THE Postscript
Tallahassee Stamp & Cover Club

American Philatelic Society
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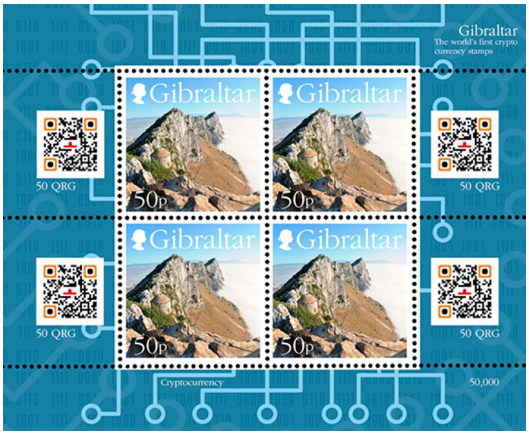
Crypto Currency On Stamps *by Dr. Hemanth Setty*

Stamps go digital, how interesting. The technology involved in creating cryptocurrency is complicated and is difficult to understand without an IT background. My goal here is to make aware of the changes that are happening in our surroundings and adaptation of new technology in philately. The digital way of storing money is called cryptocurrency. It is an innovative new financial technology. One should understand that it does not exist in physical form, like the paper money. It forms a medium of exchange where individual coin ownership records are stored in a computerized database with strong cryptography (encrypted algorithm) for secured transactions. Remember that they are not issued by a central authority or central banking systems. Anybody with a strong algorithmic knowledge can issue cryptocurrency and each cryptocurrency works through distributed ledger technology, typically a blockchain that serves as a public financial transaction database. Bitcoin was the first decentralized cryptocurrency issued in 2009. Presently there are several types of cryptocurrencies.

Gibraltar is the first country in the world to issue crypto currency stamp sheet featuring the Rock of Gibraltar in 2018. The 50p stamp and its four-stamp collector block with 4 identical QR Codes was been created by graphics designer Mr. Stephen Perera.



Meeting Dates & Presentations, 2020

Jan. 14, Ed Malin - Panama Canal Philately
Feb. 11, Dana Bryan - US #8 Certification
Mar. 10, Cancelled due to Covid-19
Apr. 4-5, Cancelled due to Covid-19
Apr. 14, Cancelled due to Covid-19
May 12, Cancelled due to Covid-19
Jun. 9, Cancelled due to Covid-19
Jul. 14, Cancelled due to Covid-19
Aug. 11, Cancelled due to Covid-19
Sep. 8, Cancelled due to Covid-19
Oct. 13, Getting Back Together (at IHop)
Nov. 10, Single Page Exhibit (at IHop)
Dec. 8, Annual Christmas Party (at IHop)

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- **The date for TALPEX 2021 has been set for March 27 and 28, 2021. While it is the same weekend as Springtime Tallahassee (if there is going to be Springtime,) it seemed to be the best timeframe for our usual dealers.**
- **CORRECTION: The last issue of *Postscript* stated that Scott no longer lists values for U and UX cut squares. That statement was incorrect. The new Scott 2021 US Specialized catalog still lists values for cut squares of the U or envelope category. The UX (Postal Cards) are now only values at an "entire" piece.**
- **The November meeting will be our annual Single Page Exhibit night. Bring your exhibit. With anticipated low turnout for the meeting, you have a better chance at winning an award.**
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Crypto Currency On Stamps *by Dr. Hemanth Setty (cont'd.)*

The QR Codes can be scanned with a smartphone/tablet and offers the opportunity for first time owners of these collectible blocks to collect free crypto coins which will can be freely traded. They have created a website to monitor the transactions. The first time owners can redeem 200 QRG Cryptocurrency tokens/coins for each block of these stamps. Each sheet is printed with a unique serial number. A total of Top of Form 50,000 blocks of four 50p have been issued. They are presently in high demand.

