

Stamp



Chatter

Volume 57 - Issue No. 1 w344

January – March, 2026

Sequoia Stamp Club

APS #687-54588

Club meetings are held every **second** and **fourth Tuesday** of each month at the Community Activities Building (CAB), 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
sequoiastampclub@yahoo.com



In This Issue

President's Message	1
Stamp Calendar	1
Picture Gallery	2
Story of Zionism	3
Cover of the Month	4
PENPEX Caboose	5-6
Topo Chico	7
Redwood City	8
Black Jack Stamps	9
New Members	10
Members' Ads	10

President's Message



Happy New Year! I'm honored to be of service to the Sequoia Stamp Club for a second year. 2025 was just fantastic, with such a wide variety of program activities – presentations, auctions, a picnic, pizza party and holiday party – and of course our annual PENPEX stamp show. I feel so fortunate to be part of a club with such a large membership, deep philatelic knowledge, and enthusiastic, dedicated volunteers who make it all happen.

I hope you all had a chance to attend PENPEX this year. I found a lot of stamps to add to my collection. We had a nice variety of dealers there, and I enjoyed chatting with them as I looked through their inventory. There's always something new to find in the low-priced Flea Market room, and I enjoyed checking out the range of exhibits we had. And as usual, the 500+ item silent auction was a huge success and I picked up some nice items at reasonable prices. The banquet at Harry's Hofbrau this year was very well attended and everyone had a great social time there Saturday evening after a full day of stamp show fun. Thank you to all the volunteers who made PENPEX happen – you are the heart of the show! Be sure to mark your calendars for PENPEX 2026: December 5 & 6.

Looking ahead, we have a great schedule planned this year – more informative presentations, swap meets, member auctions, and social activities. There will also be three live auctions of excellent philatelic items from the Gerry Fields Collection, sure to be some of the highlights of the year. I'm looking forward to another great year!

Kevin Kraemer
kevinstamps@kraemersw.com

Calendar: Club Meetings (in black) and Other Events (in green)

- ◆ **Jan 13:** Inauguration of Officers. Past Presidents Present. Silent Auction.
- ◆ **Jan 17:** **PENPEX Wrap-up & Appreciation Brunch, 10 AM, Sizzler, 2855 Augustine Drive, Santa Clara.**
- ◆ **Jan 27:** **6 PM SSC Board Meeting (all welcome).** 7 PM Members' Live Auction. Wally Jolliff, auctioneer.
- ◆ **Feb 10:** "History of Egypt and its Stamps until 1922" by Alan Smith. Silent Auction.
- ◆ **Feb 24:** Swap Meet. Members can rent a table for \$1 for the evening. Silent Auction.
- ◆ **Mar 10:** Fields Collection Live Auction #1. Jim Giacomazzi, auctioneer.
- ◆ **Mar 25:** Kiloware Night (10 cents a stamp). Silent Auction.

Meetings on the underlined dates above will be hybrid meetings using Zoom. The complete schedule can be found online at www.penpex.org/ssc/calendar.

SSC Auction @ WPL, Oct. 11



Photo courtesy of Tom Hayes.

We did something different for this auction. We held a SSC silent auction at the Western Philatelic Library. Open to the public as well as club members. Eric McCrystal (left) and Preston Chiappa (right) enter their bids. The auction was a great success.

All unattributed photos courtesy of Ken Perkins.

Picture Gallery

October 14 Meeting



Kevin Kraemer (right) presenting Dale Eggen (left) with a certificate after Dale gave a presentation about the lack of cancelled covers from Talcton, Nevada.

Philatelic Halloween, October 28



All the costume wearers that evening. Can you identify them?

At right, Kristin Patterson (UL) as a pirate, Tom Hayes (UR) as Zorro, Joe Coleman (LL) as a ghost, and Kevin Kraemer (LR) as just a party-goer.



