr 26-28:** **WESTPEX, San Francisco Airport Marriott Waterfront Hotel, Burlingame, CA**
- ◆ **May 14:** Phalen Live Auction. Jim Giacomazzi, auctioneer.
- ◆ **May 28:** Kiloware Night, (5 cents per stamp).
- ◆ **Jun 11:** "Making Your Collection Personal" by Larry Crain. Silent Auction.
- ◆ **June 25:** Scholarship Winner Presentation, Members' Live Auction

The complete schedule can be found online at www.penpex.org/ssc/calendar.

Picture Gallery

January 9, Inauguration of Officers



Photographer Ken Perkins titled the left photo “Comedy Night at the Officer’s Club”, which seems entirely appropriate. After everyone settled down, the official swearing in took place on the right. In each picture, left to right: Jim Giacomazzi (Director), Joe Coleman (Treasurer), Kevin Kraemer (Vice President), Jay Strauss (President), Tom Hayes (Program coordinator), and Ron Guaraldi (Director). Patrick Ford (Director) and John Corwin (Secretary) were not present that evening.

February 13, Design Your Own Love Stamp



Tom Hayes organized this unique program for the day before Valentine’s day. At left, he is showing some of the materials such as stickers and clip art that we could use to design our stamps. Below are some of the creations.



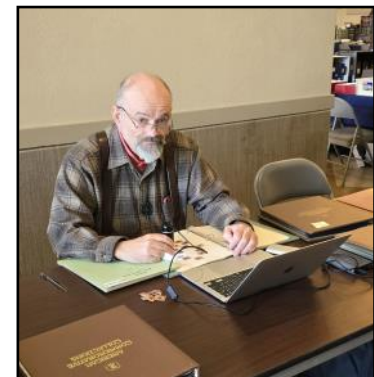
Tom declared Kevin Kraemer the winner of the contest. His prize was the box of Godiva chocolates.

January 9th and February 13th photos courtesy of Ken Perkins.

March 10, Bay Area Stamp Fest



Thanks to Stamp Art dealer, Tom Kinberg, for organizing this stamp show at Napredak Hall. He is shown at left helping customers at the show. At right, Peter Adams is helping at the registration desk and working with his collection of US #295 stamps.



Napredak photos courtesy of Jim Stratton.

Newsletter Staff: Co-Editors: John Corwin and Jim Giacomazzi; President’s Message: Jay Strauss; Feature Article: Marsha Brandsdorfer; Photographer: Ken Perkins; Printing & Distribution: John Corwin. The *Stamp Chatter* is published quarterly by the Sequoia Stamp Club. Visit our website at: www.penpex.org/SSC or email us at sequoiastampclub@yahoo.com.

The Beginnings of Basketball

By Marsha Brandsdorfer



The international sport of basketball can inspire a delightful topical collection as there are stamps all over the world illustrating this game. Its humble beginnings started in 1891 at the International Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) Training School, at Springfield College in Springfield, Massachusetts, when James Naismith, a physical education teacher at the school, was asked by his supervisor to work on creating a new game for students to play indoors during the long winter months that could encourage their enthusiasm.



As for ideas, Naismith studied other sports. He saw that many used a ball. Naismith considered using a large ball for his new game. The player in possession of the ball would need to throw it to another player on his team. As an objective to the game, he felt that he could place one box at each end of a floor, and each time the ball entered the box, it would count as a goal. He spoke with a colleague to see if he had any boxes he could use. The colleague said he did not have boxes, but he had two old peach baskets in his storage room. He brought them to Naismith, who with a hammer and nails, tacked each basket about ten feet up on each side of the gym. He felt that the baskets were needed to be lifted high up to prevent cheating and allow others to see the goals made by the players.



Naismith came up with thirteen rules and had a secretary type them up for him. He then fastened the rules onto the bulletin board in the gym. He read them to the 18 students he had in his class and broke them into two teams of 9 players each. Using a soccer ball, players tried to make goals while their opponents tried to stop them. The boys seemed to very much enjoy this new game. Some of the other teachers became interested and female students wished to play, so girls' teams were soon established.



In January 1892, the school newspaper, the "Triangle", printed the rules under the heading "A New Game." It would soon be given its title, "Basketball." The school paper with its rules were distributed to other branches of the Y.M.C.A. all over the country and soon they too were quickly adapting the game. High schools, businesses which formed their own teams, other athletic clubs, religious organizations, colleges, and even the military adopted the game. The game started to expand overseas, when during the war of 1914, other countries would see Americans playing basketball and take an interest in learning it so they could play it amongst themselves.



