



# THE PHILLY PHILATELIST

Award-Winning Newsletter of the Greater Philadelphia Stamp & Collectors Club

Founded 1904

American Philatelic Society – Chapter 18

August 2026

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

Volume 14, Issue 7

## NEXT MEETING

August 18, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

Community Rooms  
GIANT Supermarket  
315 N. York Rd., Willow Grove, PA

### Dinner:

For those who would like to join us for cocktails and dinner beforehand (Dutch treat), we meet at The W Tavern located at 210 York Road, at 5:00 p.m. for cocktails followed by dinner at 5:30 p.m.

The W Tavern menu can be viewed here:

<https://wtavern19090.wixsite.com/my-site/menu>.

The “Grilled Bill” is a favorite of GPSCC members. It is worth checking out!

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## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Paul F. Miller

Boston 2026 World Expo is in the rear-view mirror. It was a terrific event that absolutely measured up to the hype. The organizers involved took on a huge task and created a truly memorable event.

Do you feel a little let down now, however? After such a grand event, do you think, “What do I do now?”

Fear not, because the stamp collecting hobby can be a year-round, 365-day source of enjoyment shared with others. In fact, I have a handy list of ways you can continue the enjoyment throughout the year.

### Attend Another Stamp Show

Stamp shows occur throughout the year in various parts of the country. Usually, the GPSCC newsletter

includes details in the “Upcoming Events” section. Stamp shows can help you acquire new collection material from dealers. You can also enjoy great exhibits assembled by hard-working collectors on a variety of topics that you may never have experienced before. Relatively close upcoming events include:

- NAPEX 2026 – August 28-30, 2026
- NOJEX 2026 – October 2-4, 2026

### Participate in an Auction

If you enjoyed picking up stamps while at Boston 2026, then participating in an auction can be another way to grab great material for your collection or stamp topic. You could attend in person, but with technology today, many/most auctions can be

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

enjoyed from the comforts of your own home right in front of your computer! Many times, when one hears “auction” you think of the big ones with super expensive collectibles – like bidding on an Inverted Jenny. That is not always the case. Many auctions can have reasonably priced items that could fit nicely into your collection. You must do some homework by looking at the items offered, but that is part of the enjoyment – the looking and finding.

### Attend a Stamp Club Meeting

It is great to use club meetings as a socializing event. Your stamp collecting hobby can be enhanced by interacting with like-minded individuals, even if they have different collecting interests. Most meetings can involve a presentation, Q&A session, and discussions. It is a great opportunity to learn new facets of stamp collecting. Of course, if you can, attend a GPSCC monthly meeting. You can participate, or just sit back, relax, and enjoy learning. The Philatelic Gathering at the Chester County History Center is another great meeting you can attend on a quarterly basis. Details are usually provided in the “Upcoming Events” section of the GPSCC newsletters.

### Be a Presenter at a Stamp Club Meeting

Do you have something in your collection that is of particular interest to you that you would like to share?

If you do, undoubtedly others would be interested. Pulling together a presentation can give you the thrill of looking at your stamp collection in a deeper way. And it gives you the opportunity to expose other stamp collectors to your collecting interests. This can spark a whole new interaction with others – or you could become the resident expert on the stamp topic.

### Write an Article for *The Philly Philatelist*

I talk about this often. It is similar to being a presenter. Do you have something in your collection that is interesting and just waiting to be shared? If presenting seems scary, then maybe you could simply write about it. The GPSCC newsletter is always looking for content – especially if it comes directly from a member. Mike Wilson, our GPSCC newsletter Editor, can be especially helpful with whatever you have. Give it a try sometime. You might get the “writing bug” and can brag about being “published”!

This is by no means an exhaustive list. But you get the gist. The end of Boston 2026 does not mean it's the end of philatelic fun. You can make your own fun by being an active participant in the hobby.



## TARIFF UPDATE

On July 24, 2026, the April 2026 “Section 122” tariffs expired and were replaced by new “Section 301” tariffs. There is good news for philatelists.

Previously, there was some ambiguity about whether philatelic material qualified for the “informational materials” tariff exemption. ANNEX 1 of the July Notice of Action announcing the Section 301 tariffs explicitly includes all philatelic material (HTS Code 9704.00.0000) within the scope of material EXEMPT from the new Section 301 tariffs at paragraph A.2(b). A new HTS code (9903.05.86) was created to identify tariff-exempt classifications.