Holiday Party, December 9

The holiday party included a gift exchange (shown right), a cake (shown left) and a special raffle drawing with the prizes being a bottle of wine and ten nice philatelic items from the Gerry Fields material. Several of the winners are shown below with their selected prizes.



Photo courtesy of Kevin Kraemer.



Dan Aguiar



Mike McGee



Kristin Patterson



John Vogel



Tom Hayes



Sonja Marwood



Chip Harrison



Richard Griffone



Marge Parkhurst (a guest)

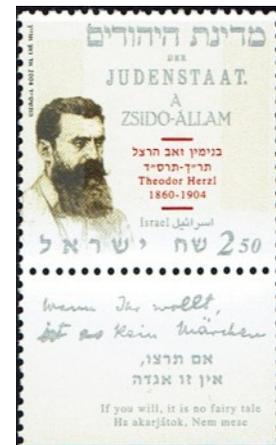
Newsletter Staff: Co-Editors: John Corwin and Jim Giacomazzi; President's Message: Kevin Kraemer; Feature Article: Marsha Brandsdorfer; Photographer: Ken Perkins; Printing & Distribution: John Corwin. The *Stamp Chatter* is published quarterly by the Sequoia Stamp Club. Visit our website at: www.penpex.org/SSC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

The Story of Zionism

By Marsha Brandsdorfer

For centuries, the Jewish people had been considering a return to their homeland. During the Jewish holiday of Passover, the Haggadah, a book read at Seder meals (the traditional ceremonial feast) retells the story of the Jews' Exodus from slavery in Egypt. "Next year in Jerusalem," is cited from the Haggadah which expresses this desire to return to the Land of Israel.

Due to the rise of antisemitism, Theodor Herzl, an Austrian-Hungarian journalist, determined that the Jewish people needed to return to their ancestral homeland and establish their own state for their own safety. He wrote a pamphlet called "The Jewish State" in 1896. His pamphlet received criticism, mockery, and even censorship, but Herzl, with his revolutionary idea, refused to give up. He organized the First Zionist Congress to take place on August 29, 1897, in Basel, Switzerland, and invited representatives of various Jewish communities around the world to discuss Zionism, which supports a Jewish homeland in Israel.



Israel #1566



Israel #484 - 486

Israel was a rough land, and underdeveloped with no organized agriculture or industry. Arabs, Jews, and Christians were some of the few groups already living in Israel. But when some of the first Zionists came to the land at the turn of the century, they went to work focusing on building agricultural villages by way of Kibbutzim, which were Israeli collective communities. The advancements in agriculture and industry, drew economic opportunities and more Jews were drawn to moving there. The achievements in rebuilding Israel as a

sustainable place to live, became even more urgent as the situation for the European Jews who stayed in their countries became more dire with the Nazi takeover and the Nazis' plan for the destruction of the Jewish people. Almost half the Jewish population was wiped out in the Holocaust.

After the Nazis were defeated in WWII, the new United Nations, founded on October 24, 1945, created a plan on how to divide the land in Israel between the Jews and the Arabs. A proposal was voted on in November 1947, and a Jewish State of Israel would be established on May 14, 1948. However, the Arabs were not happy. The following day, they went to war with Israel to try and wipe out the new Jewish state off the map.



United States #2981e

The war lasted about nine months, and formally concluded with the signing of a cease-fire agreement between Israel and the neighboring Arabs. Nonetheless, there have been several wars in Israel since as there have been continued battles between Israel and its neighbors. Nonetheless, Israel has become the homeland for the Jewish people with developments in technology, agriculture, medicine, and the sciences.

My research came from Nora Tishby's book, "Israel: A Simple Guide to the Most Misunderstood Country on Earth."



