



WILKINSBURG STAMP CLUB NEWS

Volume 22, Issue 1, January 2024

Wilkinsburg Stamp Club is a member of APS #12293

www.wilkinsburgstampclub.com

Meeting Schedule: 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. Doors open at 12:30 PM and meetings start at 2:00 PM.

Churchill Borough Building, 2300 William Penn Hwy, Churchill PA 15235

WILKPEX 2024 – Friday and Saturday April 12 (10 AM – 4 PM) & 13 (10 AM – 3 PM), 2024 – Holiday Park Fire Department, Plum PA.

Wilkinsburg Stamp Club News

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

- Dues are due for 2024! Please fill out the coupon on the bottom of the page and please return with a check made out to the Wilkinsburg Stamp Club. You can mail it to WSC C/O D. Weaver, 3710 Henley Dr, Pgh 15235

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

How do you **want** to get the newsletter? Email only ____ Mail only ____


Dues - \$8 per individual, \$4 additional per immediate family member (same household), \$2 junior member (under 16)

- **Holiday Party:**

- We had 16 people at our Holiday Party! The food from Jaden’s was great, and everyone got to take home leftovers! We had cheesy potatoes from Ann Pascal (unless I am wrong and they were from Rose Pascal) which were super-tasty and Danielle’s world-famous orange cake and punch. Everyone got a Christmas spray-on cancelled stamp and a scratch-off ticket, and the most fun was provided by John who had a word search and trivia game. Maureen won the trivia game, Dave P was second and Marti and Dave D tied for third. It was a wonderful way to go into the holidays!



- **WILKPEX 2024:**

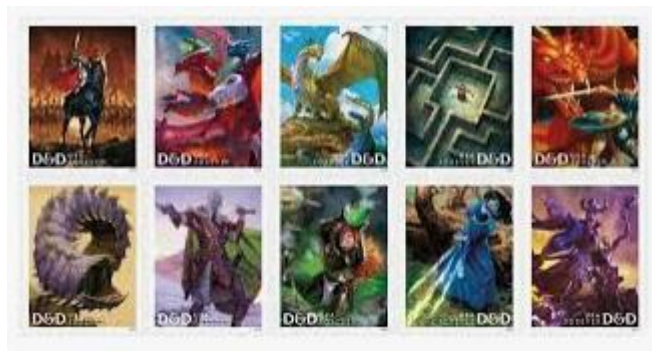
- Dates and times are Friday 4/12 10 – 4 and Saturday 4/13 10 – 3. The down payment for the hall has been submitted.
- We are looking for 2 chairmen for the show – for Advertising and for Welcome. If you are interested please let Deb know as soon as possible.
- Gene announced that Jim Leyland will be the subject of the 2024 cachet.
- We will have at least 1 large jar of various stamps to raffle off at the greeting table. All donations accepted!
- Stay tuned for more details! 



- The shadow box has a new home for 2024! Dave D donated \$6 to the club for the honor of having the box next year!
 - This tradition was started by Danielle in 2017 after she saw a similar event at a Postmaster's convention – they had a painting that was "auctioned off" each year to raise money – the winner got to keep it for the next year. Our shadowbox has been won each year (except 2020 – stupid Covid) with the money going to the club.

Philatelic News

- Initial US Issues for 2024 (Part 3):
 - Ansel Adams (16), Dungeons and Dragons (20)



- John Wooden, Carnival Rides (10)



As always, there may be more announced throughout the year.

- January 2024 US Stamps issues (as of now):
 - Love – F - (1/12) – 2024's Love stamp, an annual tradition.
 - Pillars of Creation (\$9.85) and Cosmic Cliffs (\$30.45) - (1/22) – The Priority Mail Stamps, with images from the James Webb Space Telescope.
 - Year of the Dragon – F – (1/25) – Next in the current Lunar New Year series.

- Constance Baker Motley – F – (1/31) – The 47th stamp in the Black Heritage Series honors the first Black woman to serve as a US Federal Judge.



Don't forget – On Sunday January 21st first-class postage goes up to \$0.68!

Collector's Corner

- Show and Tell is at the second meeting of each month. Please bring an item to show and talk about. It can be about a topic other than stamps. Sharing the story is the important part.
- You can find old albums all over the place! My brother uses a local Philadelphia-area online auction house to bid for old albums and loose stamps, and found a really cool home-made Airmail FDC album for \$10. Check out estate sales and antique stores too – you might find something cool for a little and even if you cannot use the materials you can always bring them to a club meeting or sell them at the Phlea at WILKPEX!

Phony postage stamp discounts are scamming online buyers: What to know

Opinion by Susan Tompor, Detroit Free Press/USA Today • 12/20/2023

Just as you are scrambling to send those last-minute holiday cards, maybe with a last-minute gift card to a favorite store or restaurant tucked inside, we're being warned of yet another scam.

OK, wait for it. Ever heard of the postage stamp scam?

Seriously?

Oddly enough, more consumers are complaining that they're running into fake websites selling counterfeit postage stamps at bargain prices, according to a December alert from the Better Business Bureau.

I guess it shouldn't be all that surprising as consumer watchdogs told us early in the season to expect a flurry of phony websites. The fake sites aim to rip off consumers by offering fantastic bargains. What you'll get can range from counterfeit goods to oddball items in a box, like cheap 3D glasses, instead of what you ordered. Or you might spend money and receive nothing at all.