Today, to avoid the incorrect assessment of tariffs, all international shippers of philatelic material to the US should label these HTS codes on all invoices and export documentation that accompanies their shipments:

- HTS 9704.00.0000 Postage Stamps and Covers
- HTS(US) 9903.05.86 Specific Exemption from Section 301 tariffs

I am always interested in learning about your tariff experiences. Email **Bruce Marsden** at [treasurer@gpscc.org](mailto:treasurer@gpscc.org).

## PROGRAM FOR AUGUST 18, 2026: ABEL PETER, "CHRISTIAN ART THROUGH PHILATELY"

Join us on August 18 to hear **Abel Peter** discuss "Christian Art Through Philately." Christian art is one of the most diverse and fascinating themes in topical philately, encompassing architecture, paintings, mosaics, stained glass, sculpture, biblical scenes, saints, Christmas issues, and the rich philatelic tradition of Vatican City. This presentation explores how postage stamps have celebrated nearly two thousand years of Christian artistic heritage across cultures and countries.

Drawing from his personal collection, Abel will showcase stamps, souvenir sheets, and official Vatican First Day Covers while highlighting the artistic, historical, and cultural significance behind them. Whether you are interested in thematic collecting, worldwide philately, or the history of art, this presentation offers a unique look at how faith and creativity have been captured in miniature.

Abel is an architectural designer with Lenhardt Rodgers Architecture + Interior in Fort Washington, Pennsylvania. He is a member of the Greater Philadelphia Stamp & Collectors Club and collects a variety of thematic subjects, with a particular interest in Christian art, architecture, Vatican philately, and first day covers. His presentation combines his appreciation for architecture, art history, and philately.



## DID YOU KNOW?

*Michael L. Wilson*

The largest denomination stamp issued by the United States was for \$50,000! What is now catalogued as U.S. Scott RX25, the stamp was not for postage. It was used to show that producers of distilled spirits paid the mandatory federal tax before moving the liquor out of government-bonded warehouses. This stamp would have covered the tax due on the equivalent of about 35,000 standard bottles of liquor. This stamp also is physically large, measuring approximately 3-1/2 inches by 2-3/8 inches. You can buy a used copy for about \$95, while mint versions go for around \$200.



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## FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM

@gpscc19090

## SHARE YOUR FAVORITE STAMP OR COVER!

I would like to highlight your favorite stamps or covers in *The Philly Philatelist*. All you need to do is send me a picture of the item and a sentence or two about why it's your favorite.

If your favorite item is a stamp and you don't have a way to scan an image, just give me the country, year and a description, and I'll track it down.

If it's a cover, bring it to a meeting, and I'll take a picture of it or send it to me via regular mail, and I'll scan and return it to you. My mailing address is 19 Brookdale Dr., Doylestown PA 18901. Thanks!

Mike W. ([newsletter@gpscc.org](mailto:newsletter@gpscc.org).)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**August 28-30, 2026** – [NAPEX](#), McLean Hilton at Tyson's Corner, 7920 Jones Branch Dr., McLean, VA.

**September 19, 2026, 10:00 a.m.-Noon** – [Philatelic Gathering](#), Chester County History Society, 225 N. High Street, West Chester, PA. **Michael L. Wilson** on "The Cheap Postage Movement of the Mid-1800s" and Kean Spencer on "Puerto Rico Revenues, Both Spanish Era and U.S. Administration."

**October 2-4, 2026** – [NOJEX](#), Hilton Hasbrouck Heights Hotel, 650 Terrace Ave., Hasbrouck Heights, NJ.

**October 31, 2026** – [Eastern PA Stamp Show](#) (EPASS), Schnecksville Fire Company, 4550 Old Packhouse Rd., Schnecksville, PA, bourse only

## UPCOMING CLUB MEETINGS

Sep. 15 – Oct. 20 – **Nov. 14** – Dec. TBD Holiday Dinner

Note: Nov. 14 is a Saturday, and the meeting that day will start at 10:00 a.m. All the other meetings are on Tuesdays and begin at 7:00 p.m.