United Nations #402 First Day Cover

Cover of the Month

By Jim Giacomazzi

Figure 1 is an illustration of a First Flight Cover that commemorates the First Mail Across the San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge on November 12, 1936. It is addressed to John F. Begley in San Francisco. The cover has a cachet that depicts an image of the Bay Bridge and a printed message that states “This cover was included in the first dispatch of mail which left San Francisco on a regularly scheduled trip on the occasion of the official opening of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge November 12th, 1936” signed by William H. McCarthy. The postage was paid using a 3-cent Susan B. Anthony “Suffrage for Women” stamp (Scott #784) with circular date stamp cancellations for both San Francisco and Oakland.

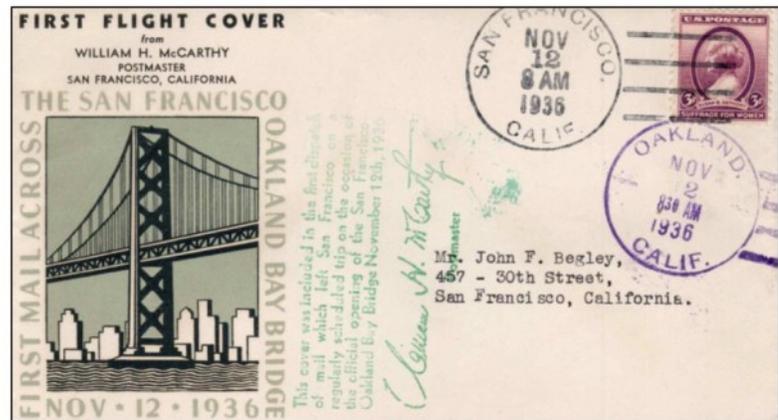


Figure 1



Figure 2

Figure 2 shows the backside of the cover with a printed design of acorns and oak leaves representing Oakland and the signature of the Postmaster, Nellie G. Donahue. Figure 3 depicts an insert that was included in the envelope with the following message: “In commemoration of the dedication of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge this first flight cover is sent with the compliments and good wishes of the San Francisco Post Office and William H. McCarthy, Postmaster”.

This cover is not to be confused with the first transpacific flight that left from Alameda on November 22, 1935, and flew *under* the incomplete bridge. The mission of that flight of the China Clipper was carrying mail for the first transpacific route to Manila, not the Bay Bridge itself. That flight took more than a week, with stops in Honolulu, Midway Island, and Guam, arriving in Manila on November 29, 1935.

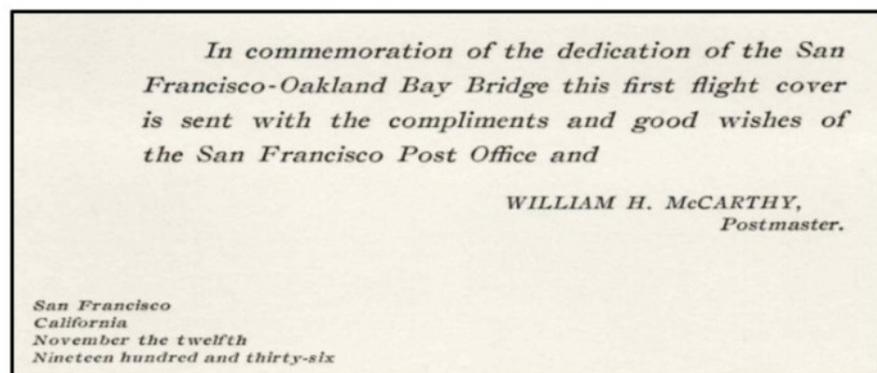


Figure 3

PENPEX CABOOSE

With 300 people in attendance, the PENPEX Stamp Show was again a great success. We had lots of volunteers and some first-timers who chipped in to make PENPEX 2025 run smoothly. PENPEX will show its thanks by hosting a **Wrap-up and Appreciation Brunch** at Sizzler, 2855 Augustine Dr., Santa Clara (near 101 and Bowers) on Saturday, January 17, 2026 at 10:00 am. Please RSVP to Kristin Patterson at email: PENPEXRedwoodCity@yahoo.com or call or text 408-267-6643. Photos courtesy of Ken Perkins unless noted.



