



Sno-King Stamp Club Philatelic News



Serving collectors in Snohomish County and north King County since 1960

Everett, 2nd Wednesday, 7:30 PM – 9 PM
Snohomish County PUD
2320 California Street



QR code - you can use your Smartphone
camera to go to the club's website

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Online at: <http://sno-kingstampclub.freehostia.com/> copies of these newsletters available there, too!

Everett Meeting

Wednesday, September 10th, 7:30 PM

- **APS Circuit Books for the Sept meeting** - American Philatelic Society “pick books”. The books haven’t arrived yet so there is no specific list to provide.

*** *We are still assembling a master list of what stamps, types, categories, countries, interests, etc. each member has.*

*Email back to Kurt with your list or bring a list to a meeting ****

Most meetings also include **show-and-tell**, along with time to **buy and sell** stamps

2025 Club Officers

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Meeting dates for 2025 (2nd Wednesday at the Everett PUD)

9/10, 10/8, 11/12, 12/10 Holiday Dinner

President's Column

Steve LaVergne

Our **September meeting** will feature American Philatelic Society **circuit books**, which are becoming a staple of meetings in odd-numbered months. As the September batch of circuit books hasn't arrived, I am unable to provide the detailed descriptions which assist members in selecting want lists.

The APS does have our list of members' collecting interests, so they can expect areas similar to those featured in past selections.

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When pouring through a box of donated material, I discovered a yellowed clipping from the Seattle Times dated January 20, 1995. Written in connection with that year's Boeing Stamp Show, the article was headlined "Stamp club buffs stay glued to their hobby."

We can overlook the inapt reference to mucilage. This article was noteworthy for a provocative comment from a Seattle stamp dealer, one still in business.

John Konrad, who owns the Stamp and Coin Shop in Seattle's Convention Center, disputed the belief that stamp club membership is helpful to newcomers to the hobby. He said he's heard too many customers complaining about dull stamp club meetings.

"It should be fun," he said. He suggested that beginning collectors learn from a dealer who is willing to explain the nuances of the hobby and who is enthusiastic.

I hardly know any collectors who shop at Konrad's store. I have never seen him at a local stamp show. You might think of certain local stamp stores as comparable to Macy's, in that they carry a well-rounded stock with material for advanced collectors and beginners. By contrast, Conrad's store strikes me as the philatelic equivalent of Saks Fifth Avenue, in that he caters to collectors with expensive tastes and budgets to match.

The article mentioned that local stamp clubs were experiencing a decline in membership. However, one outlier was the Boeing Stamp Club, which boasted a one-year increase from 118 to 155.

The article attributed this gain to two factors. One was "more exciting speakers." The other was that Phil Condit, then Boeing's chief executive, sent Boeing employees and customers 115,000 first-flight covers which flew aboard the maiden flight of Boeing's 777.

The article closed by listing five other local stamp clubs. Of the five listed, only two survive. They are **our club and the Greater Eastside Stamp Society**. Gone are the Collectors Club of Seattle and the Washington State Philatelic Society.

There was mention of another, probably defunct, which I never knew of. This was the Two Rivers Stamp Club, which held meetings in Kent and Enumclaw. One Phil Castell was listed as a point of contact.

* * * * *

There was one encouraging feature of the annual stamp show which the Sequim-based **Strait Stamp Society** held August 9. For years, this show was well-attended by collectors from Vancouver Island. They would travel by ferry from Victoria to Port Angeles.

There, a Strait Stamp Society member driving a van would greet them at the ferry landing and carry them the 20 miles to the show site.

I wondered whether these collectors would make the trip this year. Or would they, as have many Canadians angered by this country's tariff policy, not to mention blustering over a 51st state, pointedly refrain from cross-border shopping.

All reports indicate that a sizable contingent of Canadian collectors boarded the ferry and enjoyed the show. This tells us the camaraderie of the collecting community remains solid, even as matters remain tense between our government and Canada's.

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The **Fenwick** stamp show is back, after an absence of five and one-half years. It has a new location, the **Lynnwood Events Center**, in the next county north of its former venue at the Red Lion Inn in Renton.

