

# Stamping Around

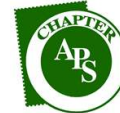
Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Arlington Meetings: First Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.

Bob Duncan Center, 2800 S. Center St.

Flower Mound Meetings: Third Wednesday @ 7:30 p.m.  
3020 Corporate Ct, Ste 400 (Step Up Sports Medicine)

Lake Granbury Meetings: 4th Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m.  
Bentwater Activities Center (adjacent to Bentwater Marina)



CHAPTER  
MEMBER



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#53-3364

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<https://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>

March 2024

## Stamp-O-Matic Stamp Packets

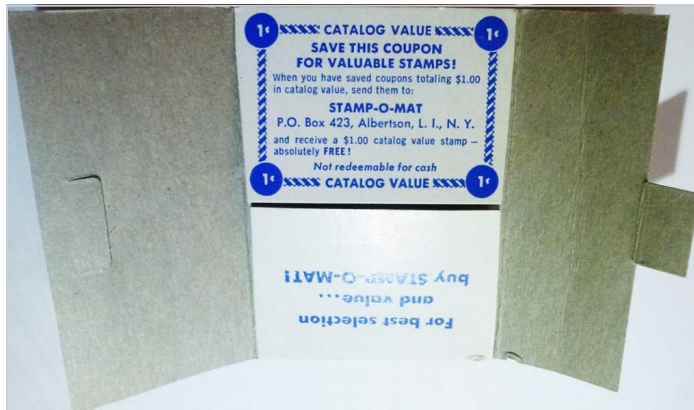
By Peter Elias

Ahh, don't you miss the good 'ole days of "stamp packets"? Those usually took the form a small envelope with a clear plastic front and a statement about what you would be receiving, such as 35 Czechoslovakia for 50¢ (or something like that....).

Digging through one of the donations to the club, I found this (shown at approximately actual size):



I had never seen one of these before. It was made of stiff cardboard, with a "tab" closure and unfolding it, it first looked like this:



Unfolding the 2 sections in the middle got you to your purchase (see top of next column).



Wow! It contained 5 of probably the most cheap definitives that I've ever seen; stuff that I got when I first started collecting back in the late 1960's.

Now what did this mystery treasure cost back then (whenever that was...)? Hard to say. I googled what you see, and could not find any references to this (other than some

eBay lots for the same item), and the only photos that came up are those of private US postage vending machines.

So what did these "Stamp-O-Mat" vending machines look like? When & where you could find them? How much this "Vend Pack" cost (hopefully not more than a nickel)? A post about these did come up at [www.stampcommunity.org](http://www.stampcommunity.org) though.

## Eules Meeting Now in Flower Mound

The Eules "3rd Wednesday" meeting site has transitioned to MCSC member Sai Madhavapeddi's offices at 3020 Corporate Ct, Ste 400 ("Step Up Sports Medicine), Flower Mound, TX 75028.

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# Stamping Around

## Newsletter of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club

Peter Elias, Editor ([news@mid-citiesstampclub.com](mailto:news@mid-citiesstampclub.com))

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### 2023 - 2024 MID-CITIES STAMP CLUB OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President – Ken Aldridge  
First Vice-President – Rick Howell  
Second Vice-President – Stanley Christmas  
Secretary – Janet Moyer  
Treasurer – Judy Christmas

#### Board of Directors (voting):

Peter Elias      Ralph Poore      Ken Wills  
Immediate Past President: Rich Hildebrandt

Membership in the Mid-Cities Stamp Club is available to anyone of good character interested in philately. Feel free to attend any of our 3 different meeting sites in the greater Dallas / Ft. Worth area! Dues are only \$12 per year (which includes an emailed or online color newsletter, or \$22 for mailed black & white newsletters). For more information, the editor is reachable during business hours at (972) 671-0077 or : [editor@mid-citiesstampclub.com](mailto:editor@mid-citiesstampclub.com)

For a membership application write to:

**Mid-Cities Stamp Club**  
**P.O. Box 820784**  
**N. Richland Hills, TX 76182-0784**

or visit: <https://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>

## Coming Attractions

### 2024

- FEB. 27**      **MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting**  
Program: TBD
- MAR. 6**      **MCSC — ARLINGTON Meeting**  
Program: by Howard Petschel, retired USPS postal inspector
- MAR. 8 & 9**      **Dallas Postcard Show**  
Holiday Inn & Suites, 3220 Craig Dr, McKinney, 75070  
Friday, March 8: Noon - 6 P, Saturday, March 9: 9 A - 4 P  
Admission is \$5 (early bird is \$10 on March 8 at 11 A)
- MAR. 20**      **MCSC — FLOWER MOUND Meeting**  
Program: Extended Show & Tell and philatelic discussions
- MAR. 26**      **MCSC — LAKE GRANBURY Meeting**  
Program: TBD
- APR. 3**      **MCSC — ARLINGTON Meeting**  
Program: TBD
- APR. 5 - 6**      **TSDA Stamp Dealer Bourse**  
DoubleTree Hotel, 1981 US Hwy 75 / Campbell Rd.  
Friday 10 - 5, Saturday 9 - 4
- APR. 17**      **MCSC — FLOWER MOUND Meeting**  
Program: Extended Show & Tell and philatelic discussions



"Editor At Work"  
LEGO™ MOC by Marcos Elias

## Editor's Forum

By Peter Elias

On February 9th, Ray Cartier sent me the following email message:

*Karen Cartier has the last stage of Lewy Body Dementia, and after falling and breaking her hip, she was placed in a hospital with 24 hour watching. She will probably not walk again.*

*When she will be released around February 17th, she will be placed in a permanent nursing home. Ray & his daughter and son-in-law won't be able to take care of all her needs. Thanks for any prayers. Ray*

Sadly, just 10 days after Ray sent that message, he sent another one on Monday, February 19, stating that she went to heaven at 12:10 PM. My condolences to Ray and his family.

