

# The PhilateliKid

**The newsletter for Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids (SCCFK)**

**Collect Stamps (The Most Educational Hobby)**

[www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org](http://www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org)

July 1, 2018

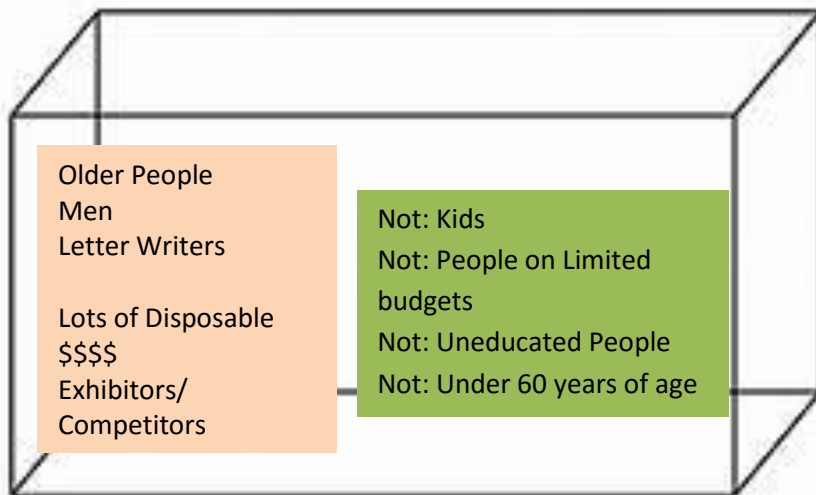
**Stampshow, Greater Columbus Convention Center, 400 N. High St., Columbus, Ohio**

## **How to Establish and Run Successful Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids**

Details about beginning and running a successful stamp collecting club for kids will be the subject of a 1-hour seminar provided by Robert W. Martin at 11 a.m. on Thursday, August 9, 2018, tentatively scheduled to be held in Room B 231. If you are interested in the future of our hobby, you are encouraged to attend. Be sure to check listings at the Show for any last-minute changes of time or place.

### **Thinking Outside the Box**

**NOW**



**GOAL**



A lot of ink has been used by numerous people to write articles that address the problem of declining numbers of stamp collectors during the past 30 years. Let us start by acknowledging that the problem is not going to have a simple answer. If it were simple, then it would have been done already.

### **Some facts:**

In 1990, The APS membership was 57,684. By the end of 2017, membership had steadily declined to 29,706. That is an average NET LOSS of 1,036 members every year for the past 27 years. At that rate by August 30, 2045 there will be only three (3) members left. Of course, the organization will have arrived at its "critical mass" and will have collapsed long before then.

But, it gets worse. A few years prior to 1990 there was a second large national philatelic organization named The Society of Philatelic Americans. Its membership was 7,890 when it suddenly closed its doors on December 31, 1983. At that time (December 1983) the APS membership was 53,152. There were undoubtedly some people who were “dual” members, belonging to both national societies. If we estimate that 10% of the SPA members were dual members, then the total different members would be 7,101 SPA and 53,152 APS, totaling 60,253 different stamp collectors who belonged to at least one national philatelic society in the United States. Comparing that to the December 31, 2017 APS membership of 29,706, (and the SPA membership of zero) the combined number at the end of 2017 had dropped by 30,547 members in 34 years, which equates to a drop of over 50 percent.

## **Explanations being offered for the decline in stamp collecting**

If we look at various authors postulations for the decline in membership in philatelic societies, we see that the number one reason put forth is DEATH of members. In reality, that is somewhat misleading, since the BIRTHS in the United States during that period exceeded the deaths. What that means is that the percent of stamp collectors in the general public was declining, and it had nothing to do with deaths.

A variety of various other “reasons” have been postulated for the decline of the number of stamp collectors. One of those “reasons” that is oft heard is that “kids today just don’t want to collect stamps.” This is the frequent lamentation uttered by grandfathers who have no children or grandchildren that are interested in their collection. That personal observance is then extrapolated into a nationwide lack of interest.