The new Fenwick took place Sunday, August 10. Until then, the most recent Fenwick took place in February, 2020, one month before Governor Jay Inslee shut down public gatherings as part of the state's efforts to combat the COVID pandemic.

Kathleen Cook, Fenwick's owner, has labored for several years to find a suitable and affordable location for the stamp show.

The stamp show shared a cavernous meeting hall with Ms. Cook's Fencom, a comic book exposition operated by Fenwick. This made for some problems, as stamp collectors and comic enthusiasts converged on limited parking, made worse by nearby worship services.

Admission was free to the stamp show. The comic exposition, which occupied two-thirds of the room, charged an entry fee of two dollars. You needed a wristband to move from the stamps to the comics.

I counted five stamp dealers and two coin dealers. In addition, the stamp area housed a vendor in a Spiderman costume, selling a variety of merchandise neither philatelic nor numismatic. Sadly, none of the dolls he had for sale were on my want list.

Fenwick plans its next show for December. Reportedly, more stamps dealers have expressed interest in taking part.

September 2025 USPS new stamp issues

September 9 **William F. Buckley, Jr**
NEW HAVEN, CT 06511

September 13 **Holiday Cheer**
WASHINGTON, DC 20066



September 17 **Elie Wiesel** (Distinguished Americans)
NEW YORK, NY 10199



September 19 **Winter Landscapes**
DANVILLE, IN 46122 (Indypex stamp show)



Sno-King Stamp Club Member Dealer Night

A "HEADS UP" NOTICE FOR NEXT MONTH----->> **October 8, 2025**
Peafowl Philatelics
(Carol & Keith Edholm)

Long-time members, Carol & Keith Edholm, are finally once again doing a Sno-King Stamp Club Member Dealer Night. If you go to the local stamp shows, you've seen them and maybe even bought a few items.

Stock they will bring in October:

Red Boxes of Worldwide, US, UN, Netherlands, Switzerland and Topicals

Notebooks of:

US Duck & Fishing Stamps
US Plate Number Blocks
US Booklets
Switzerland Booklets
Netherlands
Bhutan

Current India
Disney (we've just built up our Disney stock, so lots of new items)
United Nations
Worldwide
US
UN
Topical

Remember to bring your Want-Lists! All members received 25% discount (except on the Disney = 10% discount).

You can vote on which postage stamp USPS brings back

The United States Postal Service is bringing back your favorite stamp and you get to decide which one.

The USPS is hosting a Stamp Encore Contest to celebrate its 250th anniversary. The public can vote on a collection of popular stamps from the past few decades, dating back to 1997, to be brought back next year.

You can choose from 25 stamp panes of some of the bestselling and popular stamps like Bugs Bunny, Disney and Pixar characters, Charlie Brown, Mister Rogers, superheroes, historical moments and more. You can vote online at stampsforever.com/vote or by printing a [paper ballot](#) and mailing it by Sept. 30.

“This is an open invitation — everyone is welcome, and you can vote as many times as you want,” USPS wrote in a Thursday news release.

The stamp options are as follows:

- Bugs Bunny (1997)
- Peanuts (2001)
- DC Comics Super Heroes (2006)
- Art of Disney: Magic (2007)
- Send a Hello (2011)
- Emancipation Proclamation (2013)
- Batman (2015)
- Mail a Smile (2015)
- Classics Forever (2016)
- Star Trek (2016)
- Wonder Woman (2016)
- Disney Villains (2017)
- Have a Ball! (2017)
- Total Eclipse of the Sun (2017)
- Bioluminescent Life (2018)
- Flag Act of 1818 (2018)
- Frozen Treats (2018)
- Mister Rogers (2018)
- Transcontinental Railroad (2019)
- Let's Celebrate (2020)
- Happy Birthday (2021)
- Heritage Breeds (2021)
- Message Monsters (2021)
- Star Wars: Droids (2021)
- Charles M. Schulz (2022)

The winning stamp will be announced in May at the Boston 2026 World Expo.