Changes in the game were conceived fairly early. Different rules were instituted as the game developed and became more popular. The soccer ball and the peach baskets were replaced. The number of players were subjective on various factors, such as size of the playing area, until 1897, when each team would secure five players, no more.

By 1936, basketball was introduced into the Berlin, Germany Olympic Games. My research derives from James Naismith's book, "Basketball: Its Origin and Development." Naismith died on November 28, 1939, at the age of 78.

For many years, stamps from around the world continue to honor this popular sport. A small sampling is shown on this page.

Cover of the Month

By Jim Giacomazzi

My column for this issue of the *Chatter* will deal with Swiss Soldier Stamps. This was the topic of my Past Presidents' Presentation at the January 9, 2024, SSC meeting, and I was able to find some interesting information about these covers in my collection.

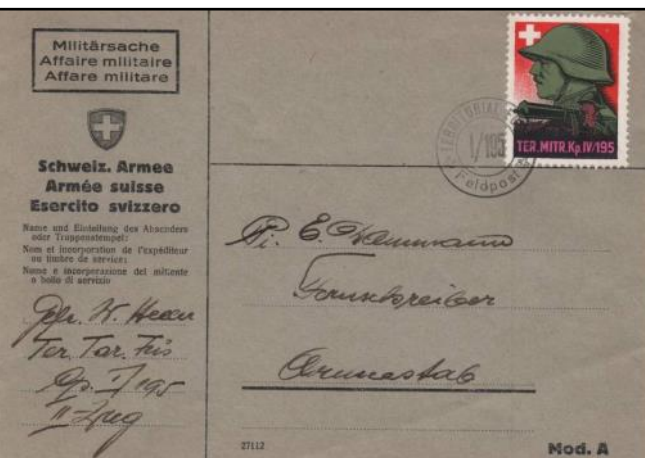
Even though Switzerland is known for its neutrality, military service is mandatory for all able-bodied Swiss men. During World War I (1914-18) and World War II (1939-45) the Swiss army was activated to full duty for protection of the borders.

As in most countries, Switzerland allowed mail from active duty soldiers to be sent free of charge. A hand stamp indicated free franking and no postage was required. The first soldier stamps were designed by Fred Bieri in 1915 as souvenirs for the soldiers.¹ They were popular and several units began producing and selling the stamps to create a charitable fund for the benefit of needy soldiers and families. These stamps were authorized by the PTT (Swiss Post Office) for use only on Field Post mail.

World War II brought about an outpouring of Soldier stamps. They were colorful, often with the Swiss flag in the design, and they became very popular with philatelists and stamp dealers. Some units of the Swiss military began to abuse the privilege of printing the Soldier stamps. Stocks from World War I were overprinted, and in 1939 Territorial Troop IV/195 issued over 20 different designs.² Variations in color were printed, and souvenir sheets and imperforates were issued.



WWI Postcard with Swiss Soldier Stamps



Cover with stamp issued by Ter Troop IV/195

To curb this abuse, the Swiss Army high command issued new requirements. Every unit could only issue one stamp per year, and designs had to be approved by the Adjutant General. Perforated blocks of 4 were allowed, but no overprints or souvenir sheets were permitted. All printers' waste had to be destroyed.

Over 2300 Swiss Soldier stamps were produced during World War II. They were issued for about every type of unit, with the largest number issued by infantry and territorial units. The unit can be identified by the abbreviations on the stamps. Since they were classified as charity stamps, no value is printed on these stamps.

Collecting Swiss soldier stamps is popular today. The standard reference is *The Soldier Stamps of Switzerland* (known as the Sulzer catalogue) printed in 1990 with illustrations of 95% of the stamps. The rarest Swiss Soldier stamp is a 224th Frontier Battalion commemorative, a green item overprinted in red for Christmas in 1939. Only 125 were produced.³ Examples of Swiss soldier stamps can be found on eBay for \$1.00 to \$3.00, and most covers for about \$5. Collecting these items is enjoyable, and they make a nice addition to a Swiss or topical collection.

¹ <https://thestampforum.boards.net/thread/3055/switzerland-soldier-stamps>

² Bennett, Lois & Gordon. "Swiss Soldier Stamps" *Topical Time Extract*, July/Aug 1995 issue, Pg 29

³ *ibid.*, Pg 32

The \$1 Trans-Mississippi: America's Most Beautiful Stamp Ever?