As a brief reminder, my short article on page 8 shows again how you can illustrate and remember a part of your own life via a stamp; sadly of course, the event in question was a sad one for this nation and many people.

## Thank You!

To Byron Sandfield for a donation of about 3½ boxes of philatelic material. It was mostly Philatelic Commemorative Society

First Day Covers in 1 box, USPS Commemorative Panels in binders in 2 boxes and various loose stamps and a 1936 "Modern Stamp Album" in a 4th box..



## Secretary's Report

By Janet Moyer

### Applications Received:

Tom Holder #664  
(collects FDC, 1st Flight & Civil War covers)

### New Members:

n/a

### Reinstatements:

n/a

### Resignations:

n/a

### Deceased:

Robert Bray #357

### Membership Summary – February 25, 2024

Membership as of January 17, 2024	104
Applications Rec'd (counts as member next month)	1
New Members	0
Did Not Renew for 2024	( 0 )
Resignations	( 0 )
Deceased	( 1 )
Reinstatements	0
Membership as of February 25, 2024	103

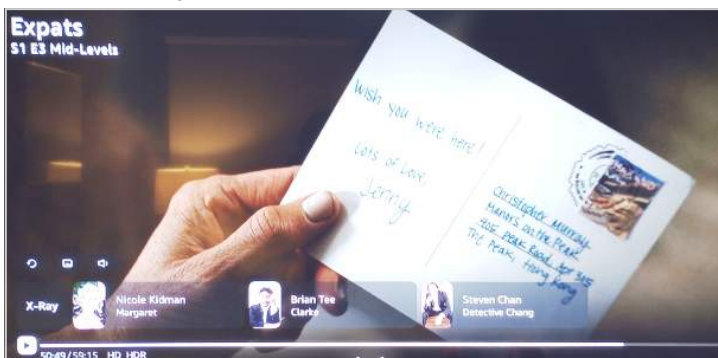




## TV Philately: Expats

By Peter Elias

In early February, I had a chance to watch the first 3 episodes of "Expats" on Amazon Prime. This is a mini-series centering around "Margaret", an expatriate living with her husband and 2 kids in Hong Kong. There was a 3rd child, but he went missing in a market.



Towards the end of the 3rd episode, Margaret (played by Nicole Kidman) was snooping through the apartment of a deceased neighbor in her building and found a postcard, which on the picture side showed a scene near Thailand, where she and her family had also vacationed in the past (and thus was suspecting him of the disappearance of her child).

On the address side of the card it shows that it was addressed to the neighbor (Christopher Murray).

I first looked at the address, 405 Peak Road. In the mini-series, it appeared to be a high-rise apartment building in Hong Kong. Looking at [maps.google.com](https://maps.google.com), I did see a Peak Road that runs near "The Peak" (which overlooks Hong Kong). However, there is no such number on Peak Road, they only go from 1 to 128 according to the online map.

If I remember correctly from the series, the neighbor appeared to live on the 5th floor, but the apartment number on the address is shown as 345. And a search at Google Maps did not come up with a "Manors on the Peak" either. While I had to look this up, anyone that's lived in Hong Kong would probably not have to do that. But that's ok. It's a fictional place in a fiction drama series.

What about the stamp? It appears to show a stamp that reads "Thailand". A closer look at the screenshot image has it appear that there are NO perforations on the stamp, just straight-line edges and I don't see any indication of a denomination. The stamp subject is just fuzzy enough that I can't really make it out. My own Scott catalogs are the 2018 versions, so I checked out stampworld.com's online catalog to see if I could find any sort of stamp issues that resemble the design. Since the movie takes place in present times, I looked from 2023 back to about 2010, and no such design similarities.

The postmark is also suspect. It has a rather unusual design, but all letters & numbers in it are not legible.

Conclusion: As is the case most of the time, this is another miss. While I don't expect addresses to be real (unless it is a documentary film or show), the stamp & postmark are not based on anything actual from Thailand, as best as I can tell. As usual, the image of this is up on screen only for a second or two, in passing on your screen, it seems to pass muster as a postcard that was mailed. Only when pausing and analyzing it does it show that the props department had to manufacture this.

But as always, I had some "philatelic fun" investigating what I saw on the screen!

## Revenue stamps

By Peter Elias



A couple of weeks ago, I ran across the revenue stamps that you see at top. There was one from Italy (top left), three from Austria and one from Czechoslovakia (right). They appeared to be from the same period. The Italian one was pen cancelled and appears to be from 1932, although the date as written does appear to be "27 / 5 / 932" (maybe someone wasn't paying attention writing that and forgot the "1"...).

Since these were cut off from whatever document they were on, I figured I just soak them off, but then I remembered that some revenue stamps back then had "fugitive" inks, so I put that thought back in the closet...

When I turned the pieces of paper over, this is what I saw (left, same order as above, just rotated 90° counter-clockwise).



So it appears that these stamps from 3 different countries all came from checks made out from the same bank account, but to different people or companies in Italy, Austria and Czechoslovakia.

Nice engraving too! But the most I can make out is that it was a "First Bank of Somewhere", unknown as to where exactly, but presumably somewhere in the USA.

A revenue stamp on a document of some kind is similar to a stamp on a cover or postcard (which we refer to as "postal history"). It can tell a story as to what was going on at the time, what items were taxed or had a fee, who it was for, etc.

A revenue stamp cut off a document is worth far less than if it remains intact on the document (same as with a stamp that remains on the envelope). Unfortunately, it is too late find out more about what these checks were for and to whom they were sent. But collectors of these type of items back then didn't know any better...

## MCSC Granbury Meeting Minutes

January 23, 2024

by Dave Stockbridge

### Call-To-Order:

- Dave Stockbridge called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM on January 23, 2024.

### Attendance:

- A guest, Andrew Christmas, Judy & Stanley Christmas' son, who was visiting from South Carolina, attended the meeting. A first-time MCSC attendee to Granbury, Bruce Davis was welcomed by the group..