Below is a copy/paste article from the Associated Press found at

<https://apnews.com/article/us-postal-service-250th-anniversary-f3767d7216b8779a95a6b27cd8082737>

I **HIGHLY RECOMMEND** you go to the original article for the story with excellent photos and illustrations - try Googling the title on the next line to find the full story

From Benjamin Franklin to Pony Express to anthrax: How the US Postal Service shaped a nation

By SUSAN HAIGH July 25, 2025

The one government agency that still reaches nearly every American daily — undeterred by rain, sleet, snow or even gloom of night — turns 250 on Saturday.

Established in 1775, when the Second Continental Congress appointed Benjamin Franklin as postmaster general, the postal service predates the United States itself. It was launched nearly a year before the colonies declared their break from British rule.

“The country may not even have come into existence but for the Postal Service,” said Stephen Allen Kochersperger, the postal service historian and a former local postmaster.

Now grappling with concerns over its financial viability, the independent agency has had a long and colorful history. It has grown from serving the 13 colonies to delivering more mail than any other postal system in the world, reaching nearly 169 million addresses and employing more than 635,000 people.

America's first postmaster

When the Continental Congress met in 1775, it had two main priorities: appoint a commander to lead the war against Britain and appoint a postmaster to oversee communication among the colonies.

Franklin was chosen because he had served in the British postal service for North America. He'd been dismissed in 1774, in part for his radical views.

The early American postal service linked colonial leaders and the Continental Army. It also helped unify the diverse, fragmented colonies by spreading ideas of liberty and independence through letters, newspapers and pamphlets.

“People were reading, getting ideas of what it would be like to be an independent country,” Kochersperger said.

Settlers, migration and roads: A nation connected

When the U.S. Constitution was ratified, Congress was granted power to establish post offices and mail routes — many along existing Native American trails. These post roads, first used by mail carriers on horseback, were upgraded for stagecoaches. Some evolved into highways still used today.

Historians have said this aided settler expansion into Native lands and was intertwined with the displacement of tribes.

As western migration accelerated, mail was sent by ship from New York to Central America and on to California. Delivery typically took two to three months.

A new business model: Putting a stamp on it

Before the advent of stamps, postage was generally collected in cash from the recipient.

“By the mid 19th century, the problem is developing that the post office is carrying a lot of letters for which it's never actually getting paid,” said Daniel Piazza, chief curator of philately at the Smithsonian National Postal Museum.

With no home delivery, recipients either didn't want the letters or were unaware of them. Postmasters paid to publish in newspapers lists of people with mail piling up.

In 1847, the first U.S. postage stamps were issued. Making postage prepaid saved the post office the trouble of chasing down its money.

“That's a business model that's pioneered in 1847 that is still the basic business model of the postal service today,” Piazza said.

A postal precursor: The Pony Express comes ... and goes

While the Pony Express is legendary, it only lasted about 18 months.

Operated by private carriers from April 3, 1860, to Oct. 26, 1861, a relay system of riders on horseback carried mail, often from San Francisco or Sacramento, California, to St. Joseph, Missouri, the furthest westward railroad stop. The 1,800-mile (2,900-kilometer) journey took 10 days.

As a West Coast stock market emerged, most mail was financial, Piazza said. Businesses needed to send stock quotes and commodity prices across the country.

“And so they're willing to pay exorbitant amounts of money to do that,” Piazza said. “The Pony Express was very, very expensive.”

While U.S. postage to send a letter was 10 cents in 1860, it initially cost an additional \$5 to send mail by Pony Express — close to \$200 today. Piazza said the service was scuttled by the Civil War and made obsolete with the advent of the telegraph.

Later, the transcontinental railroad reduced mail delivery from months to days.

A war and sad tidings streamlined home mail delivery

After early experimentation, free mail delivery to homes began in earnest in the nation's largest cities in 1863.

During the Civil War, the only communication from a father, brother, husband or son usually came through letter-writing. The postal service let soldiers send mail for free and vote by mail — an early forerunner of mail-in ballots.

Women lined up daily at post offices, awaiting word. Sometimes they got their own letters back, with a note saying their loved one had been killed.

