



WILKINSBURG STAMP CLUB NEWSLETTER

Meets 2nd and 4th Sundays

June 1994

Box 8711, Wilkinsburg, PA 15221

A. P. S Chapter 1214

We would like to welcome six new members to the WSC: Lisa A. Scales, Ronald A. Hagan Jr., Robert J. Schafer, former member Alex F. Hatok, Gloria F. Tepke, and Elizabeth E. Sukowski.

Beginning with this meeting, members will be encouraged to present a small informal discussion of a topic, country, or any other speciality, to the club. It is hoped that these talks will encourage everyone to participate and have fun with the hobby. Parvin Lippincott will start the ball rolling with a talk on Venezuelan Fiscal Postal Issues following the regular meeting this Sunday, June 12th.

All items ordered from Scott should be here at our first meeting this month, including Volume I of the 1995 Catalogue, mounts, hinges, stock books, supplements, ultra-violet lamps, albums, and binders. After our second monthly meeting another order will be sent to Scott for Volume II of the 1995 Catalogue and any other Scott items you order at that meeting. Linn's 1993 Yearbook is now available at much less than advertised prices. Ask Lou about this item. Retail is \$18.

There will be a Scott Catalogue each month from now until December (U.S.Specialized). A new Classic Catalogue will appear in November.

As usual, a new circuit will be on the table.

Have you noticed how many ads there are in Linn's classified section each week for phone cards? Even Herrick has an ad every once in a while for them. Revco drug stores had/have them for sale at reduced prices a few weeks ago.

A phone-card subculture is emerging. 3,000 people attended the first U.S. phone-card convention last March in San Francisco. One is planned for New York this Fall.

Phone-card collecting is very popular in Europe already. Prepaid phone cards have been in use there for years. The U.S. market is just getting started. Two years ago just about a dozen companies issued prepaid phone cards here in the USA. Now about 130 companies issued them. However, the nation's three biggest long distance carriers--AT&T, Sprint, and MCI--have shown only mild interest.

Prepaid phone cards, also called telecards or debit cards, allow you to make long-distance phone calls without coins or a credit card. You pay for the card up front, in denominations of \$2 to \$100. Then you call a toll-free number, punch in the card's account number, and place your call. The account is drawn down as you talk. When the time is used up, you can throw

the card away.

Then again, you may want to keep it.

A card that New York Telephone handed out at the 1992 Democratic Convention was worth \$1 in phone time. Most people threw them away. Now an unused card is worth \$1,700.

If you were among the thousands of McDonald's customers who bought Extra Value Meals last summer, MAYBE you still have that free AT&T card that came with your burger and fries. That card is now worth \$125.

There are now only about 5,000 phone card collectors in the U.S. Within two years they may become the world's hottest collectibles, bigger than coins, baseball cards, or stamps.

Long-distance deregulation and technological advances have enabled nearly anyone to buy blocks of phone time and sell prepaid cards. The market is being flooded by flashy cards, often issued in limited runs of 1,000 or 2,000. The variety of cards is limited only by the bounds of good taste, and sometimes not even by that. There are crds featuring Elvis, Marilyn Monroe, sports heroes, and animals. One even shows eight swimsuit-clad Playmates crammed into a phone booth.

Will these be hot items at WILKPEX '95?

It was suggested at the May 22nd meeting that a survey be placed in the next Newsletter to determine why members do not attend the Sunday meetings. Therefore, please cut along the dotted line and give this survey to an officer of the club or please sent it to our post office box.

.....NNNN.....
Name _____ WSC # _____

Do you attend the meetings regularly? Yes _____ No _____

If "YES" : Why do you attend regularly? _____

If "No" : Why don't you attend regularly? _____

Would you suggest a different day, time, location? _____

Would you be willing to give a presentation/short program to help build up interest? _____ Topic _____

Suggestions/comments: _____