### Announcements:

- Dave announced that Madeleine Myers made cookies with Joe McFarland's pecans.
- Dave Stockbridge announced that he had 4 open dates for programs for 2024 and asked for volunteers.
- Jim Myers announced that the TSDA was holding a stamp show in April 5 & 6 at the Doubletree Hotel, Bluebonnet Room, 1981 North Central Expressway (southwest corner of Hwy 75 & Campbell Rd), Richardson, TX 75080 (Friday 10-5, Saturday 9-4).

### Show & Tell:

- Stanley Christmas passed around five items he recently acquired. This included MNH Singapore \$2.00 and \$5.00 1949 to 1952 - King George VI, Perf. 17½ x 18 stamps that complete his 1946 to 1958 Singapore collection. He also showed a Chicago Worlds Fair cachet cover that commemorated the Adams airmail pickup demonstration held at the Fair between September 20 to October 31, 1934.
- Bob Cole showed a scarce street car RPO cover that he found.
- Jim Case showed an article from the American Stamp Dealers Association titled "What brings people to stamp shows". The group discussed the article.
- Rick Howell talked about the new APS stamp store and the new priority mail rate. He also showed a strip of Great Britain Spice Girls stamps released January 12.
- Bruce Davis showed two boxes of post office "stuff".
- Les Barton showed an Austrian glass stamp.
- Jim Myers showed some non-profit items he dug out of the trash bin at the Coppell Post Office. He also showed an old tin with stamp hinges still in it. Dave told the group that Gene Atkinson collected stamp hinge containers and that he might be interested in adding the tin to his collection.
- Joe McFarland reported he put together a bag of stamps and gave it to a 12 year old potential collector.

### Program:

- Dave Stockbridge told the group that the program was "Clean Out Your Closet" and adjourned the group for 15 minutes so everyone could shop and have cookies and drinks.

### Post Program:

- After everyone was finished, Dave, ended the meeting with "The Question of the Day" which was "What do you like the most and least about stamp collecting". All the members joined in on the discussion.

### Attendance Prize Drawing:

- The drawing for gift certificates was held and the winners were Bob Cole, Joe McFarland and Jim Case.

### Adjournment:

- Dave Stockbridge adjourned the meeting around 8:00 PM.

## Barbados Independence Arch Revisited

By Arthur P. von Reyn

In a "Been There, Done That" article that appeared in the November 2023 issue of *Stamping Around*, Peter Elias wrote about a 1967 stamp that pictured an Independence Arch in the Barbados capital of Bridgetown. He wondered why the stamp image differed from what he observed when visiting the island in 1993.



Coincidentally, last summer when I was going through my Barbados collection, I noticed the curious design of the stamp, which is part of a set issued for Barbados' first anniversary of independence. I searched about the Independence Arch on the internet, as I occasional do when a stamp subject interests me. Various websites mentioned the arch was built in 1987 for the 21st anniversary of Barbados' Independence, some 20 years after the stamp was issued! There was no information whatsoever about an arch existing in 1967.

As Peter observed in his article, the structure now existing is visually different than what appeared on the stamp. To me, the 1967 stamp design appears to have been taken from a photograph, so there must have been a forerunner to what now exists.

Back in late December, I sent an email inquiry about the discrepancy to the Barbados Museum and Historical Society. Harriet Pierce, the librarian, responded, "A temporary Independence Arch was constructed as part of Barbados' Independence celebrations on November 30, 1966. I suspect that the image of that temporary arch is the one carried on the stamp in question. When time permits, I will see if I have an image of the temporary arch."

In a subsequent email, Ms. Pierce stated the library was having "environmental challenges" and referred me to the Barbados Department of Archives, with Dario Marshall in that department indicating a basic search of the House of Assembly debates turned up nothing and suggesting hiring a paid researcher if further information was desired.

While I still don't know of what materials were used to construct the arch depicted on the 1967 stamp or how long it existed, it is obvious that there were two different Independence Arches, with the first no doubt being the inspiration for the permanent one erected in 1987.



## How Does It Get Here?

By Peter Elias

That's what I often wonder. Philately is of course about postage stamps, but it also about the study of the movement of the mails, in what is generally referred to as "postal history".

So, as part of wondering about how modern mail movements work, here is what I've looked into when receiving the occasional "small packet" when I order items from aliexpress.com, which is a Chinese online marketplace, populated by individual sellers of all sorts of products. I generally order items like button-cell batteries, USB or similar cords and one time even LED automotive lamps. Mind you, these are the exact same items that are also offered on eBay, Amazon and even local stores, and they all come from the same place (but at a higher price markup) ...

So on December 19, 2023, I received the usual little bubble-pack envelope you see to your right (#1). When these arrive at my UPS Store PMB (private mail box), they usually slap one of their 4x6" receiving stickers right on top of the package, in this case, covering up the original shipping label.

Peeling back the UPS Store label, I saw that the label underneath had a return address from Buford, Georgia and was mailed as USPS "Ground Advantage" (#2). When I peeled back to the bottom label (#3), it clearly shows that it originated in China based on the "China Post" postage label (that also doubled as a customs label at the bottom).

I thought that solved where it came from. HOWEVER, when I looked at the label that I had peeled back, that it was actually 2 different labels, stuck to each other (#4); holding these against some backlighting, it shows that there was ANOTHER "Ground Advantage" postage label stuck behind it, this one having a return address in Dublin, Ohio! Mind you, all 3 labels had my delivery address in Murphy on them!

So definitely somehow,

this item was drop-shipped from China to the USA, and then entered the mail stream. Checking the tracking on the topmost label (ending in 3827 10), the USPS says it was accepted at the Elk Grove Village, IL regional mail processing facility on Dec. 27, 2023 and was delivered here on Dec. 29. But why the Georgia return address?