Stamp Art's tables were full at their first PENPEX show.



Goyo helping a young attendee with the Prize Wheel in the Youth Area.



Miriam Thurston selling show cachets which she designed.



Jean from US Post Office selling stamps.



Tom Hayes giving Peter Adams the prize for Favorite Exhibit.

DURING THE PENPEX SHOW

The 2-day show had lots of activities: Dealers, Flea Market, Silent Auction, House of Zion Auction, Snack Bar, and Banquet Party. Shown here are photos taken during PENPEX Dec. 6 and 7, 2025 by Ken Perkins unless noted.



Silent Auction room with 546 lots to bid on.



Banquet Party at Harry's Hofbrau: apprentice judge Khosrow Ghadiri and judge Akthem Al-Manaseer.



Tom Hayes takes photo of Kevin Kraemer and Tim Coté moving frames to the trailer.



Dueling cameras: Kristin Patterson with Eric McCrystal in snackbar versus Ken Perkins on the show floor



Topo Chico from Monterrey

By Bobby Liao

One of my favorite advertising covers is a Topo Chico cover franked with a 1939 Mexico Census 10-centavos stamp (Scott Mexico #753) postmarked on December 20, 1939, with SERVICIO AMBULANTE 244 numeral duplex. The cover is addressed to the Pan American Division of The Coca-Cola Export Corporation in Atlanta, Georgia (Figure 1).

Cia. Topo Chico S.A. or the Topo Chico Company was founded in Monterrey, Mexico in 1895 to bottle and distribute the mineral water from Cerro del Topo Chico spring. Locals believed the naturally carbonated spring water had healing properties. In 1926, Topo Chico became the first authorized bottler of Coca-Cola in Mexico.

On the left of the cover is a single-color illustration of a right hand holding the contour-shaped Coca-Cola bottle. The embossed lettering detail on the bottle is based on a standardized first-generation patent bottle: "Coca-Cola TRADE MARK REGISTERED BOTTLE PAT'D NOV. 16, 1915" but the "16, 1915" is obscured by the thumb. Nov 16, 1915, is the patent date of the iconic Coca-Cola bottle.

What's interesting is that the illustration used an American bottle and not a Mexican bottle with embossed lettering in Spanish. It is possible that this was an early version of the company envelope that did not have an illustration of a Mexican Coke bottle or that it was easier to use an existing artwork sent from Atlanta.

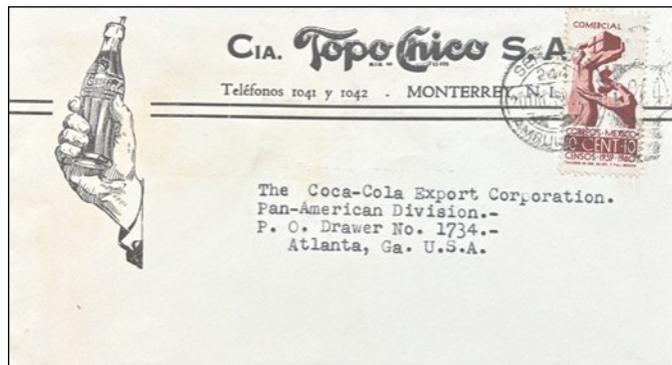


Figure 1

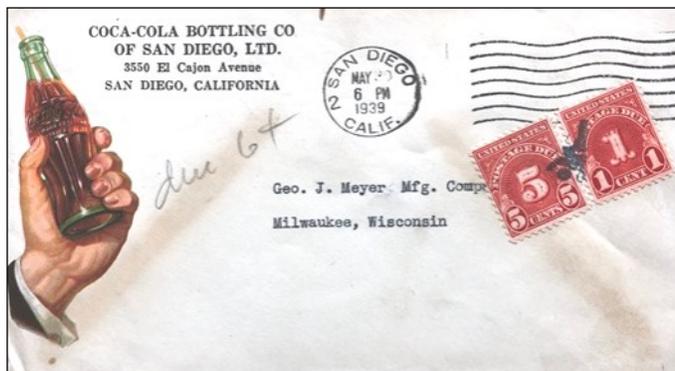


Figure 2

CONTENT 6 FL. OZS. "MIN. C" is obscured by the thumb. The bottle is uncapped with a straw similar to the Topo Chico illustration.