## WORD RIDDLES

a) What starts with a P, ends with an E and has a million letters in it?

b) What begins with an E, ends with an E and only has one letter in it?

See Page 10 for answers!

## MINUTES OF THE JUNE 16, 2026, GPSCC MEETING

President Paul Miller called the meeting to order promptly at 7:00 p.m. and introduced our speaker for the evening, Bob Myers. Bob's presentation, the "Siege of Paris 1870-1871-Movement of Mail," is based on his eight-frame exhibit on the subject. He won the grand award at BALPEX 2025 and was entered in the APS Champion of Champions at Boston 2026. Bob is also the editor of Malcolm Gilbert's monumental work titled *Balloon Mail During the 1870-1871 Paris Siege* published by the American Air Mail Society in 2025.

Bob explained that the Siege of Paris by the Prussians lasted over four months, from September 18, 1870, to January 28, 1871. During this period, Paris was isolated from the outside world, and citizens and visitors were confined within the city. Maintaining both military and civilian communications was crucial, but the options were limited.

The government decided to use balloons filled with the gas used for lighting Paris streets. The flights carried civilian and military mail, government dispatches, maps and news, carrier pigeons, and passengers out of Paris. The flights were dangerous for the pilots and passengers.

The balloons carried regular mail, priority mail and entrusted mail. The entrusted mail was handed directly to a passenger, pilot, or balloon-site manager prior to the balloon's departure.

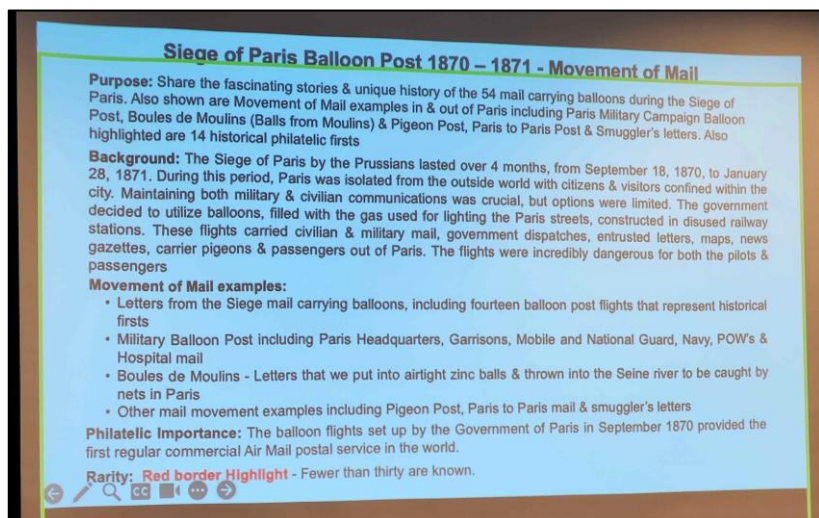
There were 54 mail-carrying balloons during the Siege of Paris. Bob presented a map of the landing and departure sites within the Paris area. He continued his presentation by explaining 28 balloon flights.

Balloons were successful in transporting mail outside of Paris, but there were few options to send mail into the city. Carrier pigeons carrying microfilms were the most reliable, but even then, only a fraction of the hundreds of pigeons arrived in the city safely. Another attempt was made by *boules de Moulins*, which were watertight zinc spheres dropped into the Siene River. That was a complete failure with none of the balls reaching Paris before the Armistice of Versailles was signed on January 28, 1871, ending the Paris Siege.

Bob noted there is a database of every balloon used during this period. Bob closed by answering questions about his presentation and the book that he edited. Before he departed, Bob was presented with a certificate of appreciation by the GPSCC.

Paul Miller reported that we have two new members: Dave Nicholas and Steven Hubschmitt. Dave collects classic Nicaragua, British Postal Agency in Greytown and U.S. occupation. Steven collects U.S. airmails, used and mint singles, postcards and federal hand stamps. Miguel Fiel has been reinstated and collects Portugal and Portuguese Colonies.

*Respectfully submitted by Robert Cohen*



*Title slide of Bob's presentation.*



*Bob presenting to the GPSCC.*

## AWARDS AND HONORS

At the Scandinavian Collectors Club (SCC) dinner during Boston 2026, **Alan Warren** was honored with the SCC's "True North Award." It is a new award, and he was its first recipient. Alan has been a member of SCC for over sixty years. He was recognized for his service as past secretary, president, and member of the board of directors. Alan has also been a longtime author, exhibitor, and judge for the Nordic philatelic community.