Checking the middle Ground Advantage label (ending in 477947), the USPS website only states "label created, not yet in system". And why that label has a Dublin, OH return address, I don't know either. So did one "freight forwarder" forward this to another forwarder for re-mailing? Who knows!

Checking the Buford, GA address at 4220 S Lee St, Google maps shows it to be "Restaurant Depot". At reddit.com, many people are reporting receiving items from the exact same return address, stating it was jewelry items that they didn't order. Strange, I did order this item, which was 50x small button cell batteries (but they're not "light parts" as stated on the custom label (#3)!

Checking the Dublin, OH address at 5926 Wilcox Pl, Google, it shows several addresses that are part of a small office / professional building complex, but no active business with that specific address number!

Conclusion: Freight forwarding is definitely involved in these types of shipments, but why the 2 USPS postage labels with different return addresses leaves me with no explanation. Only the top one had actual tracking, not from Georgia, but starting in Illinois (probably near O'Hare Airport). So if entered the USPS mail stream in Illinois, why did the label have a Georgia return address?

I've also received similar small packets, all ordered through aliexpress.com, but they were mailed to me from places like "Equatorial Guinea" (Africa), Kyrgyzstan and Tuvalu (small island in the Pacific).

Ah, the wonders of modern international mail logistics! It does have something to do with saving on mailing costs. Otherwise, why go through this trouble? Anyone have thoughts on this?





## President's Message

By Ken Aldridge

One of our long time, active members, Karen Cartier, passed away on Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. She and her husband co-founded the Mid-Cities Stamp Club. Our condolences to Ray and his family.

We have a new member, Tom Holder. Thanks to member Roy Davis for bringing Tom to the February meeting in Arlington.

Recent Board action: It was recommended and

voted on to reduce the number of gift certificates we give out at each meeting. Effective immediately, we will give out 3 certificates at the Arlington meeting, 2 at the Granbury meeting and 1 at the Flower Mound meeting.

Speaking of Flower Mound, a big shout out of "Thank You," to Sai Madhavapeddi for providing the new meeting place, replacing the Euless one. This group meets at 7:30 the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month. It is located at 3020 Corporate Court, Suite 400 (Step Up Sports Medicine).

Thought for the day: Laughter is a tranquilizer with no side effects!



<-- [Editor: - thanks to member Sai Madhavapeddi for taking the picture at the inaugural Flower Mound meeting on February 21!]



Be sure to visit the Club website on the **Internet:**

← <https://www.mid-citiesstampclub.com>

For recent online newsletters see the club website above or:

<http://BetweenThePerfs.com/MCSC> →

(for older newsletters please contact the newsletter editor)



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## MCSC Arlington Meeting Minutes

February 7, 2024

By Janet Moyer

### Opening:

- President Ken Aldridge called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

### Attendance:

- 22 members were present and we had 1 guest – Tom Holder.

### Officer Reports:

- Secretary Janet Moyer announced we have no new members this month. That leaves us with 105 memberships, 66 have so far paid for this year.
- Treasurer Judy Christmas told us the balance in the checkbook.

### Announcements:

- 2024 dues are due. Please get them to Janet Moyer.
- Rick Howell has bags of mixture-pick stamps for sale at \$10 per pound.
- March's meeting will have a special speaker - Howard Petschel, a former US Postal Service Inspector. He will speak about counterfeit and fake stamps.
- The April meeting needs a program.
- May's meeting will be an auction.
- There will be an EXPO meeting on February 10th, starting at 11:00 AM at David's Barbecue.
- Peter is working on the newsletter.
- Dave Stockbridge has plenty of Circuit books for sale including many from the Oklahoma Stamp Society.
- The Eules meetings will now be in Flower Mound. Thank you to Evan for letting us use his office for this long. We will now be meeting in Sai Madhavapeddi's office.
- Bruce Davis brought some items people were interested in.

### Show & Tell:

- Stanley Christmas showed an item from Germany and an envelope he received addressed to Jerry Mertz from Martin Tope (two old members of MCSC).
- Tom Turner shared an Irish Cover with Postal Stationery.
- Peter had 4 things to show & tell; one was a Dutch souvenir sheet from 2023 and is recreating the scene on the sheet with an actual Lego build.

### Door Prize Drawing:

- Four gift certificates were awarded.

### Program:

- Stanley Christmas presented a very interesting program titled "Adams Airmail Pick-Up Service - 1923-1949".

### Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 P.M.

## Flower Mound Meeting Minutes

February 21, 2024

By Skip Ely

### Call-To-Order:

- Second Vice President - Stanley Christmas began the meeting at 7:25 P.M.

### Attendance:

- 12 members and 4 guests attended our inaugural meeting in Flower Mound. Stanley thanked member Sai Madhavapeddi for offering his office space for the meeting.

### Officer Reports:

- Treasurer - Judy Christmas was absent but Stanley gave the approximate treasury amount.
- Secretary - Skip Ely was substituting for Janet Moyer.

### Committee Reports:

- EXPO - Stanley said he didn't have a new date yet for the postponed February 10 planning meeting.
- Newsletter - Peter said he was almost done.
- Facebook - Rick said we had a 140 members on the club Facebook page.

### Show & Tell:

- Stanley Christmas showed some new issues from Australian Territories. He also had some new covers from the Adams Airmail Pick Up Service. He said he was now looking for postmaster signature covers from the Adams Service.
- Steve Carpenter passed around some misprinted U.S. Airmail covers.
- Dan Golden showed a cover from the National Postal Museum in Washington he received from a friend. He also mentioned briefly how a sample packet of stamps from Mystic started his interest in stamp collecting.
- Stuart Clark showed some test stamps from a coil machine.
- Jim Myers had some small tins that held stamp hinges and could be used for watermark trays.
- Rick Howell had some Deegam Machin Encyclopedia Volumes he recently purchased to help sort and identify some Machin stamps he has.
- Peter Elias showed a cover with insufficient postage and another with the postage overpaid. He also had a FDC with a 33¢ "Cats" musical cover, and talked about when he went to see the musical at Fair Park in Dallas. Then he showed a postcard with cars on it, and a letter he received with counterfeit stamps enclosed and paperwork telling how to identify them. Finally, he showed a large box of Postal Commemorative Society covers that were never opened from the original mailing.