Coca-Cola contour bottles produced from 1917-1928 had the above embossed lettering at the waist. One side is with the patent date and the other side with the fluid content just as illustrated by the two covers. Bottles produced from 1927-1938 had a renewed patent date of December 25, 1923.

Whether it is held by a right hand or a left hand, the bottle is unmistakably Coca-Cola even without examining the details of the artwork or reading the company names.

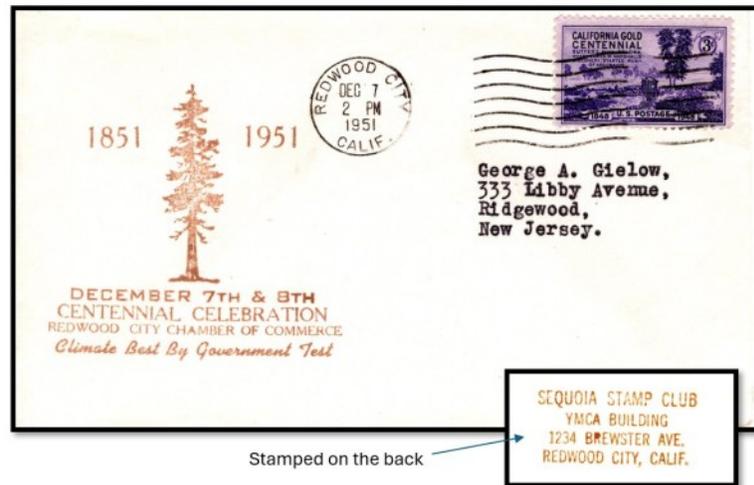
The Topo Chico Company is now part of Arca Continental, the second largest Coca-Cola bottler in Latin America, whose headquarters is still in Monterrey. The Coca-Cola Company acquired the Topo Chico brand from Arca Continental in 2017 for \$220 million and expanded its distribution throughout North America.

As Topo Chico celebrates its 130th year, Coca-Cola has made it a billion-dollar brand in 2025 – Coke's 30th beverage brand that sells more than \$1 billion annually.

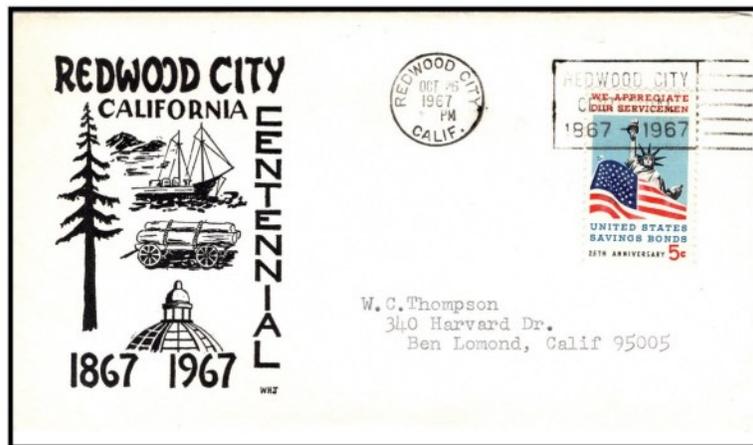
Redwood City Centennial 1851 or 1867?

By Tom Hayes

Redwood began as a settlement when Captain A. Smith built the first house in 1851 near Redwood Creek, which boats used from the bay, landing near what is Broadway today, not far from the present Sequoia Hotel. Redwood Creek ran through Rancho Del Rey, later known as Rancho de las Pulgas. A shipyard was established on the creek bank in 1851 by G. M. Burham. It didn't take long for other businesses to open, including a blacksmith, wagon builder, and a tannery. Lumber for export was harvested from the redwood forest on the hills of what is today the town of Woodside.



