



"The Postage Stamp is Our World"

The Volunteer State Philatelic Gazette



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CHAPTER 0431

Watermarks on Postage Stamps

A watermark is a key feature of a stamp, and often constitutes the difference between a common and a rare stamp. Collectors who encounter two otherwise identical stamps with different watermarks consider each stamp to be a separate identifiable issue. The "classic" stamp watermark is a small crown or other national symbol, appearing either once on each stamp or a continuous pattern. Watermarks were nearly universal on stamps in the 19th and early 20th centuries, but generally fell out of use and are not commonly used on modern U.S. issues, but some countries continue to use them.

Some types of embossing, such as that used to make the "cross on oval" design on early stamps of Switzerland, resemble a watermark in that the paper is thinner, but can be distinguished by having sharper edges than is usual for a normal watermark. Stamp paper watermarks also show various designs, letters, numbers and pictorial elements.

A large variety of watermarks can be found on postage stamps from countries throughout the world. Watermarks were originally used by governments to prevent counterfeiting. From 1895 until 1916 the U.S. government used two types of watermarked paper, double-line and single-line with the letters "USPS". Traditionally, a watermark was made by impressing a water-coated metal stamp or dandy roll onto the paper during manufacturing. The invention of the dandy roll in 1826 by John Marshall revolutionized the watermark process and made it easier for producers to watermark their paper.

Originally a watermark was created by changing the thickness of the paper and thereby creating a shadow/lightness in the watermarked paper. This was done while the paper was still wet/watery and therefore the mark created by this process is called a watermark. Watermarks were first introduced in Fabriano, Italy, in 1282.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Here we are again and Spring's sprung and there are lots of things to do! This year's show was a great success and now we are planning the one for next year. There will be new challenges to overcome, new stamps to find, new friends to be made and 25 stamp club meetings to attend!:>) So let's look forward to a better new year!

Matt Benward, President NPS

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* STAMP CLUB NEWS *

Nashville Stamp Show 2027

Our annual stamp show will be held in 2027 in late February at the Gallatin Civic Center located at 320 Albert Gallatin Avenue Gallatin Tennessee. This is a same location we used in 2026 and it will be our home for years to come. We'll be sending out contracts to the dealers in all the states nearby Tennessee and we've already heard from most of the dealers that they will return next year too! Thank you to everyone who volunteered at our stamp show this year and it couldn't have been such a success without every one of you! Of course we'll need people for next year's show too. Please volunteer!

Southeastern Stamp Expo

This stamps show is the second largest show put on by the Southeast Federation of Stamp Clubs. This show will be held on January 22-24, 2027 at The Hilton Atlanta Northeast 5993 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard Peachtree, GA. This stamp show is one of largest stamp shows in the southeast. I've attended it many times and usually has thirty stamp dealers in attendance. I would urge everyone to attend. Hours: Friday & Saturday 10-6 and Sunday 10-4.

NPS Officers election held

The officer's election was held during the February 23rd meeting and the new and current Officers' are listed above on the opposite column of this page.

Articles for the newsletter

I need articles for this newsletter on any aspect of stamp collecting. They can be hand written, typed, or by computer in any format. I would be willing to help write them too. I have been getting some articles during the last few months, but I still need some more. If you see any interesting articles in the philatelic press, please let me know. You may contact me at the club meetings or at mbenward@aol.com. Thanks.

Stamp Displays for next year's stamp show

We want to thank everyone who submitted a display for this year's show. If anyone is interested in submitting one for next year's show please see David Perry or email him at davidlperryjr@gmail.com

New Members

Ryan Pregel
Robert McMahan
David Schwarting
Dale Rector

The Volunteer State
Philatelic Gazette

Issue #124 Spring 2026

Matt Benward
Editor-in-Chief

Tom Tribke
Associate Editor

Editorial Consultants:

Matt Benward President
Al Bollmeier First Vice-President
David Perry Second Vice-President
Madeline Seibert Jr. Vice-President
Dennis Fielding Secretary
Jack Payne Treasurer

Meetings: Second and Fourth Mondays of each month. Philatelic Fellowship at 5:30 p.m., Business meeting at 6:30 p.m., Program or Auction at 6:45 p.m., out by 8:00 p.m.