**Michael L. Wilson** has an interesting article in the June issue of *The London Philatelist*, published by the Royal Philatelic Society London. He describes the attempt of pioneer aviator Sir Alan Cobham to take a small de Havilland "Moth" aboard the ship *Homeric* on its 1926 sailing from Southampton, England to New York. His plan was to take mail from the ship as it approached New York and to fly it to the Battery in Manhattan, thus saving delivery time while the ship was held up for hours in quarantine.

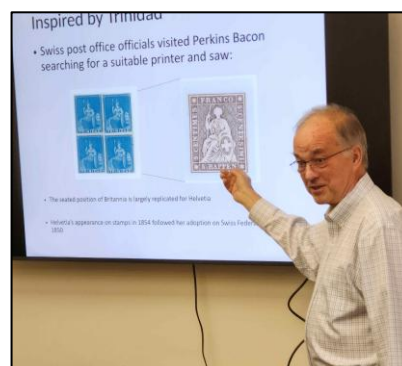


However, the intent was never realized. Due to unexpected water swells and complications with the aircraft, it never took off and had to be towed to the Battery, with Alan Cobham and his wife aboard. The approximately 300 letters were all addressed to Edward Worden, a well-known cover servicer in Milburn, New Jersey. They were transit marked at New York on November 25 and receipt stamped November 26 at Milburn. Thus, the intended airmail covers were not "flown."

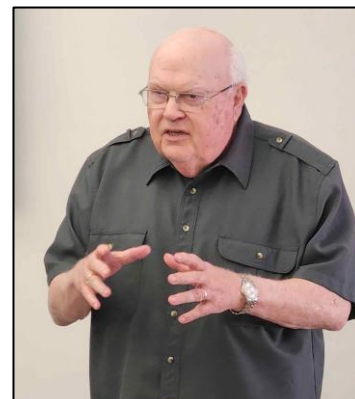
## JUNE 20 PHILATELIC GATHERING

Alan Warren

The Philatelic Gathering met at the Chester County History Center on June 20 in a newly refurbished conference room with computer projection capability for PowerPoint programs. The first speaker was GPSCC member **Bruce Marsden** (top right) who talked about Switzerland's "Strubels," the imperforate Sitting Helvetia issues of 1854 to 1863. He described the origins of the stamp design, the denominations, and the various printings at Munich and Bern. These were followed by uses including printed matter and foreign destinations.



The second speaker was another GPSCC member **Bill Schultz** (bottom right) who showed some of the many, many covers he has acquired over the years, cancelled on his birthday date of February 27. At the same time, he explained how rates changed over the years from the stampless period to modern times. A wide variety of uses were seen including receipts and other documents, two different U.S. first day covers, censored mail, a first trip of a Highway Post Office, and even a dated revenue stamp. Bill emphasized that such a collection can be developed at relatively low cost.



## THE STAMP COLLECTOR

My worldly wealth I hoard in albums three,  
My life collection of rare postage stamps;  
My room is cold and bare as you can see,  
My coat is old and shabby as a tramp's;  
Yet more to me than balances in banks,  
My albums three are worth a million francs.

I keep them in that box beside my bed,  
For who would dream such treasures it could hold;  
But every day I take them out and spread  
Each page, to gloat like miser o'er his gold.  
Dearer to me than could be child or wife,  
I would defend them with my very life.

They are my very life, for every night  
over my catalogues I pore and pore;  
I recognize rare items with delight,  
Nothing I read but philatelic lore;  
And when some specimen of choice I buy,  
In all the world there's none more glad than I.

Behold my gem, my British penny black;  
To pay its price I starved myself a year;  
And many a night my dinner I would lack,  
But when I bought it, oh, what radiant cheer!  
Hitler made war that day—I did not care,  
So long as my collection he would spare.

Look—my triangular Cape of Good Hope.  
To purchase it I had to sell my car.  
Now in my pocket for some sous I grope  
To pay my omnibus when home is far,  
And I am cold and hungry and footsore,  
In haste to add some beauty to my store.  
This very day, ah, what a joy was mine,



A Cape of Good Hope first-ever triangle stamp from 1853-1864 can be had for \$50 to \$400.

