



The Philatelic Communicator

Newsletter of the American Philatelic Society Writers Unit #30 • Second Quarter 2026 • N° 229

WRITING ESSENTIALS

What I Did For Love Cash

In his citation for me when I was given the American Philatelic Society's Luff Award for Service to Philately, Alan Warren led with having heard me on his local CBS radio station, talking about stamps. Unfortunately, that was one of the least altruistic things I have ever done for philately. Here's the back story.

For 25 years, I produced, wrote and voiced a weekly 60-second stamp collecting feature for CBS News, Radio. It was what in the business is called "syndicated"; it was sent to stations for them to use when and where they wanted, as opposed to a newscast, which is broadcast live (most of the time).

Part of a package of weekend features to help fill slow news days, CBS Radio Network stations could decide whether to run these features on the air, at any time they wanted. Since there was no commercial "attached" to the feature, the stations did not have to report back to the network when – or if – they had used them.

For this piece, I was paid the munificent sum of \$25-\$28, the union minimum, and only because I was in a union shop (New York) and belonged to the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), the on-air union. That's \$25 per week, not per station nor per airing.

Most of the major market stations never ran the feature.

Then I hit upon the scheme to produce news "spots" – 30 seconds

Continued on Page 10

Knowing Your Audience is Critical in All Writing

In 1992, the late Randy Neil started *U.S. Stamps & Postal History* magazine, six years after co-founding the American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors and the year before he became American Philatelic Society president. He seemed to have had his hand in a lot of philatelic pots at that time, even while still running his company, the International Cheerleading Foundation. The magazine was one of his many big ideas (ranging from the Tiffany Fund to one-frame exhibits); this one built on his knowledge of – and love for – vintage philatelic publications, such as *Weekly Philatelic Gossip* or the heyday of *STAMPS* magazine

But *U.S. Stamps & Postal History* magazine also came out of Randy's marketing-oriented worldview and personality, specifically his knowledge that perhaps 90% of U.S. stamp collectors collect only (or primarily) U.S. stamps. *U.S. Stamps & Postal History* (I had some honorary title, like "Contributing Editor") was an editorial and philatelic success, if not a commercial one, and Randy went on to launch two more magazines with many recognizable similarities (especially all-USA content), *American Stamp Dealer & Collector* magazine (now *American Stamp Collector & Dealer* magazine) for the American Stamp Dealers Association and, in 2015, what is now Kelleher's *Stamp Collector's Quarterly* for the Kelleher auction house.

Randy did not keep secret his insight, which, in short, was: Give the public what it wants; reflect its interests. Some-

time, probably during or after his 1993-97 APS presidency, Randy pointed out to then-*American Philatelist*-editor Bill Welch and/or then-APS Executive Director Keith Wagner, that APS members were almost all U.S. collectors and the AP's content should reflect that. Welch was former editor of Pennsylvania's State College *Centre Daily Times*, and could have been savvy enough about media audiences that he would think about the AP's audience. But, instead, he spent years – among other things – serializing one 1926 book (the *Serrane Guide: Stamp Forgeries of the World to 1926*), a feat still prompting wisecracks 30 years later. Randy was ignored, and the AP spent the next 20+ years doing what it has always done: publishing myriad articles about stamps and/or covers from around the globe, giving most APS members in most monthly issues very little about which they were truly interested in reading.

I must confess that when I edited *Stamp Collector* newspaper, from March 1989 to December 1990, I also did not try to tilt the content toward more U.S. articles and fewer non-U.S. articles. I inherited a newspaper largely shaped by the wise Ken Wood, who had over the years recruited regular columnists on the United Kingdom, South Pacific islands, France and Colonies and more. His model was simply continued by other editors, including Mike Green and Kyle Jansson – who knew very little to nothing about stamps or stamp collectors – and then by me, who was not about to mess up what was set by my friend and mentor Ken. (I

Continued on Page 4



TPC

ISSN 0147-36456

Journal of the APS Writers Unit #30
Second Quarter 2026 • Vol. 61, #2 •
Whole No. 229

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The APS Writers Unit 30 publishes *The Philatelic Communicator* four times a year and has done so continuously (with a few hiccups) since 1968. A digital subscription is included with the annual dues of \$15 a year. Visit wu30.org for more information and to join.