### Mini-Program:

- Ken Wills gave a short program about stamps from the Indian Convention and Feudatory states. He had a reference book with a map of the various states, and a stock book of stamps he has collected so far.

### Gift Certificates:

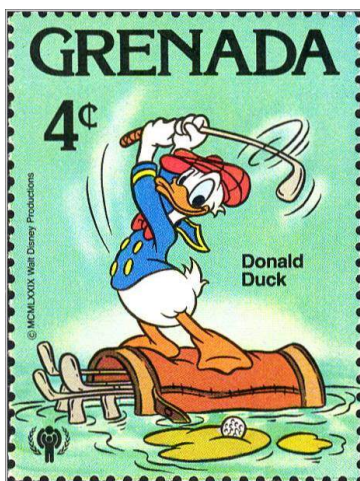
- Were awarded to Ken Wills and Stuart Clark.

### Adjournment:

- The meeting adjourned about 8:30 P.M.

## Topic of the Month: Golf

By Peter Elias



Golf is a popular game, and it originated in Scotland in the 15th Century. The 18-hole game as it is played mostly today, started in 1764.

Some historians trace the game back to the Roman days, to a game called "paganica" where a stuffed leather ball was hit with a bent stick.

Others state that there was a similar game in China, in the 8th to 14th Century, and yet others state

that another early similar game started in France and that in 1297, a game with a ball and curved bat was played annually in the Netherlands. So there 'ya go! I'll leave others to argue about the origins. But you can read up more about golf at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golf>.

Getting started with collecting "Golf on Stamps" would require some quality reading time with the Scott Standard Stamp catalogs. But a quicker way to get the listings is order a "topical checklist" for Golf from the American Topical Association (does require membership). According to the ATA website, the Golf checklist encompasses 319 stamps (and/or souvenir sheets), so a complete collection should be in reach for most people.

The biggest issue with all topical stamps like this is having to buy an entire set just to get 1 stamp. Shown above is Grenada #954 from 1979; it catalogs at only 25¢. However, it comes in a set of 9 stamps (#950 - #958) featuring various sports, and which has a catalog value of \$7.75 (in my 2018 Scott's catalog). Sadly, most dealers are not going to want to break up this set. But some topicals do come in complete sets.

For me, I can't really swing the clubs properly and ever hit a golf ball; the closest I come to all of this is "mini-golf!" Of course, that makes me wonder now if there's any stamps featuring mini-golf (or "putt-putt golf" as it is also known)! Then, if I could also find a picture of me playing mini-golf, I could envision a "Been There ..." article! Ready, set, collect!

## Tips For Your Heirs

By Peter Elias

As I was reviewing a box with some donations to the club, I found about 20+ pages of very personal information, including annual job reviews, letters of recommendation, and some US Government forms that even showed the person's social security number! All these forms and letters were from some time in the late 1970's.

However, this kind of paperwork should not be in a box of philatelic material. So, leave instructions for your heirs & beneficiaries that before they sell (or hopefully not give away) your boxes of philatelic stuff, to check to make sure that it doesn't contain personal information such as this! That also holds true for yourself: give your stuff a once-over and remove anything that's not philatelic before selling or donating it.

In this case, I simply shredded all the paperwork.

## Schloss Sargans

By Peter Elias

The Sargans Castle ("Schloss") is located in eastern Switzerland in the Canton of St. Gallen. It dates back to the counts of Werdenberg-Sargans in the 13th century!

Been There,  
Done That



The castle is located near a split in 2 valleys, one of which leads northwest to the Walensee (Lake Walen) and then on to Zürich, and the other is the Rhine River Valley, which then heads north towards to the Bodensee (Lake Constance); the Rhine River itself is only about a mile east of the castle. So the castle has a nice view of the surrounding area.

I have "seen" this castle many times, driving on the way to or from Zürich to Chur and/or Davos. The view



that you get from the freeway is basically what this Swiss postcard card from the World War II era shows.

<-- The real "treasure" with old card though is what is on the address side!

During World War II, Swiss soldiers were not required to pay for postage on their correspondence. However, the compulsory military service still placed some hardships on the soldiers, and individual military units sold charity labels, which the soldiers then used them on



their letters and postcards (this one written to the parents of the soldier).

In this case, the "soldier stamp" showed

the Sargans castle and a Feldpost (field post military) cancel (shown slightly enhanced above right) also states "Festung Sargans" (Fortification Sargans), and also states "Staff North Front" (staff being a military term) in the middle. That makes for a VERY nice collectible card!

Above is the view I had of Sargans Castle back in 1986. I love castles and have visited many of them in Switzerland; yet despite having driven past this one so many times, I don't know why I never actually visited it! Maybe because each time I was on my way somewhere else?



## Postage Stamp Language

By Peter Elias

You've probably heard about that (at least in the past sometimes), people positioned stamps in a certain way in order to tell the recipient how they felt.

While weeding out some of my many older postcards the other day, I found this postcard from Germany, featuring #704 (5pf value) and #794 (10pf value); these stamps were issued between 1954 - 1960 and 1959 respectively. My guess is that the card was then published around 1960 or after.