By Robert Brilliant

When collectors of U.S. stamps are polled to name the most beautiful U.S. stamp ever issued, the \$1 Trans-Mississippi stamp of 1898 is often the winner. With its bold "Western Cattle in Storm" vignette and elegantly engraved frame, printed in a striking black, it's understandable why this stamp has captured the eye and admiration of collectors from the day it was issued.



The \$1 Trans-Mississippi, Scott 292, is the penultimate high value of the series of famous commemorative stamps issued in conjunction with the Trans-Mississippi Exhibition held in Omaha, Nebraska, from June to November, 1898. The stamps are often referred to as "the Omahas" although Trans-Mississippi is the proper name for the issue.

The \$1 value depicts a herd of cattle marching through a violent snowstorm, led by a prominent black bull. Although purporting to be a scene from the American West, the scene was actually taken from a painting by the Scottish painter John A. MacWhirter called "The Vanguard." MacWhirter's painting and the \$1 vignette are virtually identical. This situation caused the Post Office Department considerable embarrassment at the time when it became evident that the imagery was used without permission or acknowledgment, essentially amounting to plagiarism. Only after the Post Office extended sincere apologies to Lord Blythwood, the British owner of "The Vanguard," was the matter dropped.

Two of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing's (BEP) master engravers, Marcus Baldwin and Douglas Ronaldson, produced the \$1 die, with Baldwin engraving the vignette and Ronaldson the frame. The entire printing run of the \$1 value lasted three days, from June 1-3, 1898. In all, the BEP shipped 56,900 copies of the stamp to post offices. A fair number of these stamps, although the exact number is unknown, were returned to the Post Office Department and destroyed when the issue was withdrawn from public sale. It's a reasonable assumption that the number of \$1 stamps existing today is considerably less than the number printed.

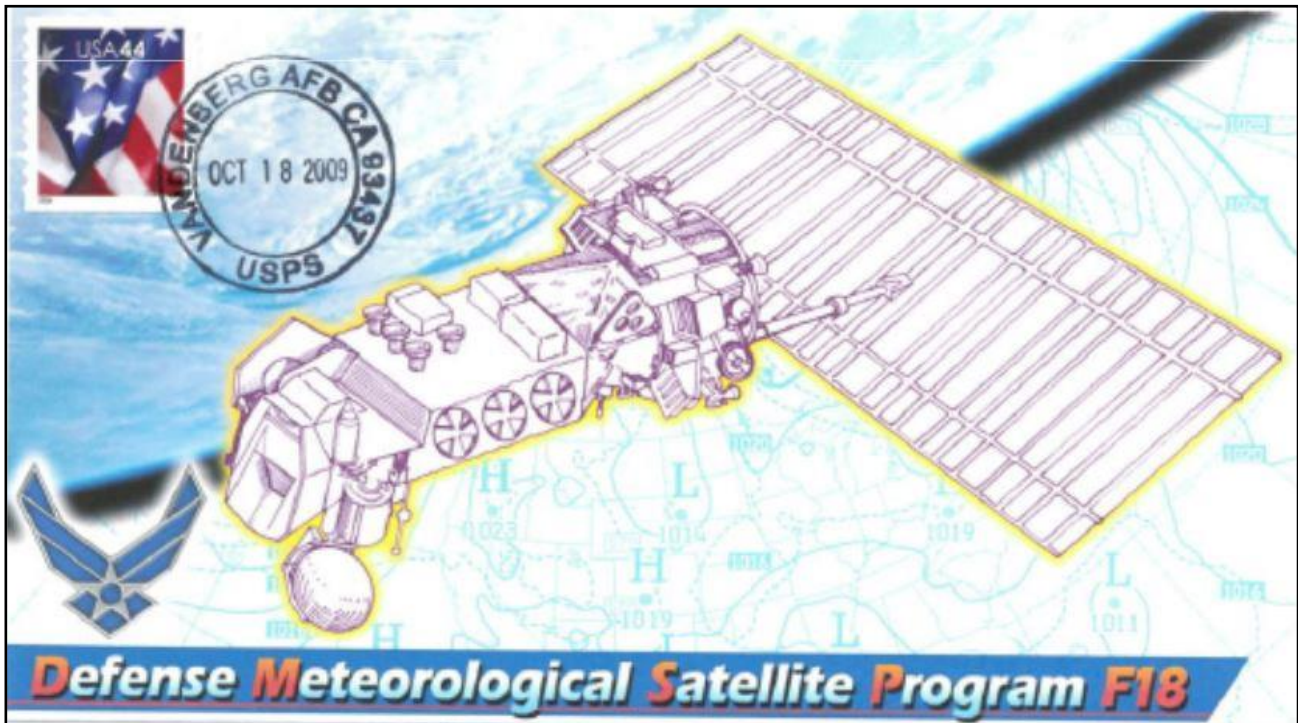
Considering its beauty and its rarity, it comes as no surprise that the \$1 Trans-Mississippi is an expensive acquisition for the collector. Very fine used copies generally sell in the \$600-800 range with very fine OG mint stamps selling from \$1500 and up. Extra fine graded never hinged examples have sold at auction for many thousands of dollars. Multiples and plate blocks of this stamp, though rare, seem to appear on the market with some frequency. Rarer still are examples on cover. At least one complete pane of 50 of the \$1 is known to exist, representing the ultimate Trans-Mississippi showpiece.