May I suggest a comparison: A medical doctor dedicated his entire life to serving the health needs of his patients, but had little time to spend with his family. His wife divorced him. His children chose to go into occupations other than doctoring, because they wanted to be able to spend more time with their families than Dad, the doctor had spent with them.. The doctor’s grandchildren saw Grandpa even less frequently than his children did, and they did not like the drawbacks of his occupation either. So the doctor, based on his personal experience, extrapolated that kids today “just are not interested in becoming doctors.” To continue the example, a group of those grandpa doctors got together one day and shared their personal experiences, and found that the vast majority of their children and grandchildren did not want to become doctors. Based on the even larger sample, the conclusion that “kids just don’t want to become doctors” soon became accepted as fact.

Today another “explanation” of declining numbers of stamp collectors is “there are just too many other things for kids to do.” On the surface, that might be true, but so what? Suppose there are a trillion other things kids (and adults) can be doing, but the fact still remains that most of us can do only one thing at a time, and each of us has to make difficult choices between several desirable things to do, with only 24 hours in the day. But...the number of the hours in the day is the same today as it was 60 years ago. It is a matter of prioritizing, and the things that get the highest priority get done, and the millions of other things that do not get done have lower priority. **PRIORITY** is what matters.

The reality is that for kids to prioritize something, it has to be repeatedly presented in a positive light, and almost never in a negative light. Kids today do exactly that in politics, religion, sports, alma maters, place of residence, food eaten, lifestyle choices, hobbies, and so forth. But that happens because of the frequent positive reinforcement of the happiness such activities bring.

After a while, the influence of peers (other children) takes over. This peer influence is seen today by kids sporting blue, green or bright red hair color. Sixty years ago, so many kids were collecting stamps that it was common for a kid to learn about our hobby from his peers. That is not the case today.

### Face Different Stamps (“fd” for short)

Beginning stamp collectors often are interested in obtaining stamps that on the face of the stamp appear different. Many beginning stamp collectors are NOT EVEN AWARE that minute differences can result in a collectible variety, and if they were aware, they would choose to get face different stamps, assuming their budget is not unlimited. Beginners would favor two different stamps, one with a dog, and another with a cat, than two stamps with the same dog, appearing the same, but with perforations that are minutely different, or some other minor variation.

Take a close look at these two stamps. They are Scott 2913 and 2915A. The only difference is that the stamp on the left is perforated (holes punched into the paper and the round hole removed) and the stamp on the right is serrated. Look carefully at the enlargements and you will notice that the stamp on the right has “teeth” on the curvy edges, and the stamp on the left is clear on the inside of the holes, and that the “tooth”



sticking out has (sometimes) tiny fibers sticking out of it, from where the stamp was torn apart from the adjoining stamp. Serrated stamps are not torn apart – they peel apart. These two stamps appear the same as far as the printed matter (face), so they are “face-same” stamps. (“fs” for short.)

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Now take a look at these two stamps. The one on the left is Scott 5061. The one on the right is Scott



5172. The design of the stamps is the same. There are five (5) differences in these stamps. Two of the differences are major, and three of the differences are minor. Can you spot the differences? (Answers at the bottom.)

There are many differences of minor variations that can occur between stamps. It is true that upon large enough magnification, every stamp ever printed is slightly different from every other stamp, if one is to consider tiny variations of inking, and imperfections in paper. So, for the purpose of most stamp collectors, differences have to be major enough to be immediately noticeable.

Major Difference #1. Stamp on left has no border. Stamp on right has blue border.

Major difference #2. Font size of stamp on left is larger than the font on the stamp on the right.

Minor difference #1. Date on stamp on left, in lower right corner (in gray ink.) - 2016

Minor difference #2. Date on stamp on right is in lower left blue border (white.) – 2017

Minor difference #3. Plate number at bottom is in different colored ink. (“P” is blue vs. white, etc.)

**Stamp Collecting Clubs for Kids is a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are greatly appreciated and if \$10 or more are provided written receipts. You also can donate via PayPal on our website.**

Visit our website at [www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org](http://www.stampcollectingclubsforkids.org) or [www.yummystampcollecting.org](http://www.yummystampcollecting.org)

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