The title of the card is "Briefmarken Sprache" (Postage Stamp Language or also "the language of stamps") and features the stamps in various orientations. I've numbered the stamps above, and below is the German text and English translation:

- 1) Ewig Dein. [**Yours Always.**]
- 2) Ich erwarte Dich. [**I Expect You.**]
- 3) Ich habe grosse Sehnsucht. [**I Have Great Desire.**]
- 4) In Gedanken immer bei Dir. [**My Thoughts Are Always With You.**]
- 5) Ich bin Dir treu! [**I Am Loyal To You!**]
- 6) Sei wieder gut. [**Be Good Again.**]
- 7) Wann kommst Du? [**When Are You Coming?**]
- 8) Vergiss mich nie! [**Never Forget Me!**]
- 9) Ich bin so einsam. [**I Am So Lonely.**]

Admittedly, some of those messages are a bit odd. Perhaps back then, that is what they were using. I used Google Translate for these (although I do speak German fluently, I wanted to see how it translates these... pretty good though).

I'm wondering about the usage of 2 stamps (#3) or a pair (#4) for a message, perhaps they ran out of "angles" to use (between horizontal, vertical, and various angles, there's only 7 positions... assuming that a standard vertical position has no "meaning" as such...)

I found a WWII-era postcard that my father sent to his parents in Germany, and he put his stamp on the postcard upside-down (as in #6 above); although that would make it mean "Be Good Again", which doesn't really make sense, and perhaps that position may have meant something else to him (this card after all was published about 17 years after he wrote his card) or he just did that by accident? I'll never know!

While I've known of these stamp positioning "messages", this is the first time I've seen a postcard about them. According to a post on [stampcommunity.org](http://stampcommunity.org), there are other meanings to these positions though as well, first done starting in the 1880's by the Dutch, and here a Scandinavian version: [https://www.jaysmith.com/Resource/Articles/scan\\_codes.html](https://www.jaysmith.com/Resource/Articles/scan_codes.html).



Now, let's find some actual covers where any of these can be proven to have been used this way!

On a side note: Here is the text in the box on the lower right of the card (alternate lines do rhyme):

Statt Blumen send' ich diese Karte  
Es ist nicht nur ein lieber Gruss  
Vergleiche bitte diese Marke  
Dann weisst Du was ich sagen muss!

### In English:

Instead of flowers I'm sending this card  
It's not just a friendly greeting  
Please compare this stamp  
Then you know what I have to say!



## The Return Flight (on 9/10)

By Peter Elias

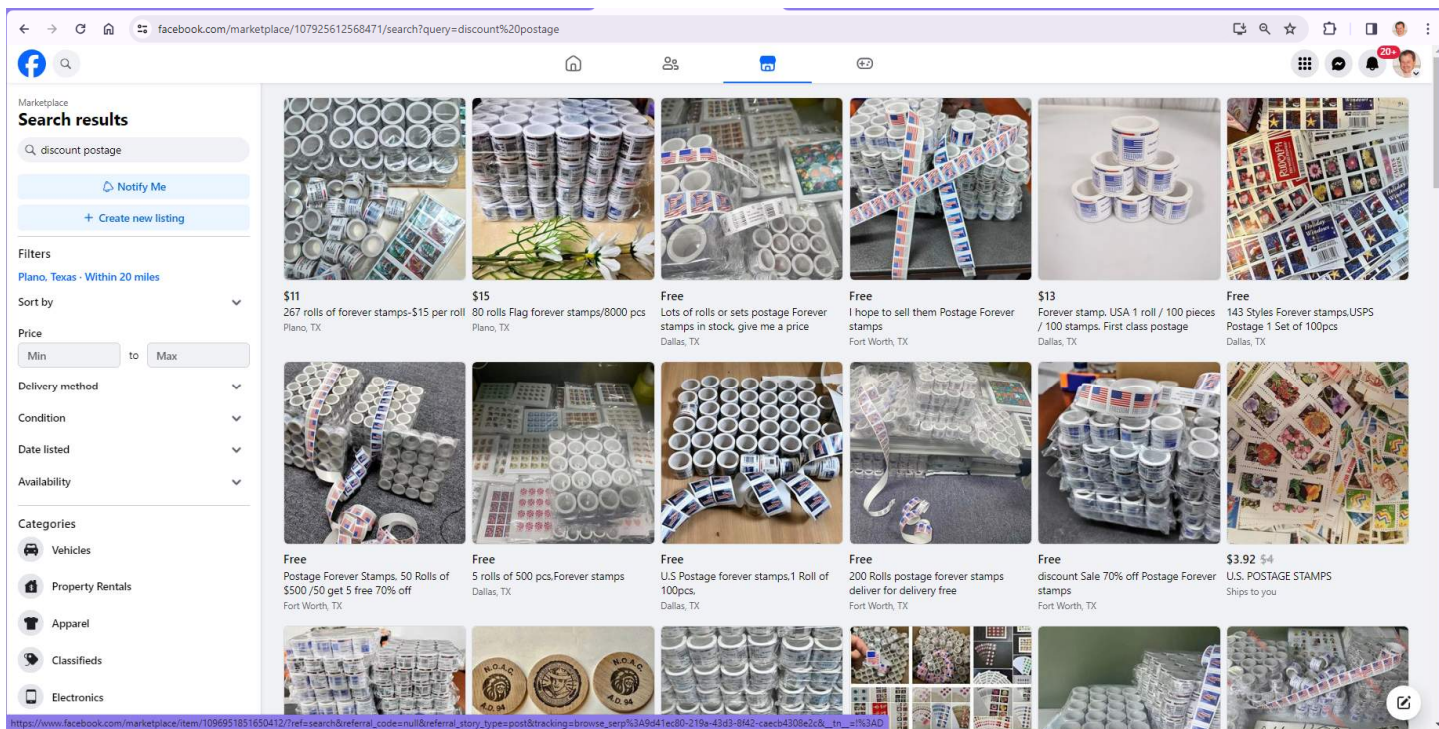
We all remember "911"; hard to believe that was 22½ years ago! I remember exactly where I was at when I first heard about it (which is when Annie called to wake me up and said to turn on the TV).