When in a dingy dealer's shop I found  
This franc vermillion, eighteen forty-nine...  
How painfully my heart began to pound!  
(It's weak they say), I paid the modest price  
And tremblingly I vanished in a trice.

But oh, my dream is that some day of days,  
I might discover a Mauritius blue,  
poking among the stamp-bins of the quais;  
Who knows! They say there are but two;  
Yet if a third one I should spy,  
I think—God help me! I should faint and die.

Poor Monsieur Pons, he's cold and dead,  
One of those stamp-collecting cranks.  
His garret held no crust of bread,  
But albums worth a million francs,  
on them his income he would spend,  
By philatelic frenzy driven.  
What did it profit in the end...  
You can't take stamps to Heaven.

*Robert William Service (1874-1958)*



Penny Black from 1840. Used copies go for \$100 to \$400 depending on condition.



The "Blue Mauritius" will set you back between \$1.5 million and \$2.5 million!



## AN ATTRACTIVE COLUMBIAN COVER FROM 1896

Michael L. Wilson

The Columbian Exposition stamps and stamped envelopes were the first commemoratives issued by the United States. They promoted the World's Columbian Exposition held in Chicago from May 1 to October 30, 1893. The items went on sale starting January 1 and January 2, 1893, and were officially removed from sale on April 12, 1894. The postal items included 16 stamps with denominations ranging from 1-cent to \$5.00 and four stamped envelopes.

This attractive cover with 2-cents of postage (the first-class letter rate in 1896) features two of those items.

The 1-cent stamp is U.S. Scott 230. The design is based on a painting by William Powell titled, "Columbus in Sight of Land." This particular copy has a vibrant color, and the image is very well centered.

The stamp is affixed to the 1-cent Columbian stamped envelope, which is U.S. Scott U348. The embossed design depicts a profile bust of Christopher Columbus and an allegorical portrait of Liberty.

The cover was sent from Highland, Michigan on January 27, 1896, and was received by *The Times* newspaper in Pontiac, Michigan, the next day.

*The Times* had a short independent existence – about seven years from 1893 to 1900 – and as far as I can tell, its issues have not been digitized. However, *The Detroit Free Press* would occasionally carry snippets of stories from *The Times*. I found these two amusing:

- April 11, 1898: "The *Pontiac Times* says there is in that city a married couple who are so quarrelsome that every time they sit near an open window, they are afraid of falling out."
- January 16, 1899: "One of Pontiac's citizens has long envied the farmers and determined to share in their immense profits derived from hens. He accordingly stocked up on a goodly supply of fowls, and commenced to buy corn in bushel lots, relates the *Pontiac Times*. After an outlay of \$350 for fodder the p.c. [Pontiac citizen] harvested one frozen egg. The hens are now said to be for sale at quarter-off prices."

For more on the Columbian Exposition stamps, check out the National Postal Museum's virtual exhibit titled "The Nation's First Commemorative Stamps" at <https://postalmuseum.si.edu/exhibition/the-nation's-first-commemorative-stamps>.

## CLOSING THOUGHTS ON BOSTON 2026

Paul F. Miller

Although Boston 2026 World Expo ended a little more than two months ago, the commentary and reviews of the international show continue to roll in.

Overall, the consensus is that Boston 2026 was a grand success. While the effort to put on a large show like this does not come without some hiccups, I tend to look at the overall experience and satisfaction enjoyed by participants, organizers, volunteers, and dealers. Judging from what I have read and have been told, the satisfaction level was sky high.

Here is a sample of comments:

- Mark Banchik, APS President – “Was the show a rewarding experience? That’s a resounding YES!”
- Kirk Gillis, APS Executive Director – “The APS team has just returned from the Boston 2026 World Expo, a high-energy, eight-day marathon of the best that philately has to offer.”
- Richard Pederson, American Stamp Dealer Association Board Member and *The American Stamp Collector & Dealer* Editor – “First, I want to congratulate all those involved in Boston 2026 on successfully pulling off the massive undertaking required for an international show.”
- Martin Kent Miller, American Topical Association’s *Topical Time* Editor – “By any measure, Boston 2026 World Expo was one of the most significant philatelic events of the decade.”