Source: https://www.gibraltar-stamps.com/index.php?controller=stamps&action=issue&id=640

Gibraltar was followed by Austria in 2019 (Scott 2801). Austrian post, on June 11, 2019, officially released stamps with digital asset which is securely stored on the Ethereum blockchain. Stamps can be fully utilitzed for postage of mail and also as a virtual collector's item.

Source: https://www.post.at/

Above are the set of 5 crypto stamps released by Austria. There are five different colors with varying degrees of scarcity. The set of five colors of stamps released are Red (1500 pieces), Yellow (10,000 pieces), Blue (20,000 pieces), Green (40,000 pieces) and Black (78,500 pieces). Designed by Julia Obermüller, the stamps have a denomination of 6.90 Euro (about 0.022 Ether, as of June 26, 2019.)

Crypto Currency On Stamps *by Dr. Hemanth Setty (cont'd.)*

Source: https://www.post.at/

The stamps look like a bank card with crucial identification concealed under scratch layers which is on the left side. They are also referred to as "wallet" that holds the full access to the code. When the crypto stamp is transferred from one particular wallet to another, then the transition is effectively documented and accepted in the blockchain. On the right side is the actual postage stamp that can be detached and used for mailing. The mythical creature, unicorn, depicted on the stamp block symbolizes the rarity in the business world. The successful startup companies, worth one billion US dollars, are referred to as unicorns. The unicorn is also the heraldic animal used to represent the Ethereum community.

First Day Cover

I was fortunate to secure few covers with Austrian crypto stamps postally used on the covers. All stamps look alike and you will only know the color of the stamp when you scan the QR code.

In the world of technology things are changing constantly. Even stamps are not spared. Hope this will help in drawing new collectors and keep stamp collecting interesting.

Postally used crypto stamps from Wattens, Austria to Tallahassee, Florida.

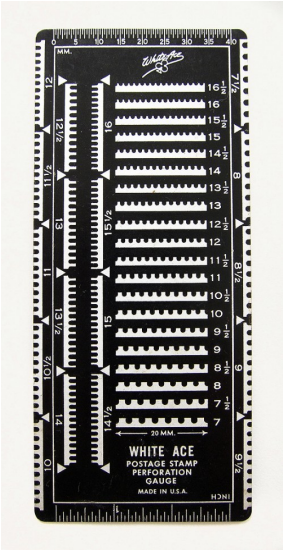
Expertizing U.S. Red & Green Coils plus Perfs *by Dr. Mike Francis*

When attempting to identify the 1¢ green Franklin and the 2¢ red Washington coils issued by the United States from 1908 to 1923, there is a required level of expertise in order to properly identify the stamp. An even greater level of expertise is needed to identify modified regular sheet stamps that someone attempted to make look like a valid coil issue.

In the September 21, 2020 issue of Linn's Stamp News, John M. Hotchner wrote an excellent article about the above topic. John is a recognized expert in this area and I would recommend to anyone collecting the Reds and Greens U.S. coils to read this article. My purpose with my article is not to duplicate what Mr. Hotchner has written but to talk about the perforation gauge measurements used to determine a fake or real stamp. John talks about this in his article with examples therefore I am simply expanding the topic for those who do not receive Linn's Stamp News.

We all use perforation gauges to measure stamps but, for the stamps in question, the distance between the center of the perf holes becomes critical. It is best to have a pair of the stamps to measure the distance but it can be measured with a single stamps. John's article referenced the 1960s Kiusalas United States Specialist Gauge. As stated on the gauge "A PERFORATION GAUGE DESIGNED WITH EXTREME ACCURACY FOR USE ON U.S. STAMPS ONLY."