But in retrospect, for me, it also caused me to remember where we were at only about 12 hours earlier (and not accounting for a time zone difference): We were boarding a plane in Detroit flying back to DFW on 9/10, and had debated on whether we should stay an extra day in Michigan, but didn't due to Annie having to work on 9/11; what if we had stayed though? It would have been a very long drive back to Dallas (due to a nationwide ground-stop and assuming that rental cars would be available)...



Where were you on or shortly before this point in history?





## Discount Forever Postage: Think Twice About That

By Peter Elias

Here's a nifty little activity for you. How much US postage is represented in that screen shot above? If reading this electronically, you can probably "zoom" in on the screen shot to get a better idea ...

Let's take the 2nd item on the first row (the \$15 one). I see what appears to be a stack of USPS rolls of 100 coil stamps, 6 across, by 4 deep, by 4 high. That would be 96 rolls of stamps (although the ad says 80 rolls..., we can't really confirm what is hidden or not in that stack).

So assuming that the seller could count properly, and it is 80 rolls (8,000 stamps) as stated in the ad, not my assumption of 96 rolls (9,600 stamps), then this represents \$5,440 of face value (or more if I am right about it being 96 rolls...).

Judging by the stacks that shown in the other photos (especially the one below the \$15 ad that shows a lot of sheetlets of 20), just how much "postage" is shown on this screen shot? At least \$100,000 in [fake] face value? More?

And this just represents 3 rows of a much lengthier screen shot for items "near me" ...

Now, I do have to say, that probably the only legitimate stamp items shown are the right-most photo on row 2, which seems to show some older mint US stamps.

What to check it out for yourself? Just go to Facebook, then go to Marketplace and search for "discount postage".

Given the rather tiny sample above, if you think in terms of this stuff being available across the entire USA, it could easily be many millions of dollars in counterfeit postage! Mind-boggling!

So, what exactly is being done about this? There is the USPIS (United States Postal Inspection Service); think of them as the postal detectives & postal cops.

The USPIS is investigating this of course, yet they seem powerless to stop it. While the average American likes a bargain (hey, this is the USA, there's always something available at a sale price, so why not postage stamps?), I don't think that the word is getting out enough to reach the average American, and that this is undermining the USPS. Or maybe some

people just don't care, except about "saving on postage" ...

Recently, I've read that one of the USPS "solutions" about what they'll do if they find your mail piece having what they determine to be fake / counterfeit postage (also read here at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/04/11/2023-07566/counterfeit-postage>):

- 1) They WILL NOT return it to you so that you can affix valid postage.
- 2) They WILL NOT forward it to the recipient with "postage due"
- 3) They WILL however simply discard or destroy the mail piece and WITHOUT ANY notification to the sender.

So, good luck should your insurance payment be sent with "discount postage", or perhaps some important document or even that only-known photo of your grandparents. Even if you are sending this with something other "first class mail". Yikes, that could really cause some problems! Will they really do this?

But going after the average mailer this way isn't going to solve the problem! Given the sheer quantities of this stuff, the US Customs Dept. should probably be involved in checking inbound sea or air shipments a bit closer (and yes, [\\$126 in fake stamps were recently confiscated at DFW Airport](#)). Thoughts?

**PS:**

- 1) "Discount postage" is not illegal as such, lots of it is available from stamp dealers, but most of it is NOT current "FOREVER" stamps, usually just older stamps that still bear a denomination and were generally purchased from collectors exiting the hobby or heirs of collections left to them.
- 2) Knowingly producing and/or selling counterfeit stamps (US or foreign - read the CFR's) is a federal felony.
- 3) Buying counterfeit stamps is NOT a felony, UNLESS your "intent" is to resell them (see #2 above) or use them as postage. As with many US laws, "intent" is a key word...
- 4) So, selling your spare copies of counterfeits to another collector is against the law (according to the Sacramento USPIS inspector I spoke with); but he said you can give them away, as long as there no remuneration or trading involved).

The actual CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) is CFR Title 18, Chapter 25, sections 501 & 502; you can download that as a PDF file at:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2011-title18/pdf/USCODE-2011-title18-part1-chap25-sec501.pdf>



# CLASSIFIED BOURSE

## Announcements

All club members that are current with their dues payments are entitled to FREE ads in this space! Please send ad to: Peter Elias, P.O. Box 940427, Plano, TX 75094-0427, give it to me at a meeting, or e-mail me at: [peter@pcelias.com](mailto:peter@pcelias.com)

## For Sale

**US POSTAGE – from our huge surplus: 1c – 20c : 70% of FV; 21c – 50c : 80% of FV.** Send any amount (min \$10), specify group (70%, 80%), and receive mix of values back in FV as indicated above. Clean, F/VF only. Plate or Zip block included for every \$10 remitted. Remit (check or MO) to: J. Myers, P. O. Box 2047, Coppell, TX 75019. TX orders, add 8% sales tax. We cover return postage, S/H charges. Can also take PayPal (same terms). [jasdmyers@earthlink.net](mailto:jasdmyers@earthlink.net) 5/15

## Wanted to Trade

I have general (unsorted) worldwide & used USA stamps (mostly beginning collector material) available to trade for your items such as worldwide revenue stamps & Framas. Contact Peter Elias at [peter@pcelias.com](mailto:peter@pcelias.com) 9/16

## Wanted

**Postally used “ATM” stamps** (i.e.: machine vended), such as Framas, from around the world; would prefer on cover or postcard if possible. Contact Peter Elias at [info@stvincentstamps.com](mailto:info@stvincentstamps.com) 8/14

*Been There,  
Done That*

## U.S. Virgin Islands

By Peter Elias



Charlotte Amalie is the capitol city of the U.S. Virgin Islands, a territory of the USA.

Three islands make up the territory: Saint John and Saint Thomas (which is where Charlotte

Amalie is located), and which are close to each other. Saint Croix is located about 50 miles south of the other two.


Between the 3 main (& some smaller) islands, the total area is only about 133 square miles (roughly about the size of 2 of the “Mid-Cities” cities of Irving and Grand Prairie, which are 139 square miles combined).