The present area of downtown Redwood City was first developed in 1854 as the town of Mezesville, when Simon Mezes, a manager of the Rancho de las Pulgas began building. The name was unpopular among the residents, however, and the town of Redwood City was incorporated in 1867.



Redwood City today bears little resemblance to the original plans laid out by Mezes, although the streets of downtown are largely about the same, but renamed except for Main Street. Mezes laid out streets parallel to the creek, which accounts for the odd layout of some of the downtown streets today. Most of Redwood Creek now runs beneath the city. A park that Mezes planned at Warren and Standish streets is still there today. On the southwest corner of Broadway and Jefferson is a tablet on the side of a building marking the spot where the shipbuilder used to launch vessels in the 1850's.

1851 marks the first settlement in the area, while 1867 was the official incorporation of Redwood City, so both centennial celebrations make sense, one for the beginning of settlement, the other for the formal start of the city.

“Black Jack” An American Philatelic Icon

By Robert Brilliant

Among the many iconic issues in American philately, few hold the same fascination as the 1863 two-cent stamp commonly known as the “Black Jack.” Distinguished by its striking design, masterful engraving, and association with a tumultuous period in U.S. history, the Black Jack has long been a favorite of collectors.

Printed by the National Bank Note Company, the stamp features a dominating full-face portrait of President Andrew Jackson, with the stamp’s numeric denomination and “U.S. Postage” confined to border and corners surrounding the portrait. Printed in a rich shade of black, it’s easy to see how the stamp quickly acquired its popular nickname among collectors.

The stamp was issued in 1863 during the Civil War, a time when the postal service was essential for maintaining communication across a divided nation. It was the second two-cent stamp issued by the United States and was intended primarily for use on drop letters (those delivered within the same city) and for newspaper postage. To accommodate this heavy usage, over 255 million Black Jacks were printed, with millions still in existence today.

Black Jacks are found in six varieties as follows:

Scott #73: This is the “mainstream” un-grilled Black Jack, and it’s by far the most common variety. Several double transfers and printing anomalies, not to mention numerous cancellations and usage variants (bi-sects on cover are the most coveted along with Civil War era covers) make this most common of Black Jacks a specialist’s dream.

Scott #84: Black Jack with the D grill. Very rare and valuable.

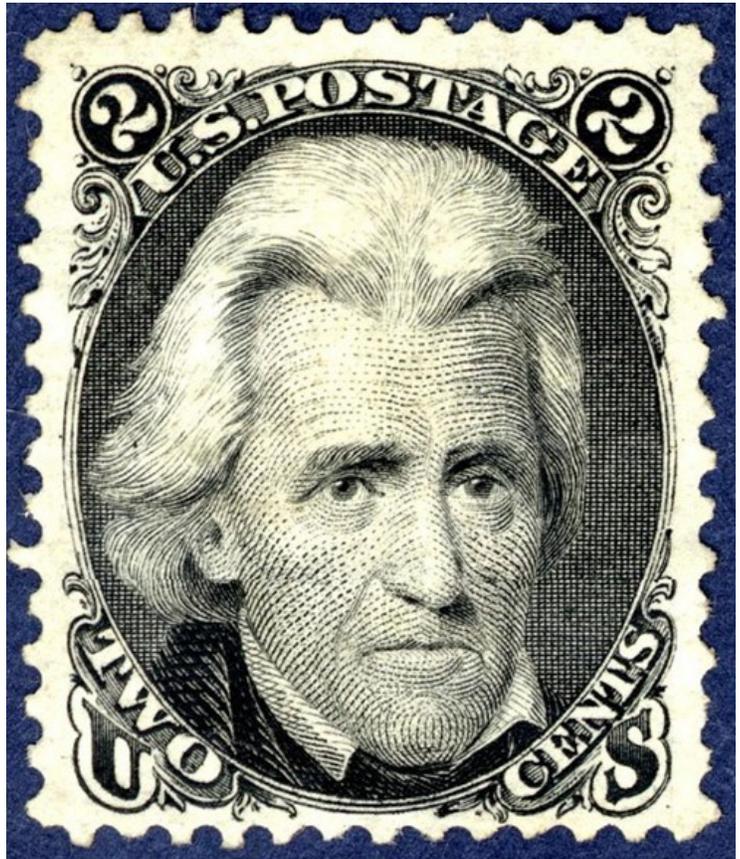
Scott #85B: Black Jack with the Z grill. Rare and valuable.