The 1965 Kiusalas Gauge



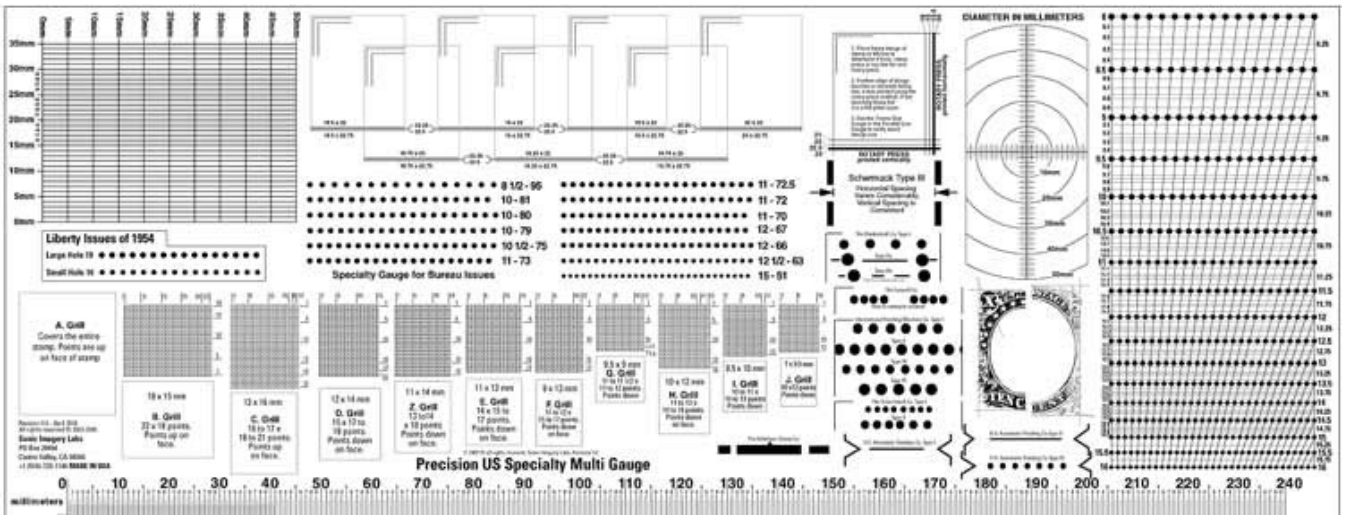
The White Ace Perf Gauge without the open slits on the left side

While the Europeans used the metric system and measured perforations in millimeters, the United States used fractions of an inch. Oddly enough, the U.S. number of perfs is not per inch but actually the number of perforations in 2cm. When dealing with the Red/Green coils, there might be a perforation measure of 10-80. While the 10 is the numbers of perfs in 2cm, the 80 represents the distance between the center of perforation holes in thousands of an inch. So while the collector sees a perf of 12, it is actually 12-66 which was used on all U.S. stamps from 1861 until 1914 with a limited exception of the 1910 coil issue. The last time 12-66 was used is on the Overrun Nations stamps issued in 1943. The Scott Catalog simply lists the stamp as perforation 12. The collector can use the standard perf gauge to measure 12-66 by simply holding the stamp up the 12 perf line on the gauge. As a point of interest, the perforation 12 U.S. Revenue high value stamps are not 12-66 but 12-67.

You can still find the Kiusalas Gauge on the internet. Prices range from $16 up to $40. There is a more modern device for measuring hole spacing and that is to use the Sonic Imagery Labs Precision U.S. Specialty Multi-Gauge. It replaces the Kiusalas Gauge plus has eleven more tools to aid in measuring almost any characteristic of a U.S. stamp except its color. I have been using the tool

Expertizing U.S. Red & Green Coils plus Perfs *by Dr. Mike Francis (cont'd.)*

for close to 15 years. The latest revision to the tool was in August 2016 and the version number is 12 and the revision level is 5.2. The Specialty Perf Gauge is accurately based on the Kiusalas Specialist Gauge. This gauge does have the center hole measurements and even has the 12-66 and 12-67. Note that the gauge is insensitive to heat and time.