The Trans-Mississippi issue was originally intended to be a bi-color printing with the stamp vignette in black surrounded by a frame of a different color for each denomination. But with the rising costs of the Spanish-American war and the need for more revenue stamps to help pay those costs, the BEP elected to print the Trans-Mississippi issue in mono-color. Existing proofs produced in the planned bi-color format attest to the intended beauty that was sacrificed for economy. However, in 1998, on the 100th anniversary of the Trans-Mississippi issue, the U.S. Postal Service re-issued the series as a souvenir sheet (Scott 3209) in the original bi-color format, allowing collectors to experience what might have been 100 years ago. The \$1 value, with its red frame and black vignette, is particularly attractive, so much so that it was additionally issued in a souvenir sheet of 9 format (Scott 3210).

Whether you're fortunate enough to own an original Scott 292, or have opted for the more affordable 1998 reissue, the beauty of the \$1 Trans-Mississippi shines on.

My Favorite Space Cover

By Tom Hayes



This cover was postmarked on the day that this satellite was launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, October 18, 2009. DMSP is a low-earth, polar orbit weather satellite built by Lockheed Martin for the U.S. Air Force. The satellite flies north-south, and with the earth rotating beneath it, it scans the entire earth twice a day. DMSP began as “Program 35” in 1962, and has undergone many name changes and improvements over the course of its history. The current configuration is the sixth generation design.

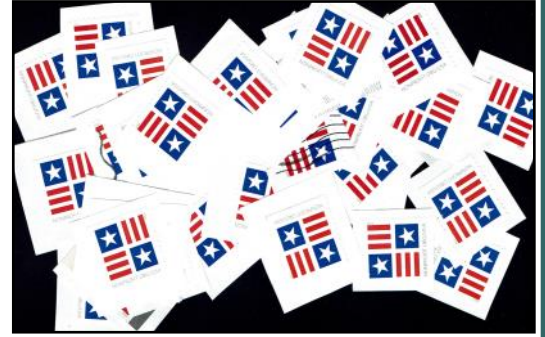
Why is it my favorite space cover? I happen to be retired from Lockheed Martin, and I worked on the program to build and test these satellites. The last DMSP satellite was never launched; instead it was decommissioned and is on display at a Space Force facility in Los Angeles.



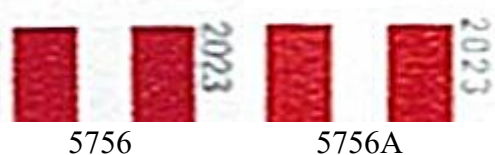
Two Varieties of a Common Stamp

By John Corwin

This collage of last year's Patriotic Block stamps shows the many examples of this stamp that I have "collected" (perhaps "accumulated" would be a better word) in recent weeks. This stamp (Scott 5756, type A4590) is by far the most common stamp that I have seen recently in my incoming mail; usually on donation requests from a non-profit. An [article](#) in February, 26, 2024, issue of *Linn's Stamp News* was my motivation for looking more closely at these stamps, which are also titled as Stars and Bars in the Scott catalogue.



The *Linn's* article says that *Scott Catalogue* editor, Jay Bigalke, recently learned of a second variety of this very common stamp, and he has assigned it a separate major catalogue number, 5756A. The most noticeable difference between the two varieties is the width of the 2023 year date in the upper right corner. On 5756, the width is narrower (1¾ mm); on 5756A, the width is wider (2¼ mm). There are also less noticeable differences. On 5756, the year date is a little darker and the square design size is 17½ mm; on 5756A, the year date is lighter and the size is approximately 18 mm.



The pictures to the left illustrate the differences in the size and darkness of the 2023 year date.