Meetings are held at the Bavarian Bierhaus, 121 Opry Mills Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37214.

Kids under 17 get a FREE stamp packet at their first attendance. Ages 6 and up are WELCOME!

THE Volunteer State PHILATELIC GAZETTE is an official Publication of the Nashville Philatelic Society

Opinions expressed in THE GAZETTE are those of the writers. These opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of the Nashville Philatelic Society or its members.

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The Nashville Philatelic Society is a non-profit organization.

Nashville Philatelic Society

Minutes Review for January 2026 – March 2026

The NPS held its 1/12/2026 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Twenty-four members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 11/27/2025 meeting were read and approved. Al Terhorst won the Door Prize and Rudy Caduff won the Participation Award. There were no applications to be reviewed. The forthcoming new issues were announced and upcoming stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamps committees. Our social media websites had 1172 “followers” on Twitter and 1100+ “likes” on Facebook. Dennis Fielding presented the nominating committee report. Nominations will be announced during the February 26th meeting and the officers elections were announced for the February 23rd meeting. The business session was then adjourned for an interesting program on “Specialty Philatelic Societies” by various club members.

The NPS meeting for 1/25/2026 was cancelled due to inclement weather.

The NPS held its 2/10/2026 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Twenty-two members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 1/12/2026 meeting were read and approved. David Schwarting and Dale Rector’s applications were given a first reading. Jim Young won the Door Prize and Bill Bowman won the Participation Award. The forthcoming new issues were announced and upcoming stamp shows were reviewed. A report was presented from the Phone, Stamps, and Social Media Committees. Our social media websites had 1165 “followers” on Twitter and 1117 “likes” on Facebook. Under old business help was asked for volunteers to help set up the stamps show and under new business Dennis Fielding gave a presentation on nominees for the officers election to be held at the next meeting. The business session was then adjourned for a talk on ‘Stamps of Occupied Countries’ by Matt Benward and Al Bollmeier.

The NPS held its 2/23/2026 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Twenty-seven members and one guest were present. Minutes of the 2/10/2026 meeting were read and approved. David Schwarting and Dale Rector’s applications for NPS membership received a second reading and they were approved for membership in the club. Bill Bowman won the door prize and Dave Schwarting won the Participation Award. The forthcoming new issues were announced and upcoming stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone, Stamp and Social Media Committees. Matt reported that social media websites had 1164 “followers” on Twitter and 1120 “likes” on Facebook. There was no old Business and under new Business Randy Coble reported that the memorial placard would cost the club \$300. Dennis Fielding passed out the ballot for the officers election and votes were tallied and the results announced: Matt Benward - President; Al Bollmeier - First Vice-President; David Perry - Second Vice-President; Dennis Fielding - Secretary; and Jack Payne - Treasurer. The business session was adjourned for our auction with David Perry as auctioneer. Our auction had 35 lots and we sold 24 of them.

The NPS had its 3/16/2026 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Seventeen members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 2/23/2026 meeting were read and approved. There were no new applications. Sachaye Walker won the door prize and Bill Bowman won the Participation Award. The forthcoming new issues were announced and upcoming stamp shows were reviewed. The Premium Auction would be held in April and Jack Payne asked for volunteers to be greeters. Reports were presented from the Phone and Social Media Committees. Matt reported that social media websites had 1161 “followers” on Twitter and 1117 “likes” on Facebook. Mark Thompson reported that the club was robbed of approximately \$1600 at the show. These were checks and cash collected for table fees during the show. We are asking the dealers who paid by check to replace the check that were taken. Under old Business Randy Coble asked member for any missing names on the Memorial Plaque. Under new business Dennis Fielding brought up the idea for supplementing the meeting announcement emails and phone calls with text messaging to contact members. The business session was then adjourned for a talk on ‘The Concorde on Stamps’ by Tom Tribke.

The NPS held its 3/30/2026 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Twenty-nine members and one guest were present. Minutes of the 3/16/2026 meeting were read and approved. Robert McMahon’s application was given a first reading. Dan Hubbard won the door prize and Linda Boyd won the Participation Award. The forthcoming new issues were announced and upcoming stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone (Jack Payne and Doug Flatter were ill and ‘get well’ cards were passed around) and Social Media Committees. Matt reported that social media websites had 1161 “followers” on Twitter and 1117 “likes” on Facebook. Under old Business Randy Coble asked members for any missing names on the Memorial Plaque. Mark Thompson announced that parts of his cover collection were for sale. Under new business Dennis Fielding asked for testers for the new club webpage. The business session then adjourned for an auction. Our auction had 41 lots and we sold 30 of them with some spirited bidding on several of them and everyone had a good time!!!