As always, if you have a question about the authenticity of a Reg/Green U.S. issue, members in the club will help with the identification. If the stamps appears to be one of the more valuable issues, then send it to the American Philatelic Society Expertizing Committee. The committee members are masters at what they can accomplish. While there are local stamp experts here in Tallahassee, the national committee has a collective amount of experience and access to scientific equipment not available to the local club members.

The Multi-Gauge can be found on the internet. Ebay has it from $13 to $22. If you buy one, zoom in on the image on the website and you will see the revision number under the magnifying glass under the words Multi-Gauge. Most of the ones on the internet are Revision 5.1 but check out the site www.slingshotvenus.com and see what is included with Revision 5.2 and what the gauge actually accomplishes. Each revision over the years has fine tuned the measurement capability of the gauge.

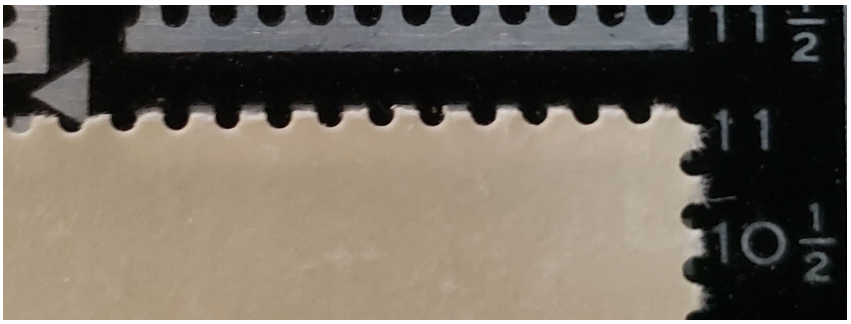
Speaking of measuring perforations, the Multi-Gauge can measure in ¼, ½ and ¾ from 10 perf up to 16 perf. It can also measure 10.1—10.9 up to 14.1-14.9.

Still speaking of measuring perforations, many collectors do not know that it is easier to read the perforation gauge, especially the black White Ace gauge, when the stamp is placed face down on the surface. The perforations appear to show up clearer. Also, while the back of the stamp is facing you, start the perf measuring from the right side of the stamp onto the right side of the perf measuring line. If the gauge matches you should not be able to see the raised up perfs on the gauge. This technique is visually more effective than trying to fill the stamp perfs into the holes between the raised gauge perfs.

continued on next page

Expertizing U.S. Red & Green Coils plus Perfs *by Dr. Mike Francis (cont'd.)*

Below are examples of a perforation 11 measurement and a perforation 10¾ measurement. Using the White Ace perf gauge, which is the most commonly used gauge here in the United States, there is no 10¾ perf measurement. All gauge measurements are in ½ or whole increments. The second image below shows a simple way around this problem by noticing the perf offset as you look from right to left down the perf line. Using the 10½ per line, a 10¾ per stamp will start showing up before the raised perfs on the gauge. Conversely, a 10¼ perf stamp will start showing up after the raised perfs on the 10½ gauge line.



The perf 11 stamps completely covers the raised perfs on the gauge starting from the right side. The reason the stamp being face down is that the stamp image will not distract or interfere with your vision.

In this image, the perf gauge line is 10½ but the stamp is Scott 5257 which is 10¾ x 10½. Since the perf gauge does not have a 10¾ measurement, use the 10½ line. As the perfs move from right to left the stamp perfs start to show up before the gauge perfs. This means the stamp is slightly more than perf 10½. In this case it is 10¾. Conversely, with a 10¼ perf stamp, the stamp perfs would start showing up after the gauge perfs meaning the stamp is a perforation somewhat less than 10½. The same "before and after" technique works on any line for any perforation measurement. For example, many modern coil stamps are 9¼ or 9¾. Use the 9½ gauge line and perform the same technique.