5756A with B222 plate number

The *Linn's* article explains that the difference is due to the two presses used to print the stamps. Both were printed by Banknote Corporation of America (BCA). 5756 shows plate number B111 and was printed on the Rotogravure Cerutti press; 5756A shows plate number B222 and was printed on the Alprinta 74 press.

I've been accumulating these stamps for the last several weeks, and the wide year date stamps (5756A) far outnumber the narrow year date stamps (5756); I have found 33 of 5756A, and only two of 5756. This is probably not an indication of rarity of 5756, because I ignored these stamps after they were first issued on March 1, 2023, and the B222 press was not printing those stamps in those early months.

I admit that I get intrigued by weird philatelic things such as Great Britain Machins and the US red and green revenues from the 1940s and 1950s; these Patriotic Block stamps are just the latest. Here are a couple more examples of these stamps from my strange little "collection".

Typically, the on-cover stamps are not actually cancelled. To date, I've only seen two of these stamps actually cancelled, and one of them is the only example that I have of a used B111 plate number single (see picture at right).

I also have this plate number coil strip of 5 (PNC5) of B111.



I intend to get a PNC5 of B222, and I'd sure like a cancelled example of the B222 plate number stamp. Does anyone have these for trade or sale?

New Members

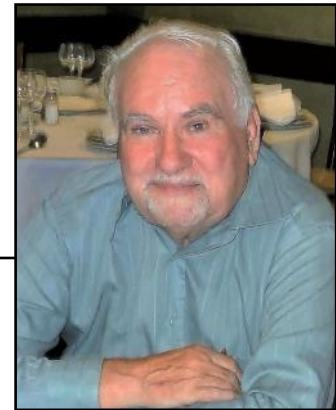
At PENPEX in December, 2023, the following people each submitted an application to join the club. We voted them in unanimously at the January 9th meeting.

- ◆ **Julie Alvarez** is Goyo's mother, and she has been to several meetings over the last few years. She finally decided to officially join the club, and she collects early U.S. and postage dues.
- ◆ **Brian Stevenson-Smith** collects U.S. stamps.
- ◆ **Ahsan Zia Ali** did not specify his collecting interests on his application form.
- ◆ **Barry Goldblatt** collects U.S. and U.N. stamps.
- ◆ **James Steckley** lives in Reno, and he came all way from there to PENPEX. He collects U.S. stamps.
- ◆ **Majid Hosseinie** collects the classic U.S. 1851-1861 series.
- ◆ **Joshua Rees** collects U.S., USSR, Disney, Scouts, and Ryukyu Islands stamps.

Welcome to the club - Julie, Brian, Ahsan, Barry, James, Majid, and Joshua. We look forward to seeing you at club meetings and at PENPEX.

Members' Advertisements

Wanted: A stamp album featuring Philippine Islands for a beginner. Covering all eras. If possible, please include packets of used stamps to be sorted / soaked, etc. Contact Laura Peterhans. 650-637-8783. lkpeterhans@yahoo.com.



Louis Lang (1934-2023)

Join Us at the Western Philatelic Library Open House and Silent Auction

3004 Spring Street, Redwood City
Saturday, April 20, 2024, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM
99 Lots Priced to Sell - Low Opening Bids

Sale of the collection of former club member, **Louis Lang**. US, Foreign, and Worldwide collections. Postcards & Covers. Stock Books. Mystery Boxes. Supplies. Mint Postage.

SPRING 2024 KICKOFF SALE

Come and discover my new expanded stock, recently enlarged with new purchases.

- 1) 60% off Scott on all MNH Germany post-1945, including Bund, Berlin, DDR
- 2) All MNH Great Britain including Machins at 50% off Scott
- 3) 2/3 off Scott on ALL used Great Britain 1841-date
- 4) Our HUGE stock of France MNH and used at SPECIAL PRICES!
- 5) Newer BIGGER discounts on MNH United Nations
 - a) 1951-1983 70% off Scott
 - b) 1984-1999 50% off Scott
 - c) 2000-2013 30% off Scott
- 6) New! Our stack of pages and old collections for 10 CENTS per stamp!

All collector visits BY APPOINTMENT. Call for yours now: 415-205-1219
denis@arrowstamp.com, freedomman1@comcast.net

Denis J. Norrington. Sequoia Stamp Club Member #812; A.P.S. #60621

Sequoia Stamp Club members may submit advertisements for no charge. Full details are available at <https://www.penpex.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Rules-for-Classified-Ads.pdf>