“And that was a terrible scene at the post office that played out almost every day,” Kochersperger said.

Postal officials in Cleveland decided to take mail to people's homes out of compassion, he said. The idea spread quickly.

City home delivery proved popular, but nearly two-thirds of Americans still lived in rural areas by the end of the 19th century. Demand was so great that rural free delivery, or RFD, began expanding rapidly around 1900.

Postal innovations: Using Army planes and pilots

While authorized air mail flights began in 1911, the nation's first regularly scheduled air mail service began on May 15, 1918. The initial routes were between Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and New York, using Army pilots and planes.

The post office soon took over air mail, running operations for nine years until turning to fledgling private airline companies, some of which remain major airlines.

In the early days, flights were so dangerous that some pilots dubbed themselves the Suicide Club. Thirty-two pilots were killed, including four whose planes caught fire in flight, according to the National Postal Museum. There were no commercial aviation systems, navigational tools or radios, and pilots relied on landmarks to find their way.

“These pilots were flying in open cockpits and all kinds of weather. It was very risky,” Kochersperger said.

FDR's New Deal brings the nation new post offices

Part of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal plan to address the Great Depression was to put people to work on federal construction projects. That included roughly 2,000 new post offices.

A portion of each building's budget was reserved for artwork, such as murals. Hundreds of post offices still house original art from the era.

During World War II, the 6888th Central Postal Battalion, or the Six Triple Eight, an all-Black and all-female unit of the Women's Army Corps, went overseas to tackle a massive backlog of undelivered mail for troops in Europe, many of whom had been reassigned.

The unit's motto was, “No mail, low morale.” It cleared the backlog in three months.

A population boom and five digits transform mail service

After World War II, the economy boomed — and so did the population.

The post office needed a faster way to sort massive amounts of mail. It could no longer do so by hand.

On July 1, 1963, each post office was given a five-digit ZIP code.

“Previously, clerks had to memorize thousands of points of address information so they could sort the mail,” Kochersperger said. “With the ZIP code, you didn't have to memorize anything.”

The public was skeptical at first, balking at more numbers. So, the post office came up with a friendly cartoon character named Mr. ZIP, who helped convince people their mail would arrive faster.

It took some getting used to, but it worked.

“Today, can you imagine life without a ZIP code?” Kochersperger asked.

A mail workers' strike led to restructuring and bargaining rights

In 1970, a strike was called over low wages by leaders of the National Association of Letter Carriers union in New York and quickly broadened in scope.

After about 200,000 workers joined the first U.S. postal strike, President Richard Nixon called up the National Guard to help sort mail. But it was a “disaster” after two days, Kochersperger said.

The strike led to the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970, which authorized collective bargaining rights for postal workers. It also transformed the taxpayer-supported Post Office Department into the United States Postal Service, a financially self-sustaining and independent agency within the executive branch.

The postmaster general would work for a board of governors instead of reporting to the president. The U.S. Postal Service would set its own rates, control its finances and decide post office locations.

How anthrax attacks reshaped the postal service

Weeks after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, four threatening letters contaminated with anthrax were sent through the mail, including to two U.S. senators. Two workers at a mail distribution center in Washington, D.C., died after breathing in the spores.

Three other people were killed, and more than a dozen were sickened. Following a nine-year investigation, authorities concluded the person who mailed the anthrax had taken his own life in 2008 and the case was closed, but new precautions were added to protect workers.

“It changed the whole way that we sorted mail at that time,” Kochersperger said.

Years later, postal workers would be designated essential workers during the COVID-19 pandemic and don protective gear again.

What’s next for the USPS?

The advent of the internet and private companies like Amazon has taken a bite out of mail volume, threatening the postal service’s financial viability. A 10-year modernization effort was launched to keep up with the times.

Reaction has been mixed, but David Steiner, the agency’s newly appointed postmaster general, says some improvements have been made.

Steiner, a former FedEx board member, wants to help keep the service self-sustaining. He has said he opposes privatization, an idea raised by President Donald Trump and billionaire Elon Musk, and believes the agency has a bright future as an independent entity.

“There is much to build upon in the years ahead,” he said.

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