The more accurate solution to this situation is to obtain a Precision Multi-Function Gauge or any other perforation measuring device that has fractional decimal increments as well as the ¼ and ¾ perforation increments.

Color Study of Early U.S. Postage Dues *by Dr. Mike Francis*

This article is at the request of club Treasurer Dana Bryan. Dana thought a short study of the color varieties of the early U.S. Postage Due stamps would not only help him but many of the members of the club. He is absolutely correct assuming I identify the color of the stamps correctly. A word of caution when attempting to identify stamp colors: There are two main issues in this endeavor: 1) your eyes must be able to distinguish colors meaning no color blindness or any other color malformation of your eyes; and 2) color determination must always be done in either direct sunlight or with a sunlight spectrum lamp like an Ott light.

Of course, most of us can distinguish most colors i.e. red from orange, brown from blue. The problem with stamps is the variety of shades such as red, red rose, rose red, carmine rose and on and on. This article just focuses on the early Postage Due issues.

Another word of caution to collectors: please do not go by color descriptions on many of the websites unless they are being sold by a reputable stamp company. Every time I scan the web for stamps at least +50% of the color descriptions are wrong even allowing for display monitor differences.

Scott Catalog lists three major colors for U.S. J1—J28: brown, red brown and bright claret.

Under brown there is a brown, a pale and a deep variety. Under red brown there is a red brown, a pale and a deep variety except for J21 which is simply red brown with no deep or pale variety known. It would help to have a J21, 50c red brown postage due, for comparison but used it catalogs for $250. For the bright claret there is bright claret, pale claret and dark claret. Notice it is dark in color and not deep toned like the earlier issues. In this series it would be nice to have a J27, the 30¢, because it has no know variety but the 2021 used value is $225.

For the next series of issues, Scott J29—J68 there is vermillion, deep claret, pale rose, rose carmine, carmine lake, dull rose, rose, rose red, and the easiest one, the J68, ½¢ dull red which is the only color for this stamp.

The next design of the U.S. Postage Due issues are Scott J69-J87 with carmine, dull carmine, scarlet with its complication of dry and wet printing varieties.

Starting with J52, the perforations are no longer perf 12 but perf 10, 11 and 11x10½. This helps when you either have a J49a which is rose carmine and a J56a which is dull rose. While one might be able to tell the difference with these 10¢ stamps if the colors are crisp but the easy way is to just measure the perfs. J49a is perf 12 and J56a is perf 10. Another method to sort out J52 to J67 is to check for a watermark. If there is a Wmk. 190 (single line) on the stamp, it belongs in the J52-J58 series. With no watermark, the stamp is from the series J61-J67. Admittedly, the watermark check is not easy since the mark is a single line which barely shows up on some of the stamps in a sheet of 100.

On the next page are some examples of the different colors in each of the above mentioned series of postage due stamps. The vermillion stamps are easy because they are the only ones that have a minimal orange tint. Once you are comfortable with lake versus claret, the process becomes slightly easier. Overall though, many collectors struggle with the postage due colors. Fading, especially on the older stamps of the 1879—1891 tend to confuse the issue.

Color Study of Early U.S. Postage Dues *by Dr. Mike Francis (cont'd.)*

The J1 to J21 colors:

Brown

Deep Brown

Red Brown

J16 color samples. The pale red brown will generally appear washed out but there are clearer stamps that are still considered pale red brown.

red brown pale red brown dark red brown

J24 shown in bright claret and in dark claret.

J29 pale vermillion. Note that the postage due vermillion rarely has the orangish tint that other U.S. stamps exhibit.

deep claret claret lake

J36 shown in carmine.

J32 color shades. The scan is slightly off because there is a little too much reddish but the shades are close.

J31—J37 are J32 colors except for J36 which has a carmine and pale rose. J37 has a pale rose. The pale rose is light and easily distinguishable from the other colors.

J69—J86 can be identified by the perforations.