Upon my return home from Boston 2026, I reached out to GPSCC members who I knew were in attendance and asked them for their “off-the-cuff” reviews of the Expo. The responses I received were incredible. They meant so much to me because they came from members of our own club who we get to see and interact with every month of the year. Here is a no-name (unfiltered) sample of those comments:

“The exhibits, dealer bourse, and presentations were amazing, but I had the most fun meeting and spending time with other collectors.”



“Queen Elizabeth II’s Rolls Royce, Alan Warren’s signature on the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, and Vernon Morris’s Bunker Hill roll call were pretty spectacular.”

“Boston 2026 was an outreach powered by focus, time, and energy. I meet with the Kings, Queens and High Rollers of international Philately.”

“My impression of the show is positive. There was plenty to do and the two days I spent there went by almost in a snap.”

“I am really glad that I decided to attend the Boston 2026 World Expo. When I first came down the escalator at the convention center I was overwhelmed with the size of the Expo. There wasn't enough time to see and do everything I wanted to at the Expo.”

“The show was a great experience.”

“It was a great opportunity for me to see many collectors that I have not been in touch with for a while, especially ones from other countries. The exhibits were extraordinary and almost every evening there was a banquet by an organization I was involved with, so I have not indulged in so much great seafood in a long while.”

“I'd say that all in all, I'm glad I attended the meeting. I thought the show was busy but not overly crowded. I could almost always find an open seat at a dealer's table. Just listening to the conversations was a blast. I milled around the exhibits for a few hours and enjoyed that as well. I also got to treat myself to 'real' fried clams (not those silly clam strips).”

There you have it. Real responses from real GPSCC members. I am happy to report that these responses are probably a good representation of the many wonderful experiences enjoyed by all attendees.

## A MEMORABLE TRIP TO ENGLAND

Michael L. Wilson

I spent two weeks in southern England in July. The main purpose of my trip was to make a presentation on an 1840 Penny Black folded letter. The letter was addressed to John Hinxman, a Navy Agent in London. About four years ago, I connected with Richard Hinxman, a descendant of John's and an avid researcher on the Hinxman family name that dates back to the mid 1500s. Every four or five years, the Hinxman family holds a big family reunion, and I was invited this year as an honorary family member to discuss my research on the Penny Black letter. It was a fascinating opportunity that I could not pass up. My first [presentation](#) to the GPSCC back in January 2023 was on the very same letter.

I also took the opportunity to visit the Royal Philatelic Society London (RPSL). The RPSL is the oldest philatelic society in continuous existence in the world. It was founded on April 8, 1869, and boasts some 2,300 members in more than 80 countries. The RPSL's multistory headquarters is quite the place.

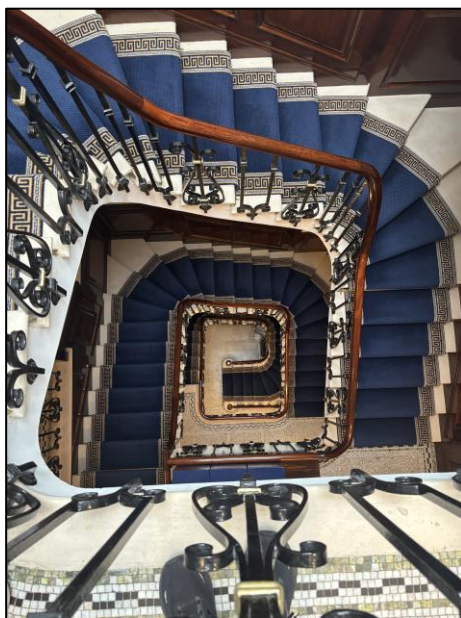
It's amazing the places this hobby can take you!



*Penny Black folded letter addressed to John Hinxman postmarked August 4, 1840.*



*RPSL flag outside their headquarters.*



*Looking down the grand staircase from the 4<sup>th</sup> floor at the RPSL.*



*Mike and his spouse Renie standing in front of the fireplace in the American Tea Room supported by donations from RPSL members in the United States.*

WORD RIDDLE Answers: a) Post Office! b) Envelope!