Shoppers need to be careful because the crooks will impersonate big-name brands, mirroring the look and design of legitimate sites, like Lululemon.

We're also seeing websites impersonating the United States Postal Service.

A Google search for 'Can I Buy Stamps Online?' can trick you

The con artists know that consumers will do a Google search to find all sorts of items being sold online, including holiday stamps, when they're in a rush and don't have time to go to a store or the post office.

"After a quick Google search for stamps, you click on a link that advertises a 50% discount on stamps," according to the BBB warning.

But, again this shouldn't be a surprise, the postal service isn't offering any half-off sales on stamps. Instead, the postal service is raising the price of its first-class Forever Stamps to 68 cents from 66 cents, beginning Jan. 21.

Yet, scammers are hoping that you'll suspend reality a bit when you spot a deal online and think, 'Wow, I just found a great bargain while I had absolutely no time to go to the post office.'

So you buy the stamps. You enter your personal information and credit card details.

"Later, you see the charge to your credit card was made by someone's PayPal account – not USPS," the BBB warned.

When you try to contact the customer service department, you might get an email back from a scammer who continues to impersonate someone from the post office.

One consumer told the BBB: "I called my bank and then emailed the helpline listed on the page about canceling my order. I received an email from uspsfaststamps@hotmail.com stating that I was being refunded. However, that pending refund transaction later disappeared from my credit card account."

How can you tell if new stamps are fake?

The most frequently counterfeit stamp typically has the American flag on it.

But Andrea Avery, assistant inspector in charge of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service, noted in a YouTube video that counterfeiters are using designs of other stamps, too, adding that one seizure included batches of the more colorful patriotic spiral or starburst stamps. These stamps were initially issued in 2016.

I spotted an offer online for 100 of the spiral Forever USA stamps, stamps with a gold star in the middle of the design, selling for \$29.99 – which amounts to roughly 30 cents a stamp at a time when the price of one Forever Stamp is now 66 cents.

A Forever stamp bought years ago, even if you paid far less for it, can be used now to mail a one-ounce letter. That's true no matter how high the price of stamps goes in the future. It's "Forever."

The first Forever Stamp was issued in April 2007 and it featured an image of the Liberty Bell.

One consumer reported to the BBB: "I ordered postage stamps online. They do not work and if you look at them closely, they are not legitimate."

The postal service issued an alert in July to warn consumers to watch out for bogus stamps, noting that the number of counterfeit stamps being sold from online platforms has escalated. Other warnings about fake stamps were issued back during the 2021 holiday season too.

"Scammers peddle fake stamps on social media marketplaces, e-commerce sites via third-party vendors, and other websites," according to the 2023 alert from the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

Online promotions might offer fake stamps at 20% to 50% below their face value.

It's best to buy stamps from the post office or from approved vendors, which can include legitimate "big box" or warehouse retailers who can provide an extremely

small but legitimate discount on postage stamps through resale agreements with the postal service.

Major retailers, such as Kroger, CVS and Walgreens, also sell books of stamps, if you're unable to get to a post office.

Costco Wholesale had 100 stamps – five books of 20 stamps each – listed online for \$65.75. That's a 25-cent savings total for Forever Stamps that cost 66 cents each. You're saving a quarter. Shipping and handling are included. The stamps are also sold at the stores.

The tips for avoiding the stamp scam are similar to those offered to avoid other online shopping scams: Check the website's URL for slightly misspelled words or other red flags of a fake site. Be extremely wary of deals you see promoted on social media.

One final tip that will last forever: Keep in mind that some deals really are way too good to be true.

Contact personal finance columnist Susan Tompor: stompor@freepress.com. Follow her on X (Twitter) @tompor.



Upcoming Events Nearby

- March 2 – 3 – McKinney Stamp Show, Canton OH
- March 15 – 17 – The Garfield-Perry 2024 March Party – Strongsville OH
- March 23 – 24 – BUFFPEX, Cheektoaga NY
- April 12 – 13 2024 – WILKPEX. Plum PA
- May 2024 – Butlerpex, Butler (Lyndora) PA

For more details google the stamp club or look at the latest issue of the American Philatelist Magazine.



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All are welcome! Free admission! Great snacks! Stamps! Fun for all!

WILKPEX – Our Annual Stamp Show

2024 – April 12 (10 AM – 4 PM) & 13(10 AM – 3 PM) – Holiday Park Fire Hall, Plum PA.

Officers:

President (Acting): Maureen McKeever (maurmomck@gmail.com)
Vice President: Laura Kaczynski (laurakac13@verizon.net)
Treasurer: David Albert (ddalbert@aol.com)
Secretary/Newsletter Editor: Maureen McKeever (maurmomck@gmail.com)
Web Tech: Dave Duggins (davidfduggins@gmail.com)
Membership & Circuit Mgr: Danielle Weaver (dmm742000@yahoo.com)

WSC c/o Danielle Weaver, 3710 Henley Drive, Pittsburgh PA 15235

Newsletter:

Original articles for the newsletter can be submitted from any member to Maureen at a meeting or emailed to her (see above) or via regular mail:

Maureen McKeever, 118 Larchwood Drive, Turtle Creek PA 15145.

Club members will be mailed a black and white copy of the newsletter each month. Anyone can request a color copy to be delivered at a meeting, but please let Stevan or Chris (stevanw2020@gmail.com) know ahead of time.



(Here comes all of your LATE Christmas presents!)