Color Study of Early U.S. Postage Dues *by Dr. Mike Francis (cont'd.)*

J38-J39 are deep claret and claret colors also with carmine and lake varieties. Shown at the right is J39 color varieties.

deep claret claret carmine lake

To the left is J40 rose red variety. The other colors of J40-J44 can be matched up with the J38-J39 colors above.

J41 has a carmine rose which will be close to the carmine color of J38.

J38-J44 is double line watermark.

J45 –J50 are deep claret with J45a J46a J48a J49a and J50a are rose carmine. J46 and J47 are the only two with the dark lake variety. This series has the single line watermark. Checking the watermark is the best way to distinguish stamps of this series from the J38-J44 since both series are perf 12. The J29-J37 series are unwatermarked. It is best to check for watermark since it is the only way to identify the deep claret stamps of these three series all being perf 12.

deep claret lake rose carmine

carmine rose red rose deep claret claret brown

J52-J58 series are carmine lake with sub catalog numbers such as J53a (dull rose) and J53b (vermillion.) Only J52 has a deep carmine lake variety. This series are all perf 10 and single line watermark. If you have trouble identifying the J52-J58 carmine lake colors from the J61-J67 carmine rose colors note that the J61-J67 are perf 11.

Note: the scan for claret brown is slightly more reddish than it should be. The claret brown has enough brown pigment to make it easy to identify.

Understanding U.S. WMK190 & WMK191

by Dr. Mike Francis

Over the last 40 years, as member of the TS&CC, I have been asked hundreds of times to help identify watermarks on U.S. stamps. Many club members have struggled over the years and still struggle with identifying U.S. watermarks. I still struggle at times today and this short article explains and demonstrates the problem. I just want collectors to know and understand that it nothing you are doing wrong. It is just made hard by the fact that the U.S. was simply negligent in laying out the watermark so each stamp has a complete imprint especially when the Post Office knew there were 100 stamps on each sheet. Most collectors will agree the U.S. was one, if not the worst, watermark user in the world at the time.

Taking a look at the two images to the right it is very easy to see why it is so hard to identify the 190 single line watermark (sl.) I will show you why it is sometimes hard to identify the 191 double line watermark (dl.) These images are readily available in the Scott Volume One and U.S. Specialized catalogs and was always in the back of the Harris United States stamp albums.

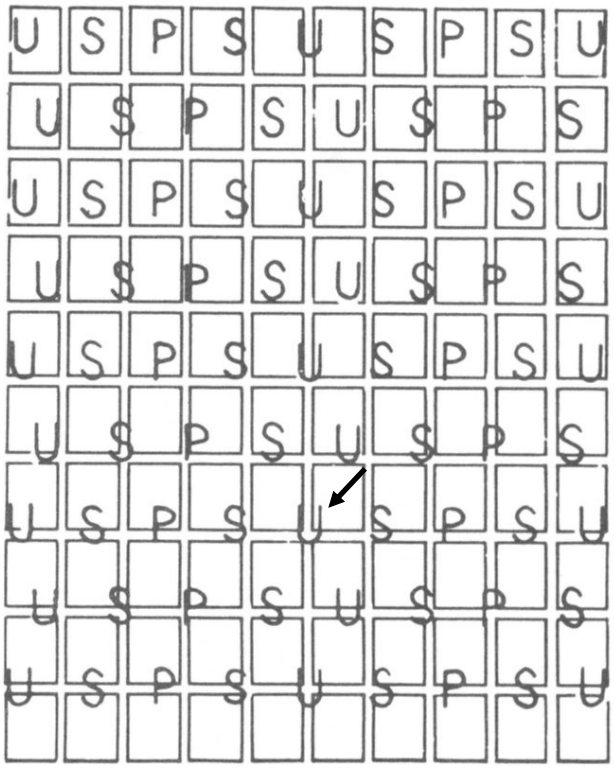
My advise to collectors over the years was simple. If a stamp is watermarked, which could either be single or double-lined and you are struggling to see the mark, assume it is single because the double would show up more prevalent on the stamp. For most examples this technique has held true. But, as you will see here, it is not always true.