Scott #87: Black Jack with the E grill. Not cheap but readily obtainable.

Scott #93: Black Jack with the F grill. The most affordable of all the grilled Black Jacks.

Scott #103: The special printing edition of Black Jack, re-printed in 1875 to honor the upcoming US Centennial. Rare with only 979 sold.

Black Jacks are among the most popular of US stamps with both general collectors and specialists. Its wide usage resulted in plentiful on-cover examples extant today, and the un-grilled stamp remains readily available, both used and unused. Furthermore, its many printing varieties, cancellation varieties, and wide spread usage have created a bountiful area for the US specialist and postal historian to research and explore. For mainstream collectors interested in building a collection of accessible classic US stamps, a Black Jack is a must have.



New Members

Larry Jiang joined the club in October. Larry collects stamps from US, People's Republic of China, Republic of China, and the EU countries.

Chris Kallenburg also became a club member in October. Chris collects pre-1940 worldwide stamps and town cancels from Austria Hungary.

Alex Danengirsh joined the club in November. Alex is from Latvia and collects those stamps as well as stamps from Europe and the Soviet Union. He is also considering creating topical collections of stamps related to two of his favorite interests – gastronomy and architecture.

Leo McArdle became a club member in December. Leo mainly collects US back-of-the-book especially postage dues and postage dues on cover.

Welcome Larry, Chris, Alex, and Leo! At PENPEX, several folks submitted applications for club membership, both new applicants and renewals. We will vote to approve those at an upcoming meeting.

Members' Advertisements

Visit the Western Philatelic Library in 2026!

- Use or check out philatelic literature
- Items for sale include duplicate books and donated stamps
- Boxes of covers at 25c each (new feature)
- Worldwide stamps for sale in Red Boxes at 25% of catalogue value (new feature!)

Library is open Monday 10:00 am – 12:30 pm and
Saturday 10:30 am – 1 pm

3004 Spring St. (at 2nd St.), Redwood City, CA 94063



For Sale from Gerry Fields Consignment Material



US Revenues and US Fancy Cancels.
Stamps, Collections, and Covers from
New Zealand, Australia, and Finland.
Unsold lots from the PENPEX Auction and
silent auctions at discounted prices!
For Information contact Jim Giacomazzi
650-454-9909, jgiacoma2@comcast.net



Buying US Airmails



Especially the Scenic America Landscape series
Scott #C133 – #C150

Mint, used, blocks, plate blocks, sheets.

Also buying other US back-of-the book stamps such as
revenues, officials, postage dues, etc.

Do you have a list of stamps you want for your collection?

Or do you have stamps you want to sell or trade?

Contact Denis Norrington at 415-205-1219 or
freedomman1@comcast.net

WANTED

Articles for the *Stamp Chatter* newsletter!

Did you enjoy reading the articles on the previous pages? They were written by your friends who are all members of Sequoia Stamp Club. Are you a budding author? Please write an article of your own and see it published here in the newsletter.

Suggested length is about 500 words with two or three pictures. Any topic related to stamp collecting or a topic that would be enjoyed by stamp collectors. Submit your articles to sequoiastampclub@yahoo.com.

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>