Nashville Philatelic Society

Minutes Review for October 2025 – December 2026

The NPS held its 10/13/2025 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Twenty-four members and two guests were present. Minutes of the 9/22/2025 meeting were read and approved. Steve Cox's application was given a second reading and he was approved as a member. Jackie Cargill won the Door Prize and Rudy Caduff won the Participation Award. There were no forthcoming new issues for the rest of 2025 and upcoming stamp shows were reviewed. Reports were presented from the Phone and Stamps committees. Our social media websites had 1171 "followers" on Twitter and 1100+ "likes" on Facebook. Mark Thompson reported that we had \$12,077 in the checking account. The business session was then adjourned for an interesting program on "Philatelic Literature" by various club members.

The NPS held its 10/20/2025 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Twenty-one members and one guest were present. Minutes of the 10/13/2025 meeting were read and approved. There were no applications to be reviewed. Courtney Cochran won the Door Prize and Jack Payne won the Participation Award. There were no new issues for the rest of 2025 and Bill Vance's "It's Just Me" stamp show was announced on November 7 - 9th. A report was presented from the Phone and Social Media Committees. Our social media websites had 1170 "followers" on Twitter and 1100+ "likes" on Facebook. Mark Thompson reported we had \$11,991.70 in the checking account. There was no old business and under new business Ray McIntire proposed a show committee which would meet before the next club meeting. It was passed. The business session was then adjourned for our auction with David Perry as auctioneer. Our auction had 40 lots and we sold 32 of them.

The NPS held its 11/17/2025 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Twenty-three members and three guests were present. Minutes of the 10/20/2025 meeting were read and approved. Bruce B. Smith's application for NPS membership received a first reading. Courtney Cochran won the door prize and Bill Bowman won the Participation Award. There were no new issues for the rest of 2025 and upcoming stamp shows were reviewed. The Gallatin Coin show was also announced on December 12-13. Reports were presented from the Phone, Stamp and Social Media Committees. Buzz Bolton had knee replacement surgery. Matt reported that social media websites had 1170 "followers" on Twitter and 1100+ "likes" on Facebook. Under old Business it was announced that our club stamp show would be on February 28 – March 1, 2026. Under new Business Roger announced that the show committee applicants to contact him. Dennis Fielding was elected chairman of the nominating committee for the upcoming officer's election in 2026. The business session was then adjourned for an interesting presentation and handout on "Stamp Cancellations" by Matt Benward, Rudy Caduff, and Al Bollmeier.

The NPS had its 11/24/2025 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Twenty members and one guest were present. Minutes of the 10/17/2025 meeting were read and approved. Bruce B. Smith's application for NPS membership received a second reading and he was approved for membership in the club. Randy Coble won the door prize and David Perry won the Participation Award. There were no new issues for the rest of 2025 and stamp shows were reviewed. The Gallatin Coin show was also announced on December 12-13. Reports were presented from the Phone, Stamp and Social Media Committees. Matt reported that social media websites had 1070 "followers" on Twitter and 1100+ "likes" on Facebook. Mark Thompson reported the checking account was the same as his last report. Under old Business Dennis Fielding spoke about the Nominating Committee. The business session was adjourned for our auction with David Perry as auctioneer. Our auction had 25 lots and we sold 18 of them.

The NPS held its 12/8/2025 meeting at the Bavarian Bierhaus at Opry Mills Mall with Matt Benward presiding. Twenty-two members and one guest were present. Our Christmas party was great with wonderful German food, Christmas cookies, and Black Forest Cake!!! Jim Young setup his stamp stock and several members looked and bought a few things. Several members had a good time looking through the APS circuit books. The business session then adjourned for an auction. Our short auction had 37 lots and we sold 24 of them with some spirited bidding on several of them and everyone had a good time!!!