Look at position 76 and 87 of the double line watermark. The only watermark you will see on the stamp is a single line even though it is a double line issue. One would assume that it is a single line issue but that would be wrong. Using these layouts and checking the single line layout, you will not find a single line stamp that has the same line as the double line position 76. The same is true for the double line 87. The closest for dl 87 is the sl 6 but the sl 6 line does not go all the way to the top of the stamp.

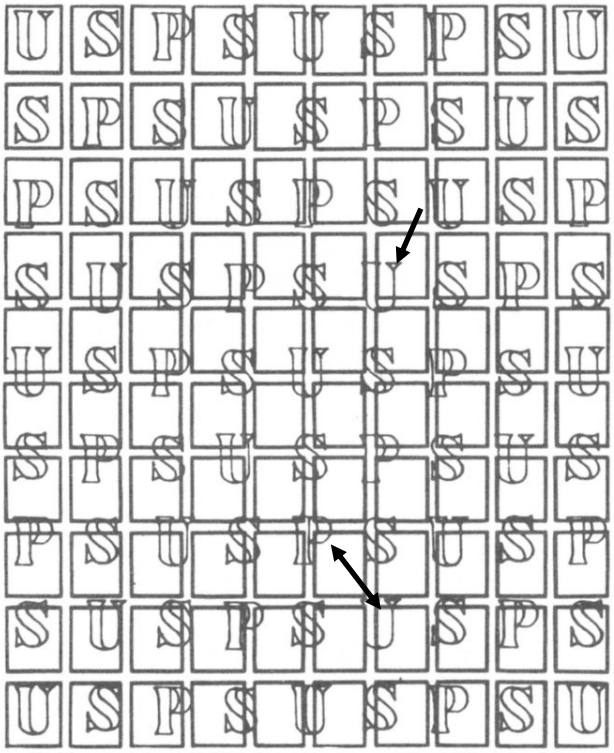
Another example would be sl 66 position and dl 46. These two positions have almost identical single lines. The major difference is that the double line watermarks all have serif letters.

What makes this process hard is that the watermarks lines also exist in the selvage of the stamp and is basically destroyed when the stamp is perforated. There are few other subtle differences but at least you can understand the struggle when attempting to identify dl and sl U.S. watermarks.

Single-line watermark



Double-line watermark



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REGIONAL STAMP SHOWS

Most, if not all stamp and coin shows have been cancelled at least through July 2020 due to COVID-19.

President's Message *from Mike Francis*

The world is still struggling with Covid-19 especially with the onset of cold weather which we were warned about this past spring. The TS&CC will still have our meeting November 10 at the IHop. Masks are required. If you feel uncomfortable coming out, the room is not large enough, or just don't like wearing a mask for extended periods of time then everyone fully understands. We will have plenty of meetings over the coming years. I rather everyone feel and be safe.

When Dana asked me to investigate doing an article about U.S. Postage Due color varieties, I said that shouldn't be hard because I have all the issues in my collection except for the special printings. It was a great idea. Well, I think a drunken sailor (no offense George) broke into my house and rearranged all my Postage Due stamp colors. My article mentioned how many of the sites on the web had the Postage Due colors wrong. My collection was just as bad. So Dana, my collection of U.S. Postage Due stamps in now correct.

Hopefully, when things settle down and we get back to normal, Phil will tell us about the "Great Stamp Robbery of the 21st Century."

Thanks to Hemanth for enlightening us about the melding of philately and cryptocurrency. Things are sure changing.

Let me know what you think about having the annual Christmas Party for the club. Most everyone I have talked with is advising against it because of the buffet style food layout and very little use of masks while everyone is eating. Let me know what you think. Mike