Above is USA Scott #802, one of 4 stamps issued in 1937 as part of the “Territorial” issue, with Puerto Rico, Alaska & Hawaii being the other 3.

During a trip to Puerto Rico in July 1994, we decided to do a quick day-trip to the US Virgin Islands (since no passport was needed). They are only about 70 miles east of Puerto Rico, just



Estate Appraisals



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[www.topperstamps.com](http://www.topperstamps.com)

## For Sale

I now have a new website in which I have listed all my used **duplicates (many thousands)**. They are arranged in Scott number sequence within country. Do take a look, and select any that you want. I charge 1/3 catalogue value, post paid. The URL is [www.kenwills.net](http://www.kenwills.net) Contact me at [wills@airmail.net](mailto:wills@airmail.net). Happy hunting! 3/19

**Philatelic Reference CD's.** The following self-running, philatelic reference CD's, each containing hundreds of scans, are now available:

- [APC Conversions 2012-2014](#) (NY2016 Vermeil Award!)
- [Usage of British Empire War Tax Issues](#) (exhibit)
- [Airport Philately](#) (800+ scans of Airports on Stamps)
- [4 Rings—The History of Audi](#) (Great for any car lover!)
- [St. Vincent Philatelic Reference Scans](#) (1,700 items!!)
- [St. Vincent Postcards](#) (300+ postcards from 1900 to 2007)
- [Vintage Swiss Postcards 1898-1959](#) (900+ postcards !!)

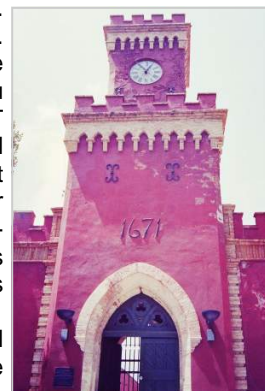
Special MCSC Member price is only \$ 6.95 each (Regular price is \$14.95 to \$19.95).. Contact [peter@pcelias.com](mailto:peter@pcelias.com) 7/23

**MOVED, BUT SALE CONTINUES!** Special discounts to MCSC members for Swiss, Austria, Liechtenstein issues, 25% and LESS of catalog values. All orders postpaid! I also accept PayPal if you wish! John Barrett, Ph.D. Contact info: [jstrubel-boy@aol.com](mailto:jstrubel-boy@aol.com) 12/14

a quick 35-minute puddle-jumper flight away. And of course I rented a car to get around St. Thomas. Now here's the “fun” part: The U.S. Virgin Islands are the only part of the USA (at least in 1994...) where you drive on the WRONG, I mean LEFT side of the road (but the steering wheel is also still on the left side - so a bit scary when trying to pass another car...). Why that is, I don't know; perhaps because the British Virgin Islands are next door (just a couple of miles northeast of St. John)?

Here are 2 photos I took (no digital cameras at the time). To the right is the entrance to the Dano-Norwegian-built Fort Christian in Charlotte Amalie; it was built between 1662 to 1680 and ruled by Denmark until 1917 (and it was NOT that pink!).

To the left is a view looking south, of the runway at Cyril E. King Airport (Charlotte Amalie would be to the left).





## MEET & EAT for March 2024

by Judy & Stanley Christmas

"Meet & Eats" are held before our club meetings. All club members and their guests are welcome. We will gather at 5:00 PM and start ordering at that time. However, latecomers can order when they arrive or just come by for a visit. Meals should be over around 6:15 to 6:30 PM with the Arlington new meeting start time now being at 7:00 PM rather than 7:30 PM.

Meet & Eat locations will be included the club's broadcast messages. NOTE: All locations are subject to change.

### ARLINGTON

March 6 David's BBQ, 2224 West Park Row,  
Arlington, TX 76013 (817-261-9998)

### FLOWER MOUND

March 20 Bari's Pizza & Pasta  
3472 Long Prairie Rd, Flower Mound, TX  
75022 (972 426-2956)

### GRANBURY

March 26 Grumps, 3503 E. Hwy 377, Granbury

## Wanted to Buy

Texas Precancel Stamps. Contact Rick Howell at:  
[Rick.howell1@tx.rr.com](mailto:Rick.howell1@tx.rr.com)

5/19

Wanted to buy or trade for: Worldwide unusual EFOs, postal counterfeits. Odd US 20th century auxiliary markings, US 1934 and 1935 Christmas Seals on and off cover and publicity material, Korean War postal history from US and other UN contingents, and any other US philatelic material with an interesting story. John Hotchner, PO Box 1125, Falls Church, VA 22041, or [jmhstamp@verizon.net](mailto:jmhstamp@verizon.net) 2/15

Various USA Scott #C2 & C3 on covers & cards are needed for my U.S Air Mail collection. Please forward scans of the covers / cards along with asking price(s) to Don Jones at [adjaams@aol.com](mailto:adjaams@aol.com) Thank you. 2/21

## For Sale

FREE 111-page (all varieties) or 26-page album (basic version) of Spanish ATM stamps (provided as a PDF file) with purchase of at least \$4.00 in Spanish ATM stamps (which are only 15¢ each!) Contact Peter Elias at [peter@pcelias.com](mailto:peter@pcelias.com) 1/21

United States Booklets, large selection of unexploded booklets for sale at just above face value. Starting with booklet #BK104 to #BK259. Identify booklet number desired and send an email to Dave Stockbridge at [stockdave44@yahoo.com](mailto:stockdave44@yahoo.com).

Dave will send you a price, if booklet is available and payment instructions. 4/23

Mid-Cities Stamp Club "Stamping Around" Newsletter  
c/o Peter Elias  
PO Box 940427  
Plano, TX 75094-0427

**Don't Forget:**  
**Postal Inspector program - March 6**  
**Dallas Postcard Show - March 8 & 9**  
**3rd Wed Mtg now in Flower Mound!**