Specialty Philatelic Societies

Specialty philatelic societies are ones that are setup by stamp collectors who want to study specific aspects of philately. For example some of them could be stamps issued by certain countries, types of stamps issued by various countries, topics on stamps, or postal stationery.

When most stamp collectors begin the hobby they tend to add any stamp they come across to their collections. In time they usually find that they are drawn to specific types of stamps or ones which display various topics. Eventually they either find other collectors with the same interests or run across on the specialty groups.

Many collectors don't realize that there are a large number of specialty groups which touch on almost all areas of philately. While many of these groups hold meeting from time to time at stamp shows or online, most of their members never attend a meeting. Instead, they learn about the group's activities through regular journals or newsletters which are put out monthly or quarterly. These journals provide news and articles that specifically appeal to collectors with the specific area of interest.

A list of specialty philatelic societies in the United States: <https://stamps.org/specialty-societies-list/>

Various Specialty Philatelic Societies

U. S. Possessions Philatelic Society – USPPS

<http://uspps.tripod.com/>

American Topical Association – ATA

<https://americantopical.org/>

United States Stamp Society – USSS

<http://www.usstamps.org/>

United Postal Stationery Society – UPSS

<http://www.upss.org/>

Allied Military Government Collectors' Club – AMGCC

<http://www.amgcollector.org/>

Germany Philatelic Society – GPS

<http://www.germanyphilatelicsocietyusa.org/>

American Helvetia Philatelic Society – AHPS

<http://www.swiss-stamps.org/>

Scouts on Stamps Society International – SOSSI

<http://www.sossi.org/>

Postal Museums of the United States of America

National Postal Museum

The National Postal Museum, located in Washington, D.C., is the primary postal museum of the United States. It covers large portions of the postal history of the United States and other countries. It was established through joint agreement between the US Postal Service and the Smithsonian Institution and opened in 1993.

The museum is located in the building that served as the main post office of Washington, D.C. for decades, from its construction in 1914 until 1986. The building was designed by the Graham and Burnham architectural firm, which was led by Ernest Graham following the death of Daniel Burnham in 1912. The headquarters of the United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics is based in this building, and there is space for a data center for the United States Senate also. It is located across the street from Washington Union Station.

The museum's atrium features vehicles used to deliver mail throughout the history of the USPS, including planes, trains and automobiles. Historical exhibits guide visitors through the postal service's inception and expansion, as well as its role in significant national events such as World War II. "Systems at Work" explores historic and current technologies involved in mail processing and delivery, such as message boxes, ZIP codes, optical scanners and conveyor systems. The museum holds the National Philatelic Collection. The museum has a gift shop and a United States Postal Service philatelic sales window. Admission is free.

Website: <https://postalmuseum.si.edu/>

Spellman Museum of Stamps and Postal History

The museum is located at 241 Wellesley Street, on the campus of Regis College in Weston, Massachusetts. It is open to the public Thursdays through Sundays ten months of the year, and Thursday to Saturday in July and August. The Spellman Museum was founded in the early 1960s to house and share the collection of Cardinal Francis Spellman, Archbishop of New York (1939-1967) and a world-renowned philatelist.

Cardinal Spellman was introduced to the world of stamps by seminarian Lawrence Killian prior to World War I, while they were at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Italy. Cardinal Spellman used stamps as souvenirs, having them signed to commemorate events in the church and in the world. During his years in Europe, he shipped stamps he had collected to Sister Fidelma Conway, CSJ, and a colleague at Regis College, for safe keeping. Sister Fidelma acted as caretaker for his collection, which grew larger than could be housed in the space allocated by Regis. On March 14, 1962, ground was broken on campus for the museum. In the late 1950s, the National Philatelic Museum in Philadelphia, aligned with Temple University, was dissolved. Most of its equipment, literature, and philatelic holdings were transferred to the newly incorporated Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Museum, which officially opened on May 4, 1963.

The museum now contains over two million items, ranging from postage stamps, to postal history, to artifacts of communications through the mails. Major holdings include Cardinal Spellman's personal collection and those from the former National Philatelic Museum, and collections or portions of collections donated or loaned by notables including Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Dwight D. Eisenhower, musician Jascha Heifetz, and U.S. Army General Matthew Ridgway.

Website: <http://www.spellmanmuseum.org/>

* Please visit our web page at <http://www.nashvillephilatelic.org/> *
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