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The Executive Committee was reconstituted at the last election. Volunteers are sought for the following positions: Vice President, Historian, Publicist, Special events, AIJP liaison. Please reach out to the president if interested in helping with any of these roles.

EDITOR'S OPINION

Knowing Your Audience ...

Shortly after agreeing to serve as editor of *The Philatelic Communicator*, I

Wayne Youngblood asked Alan Barasch to send out a

brief survey to our membership about what functions you serve in the hobby, ranging from author and editor to webmaster and "other." Members were allowed to check as many categories they felt appropriate.

The survey was sent to 120 members and, within a couple of days we had a response from 72. This was a phenomenal success by any measure!

More importantly, it gave me a better idea of our current membership/readership and the types of articles and other material you would like to see in this journal. A summary of the results is illustrated nearby.

As expected, the primary composition of our membership is writers and editors, with writers edging out editors by more than 20 votes. Of course, all the additional categories matter as well, but you clearly won't see as much material about being a webmaster as you will about issues facing authors and editors.

But it's also important to hear directly – and more specifically – from you. What do you want to see in *TPC*?

Type	Counts
Editor	40
Writer	61
Other	9
Publisher	4
Dealer	5
Exhibitor	2
WebMaster	3
Proofreader	4
Bystander	2
Indexer	1

As an author what are your biggest concerns right now? What skills would you like to either learn or improve?

As an editor, what are the biggest or most troublesome issues you currently face? What types of software do you use? What are the challenges, joys and problems you've encountered working with leadership of philatelic organizations?

Or, as a dealer or exhibitor, what are some of the issues you face or skills you could learn or improve upon through content offered in *TPC*.

Please let us hear from you. Those of us who have been members of WU#30 for many years would like to see this group once again thrive and grow. But this can only happen if we're meeting real needs of our membership. Email editor@wu30.org.

Letters

Wayne, editor to editor ... thanks for "picking up ize for nit-picking, but I think this issue (2026 Q1) should be whole No. 228?

— Len McMaster
via email

Thank you, Len. All should be straightened out now.

—Wayne

Contents

What I Did For Love Cash, Lloyd A. de Vries	1
Knowing Your Audience is Critical in All Writing, Dane S. Claussen	1
Editor's opinion, Wayne Youngblood	2
Letters to the Editor	2
President's Message, Lloyd A. de Vries	3
Book Review: Love Triangles, Alan Warren	5
Let's Stick With Style a Bit; and Cover General Editing Practices, Wayne Youngblood	6
Quick Tip: Unformatting Text, Lloyd A. de Vries	7

Editors: What Can You Do to Get Writers to Write For You?, John M. Hotchner	9
Calendar of Philatelic Literature Competitions, 2026	9
Errata (Stuff Happens)	10
Book Review: <i>Catalog of Overseas Mailers First Day Covers</i> , Alan Warren	10
Get Yourself an Editor, Alan Barasch	11
Club Newsletters, Alan Barasch	11
Letter, Sec'y-Treasurer report	11
Obituary: Robert Paul Odenweller, Alan Warren	12

Reality Intrudes

Sometimes real life gets in the way of philately. I had every intention of attending Boston 2026. However, the day before we were to leave for nine days in Boston (that is, Thursday May 21), my wife had all the symptoms of a stroke. It turns out it wasn't one. We blame stress that had nothing to do with philately or travel.

Lloyd A. de Vries

When I got back from the hospital, I canceled my travel plans and notified the Writers Unit Secretary-Treasurer Alan Barasch and others that I would not be attending the show. It wasn't a hard choice. Besides, my sons said I'd never see my grandchildren again if I went to the show despite my wife's illness.

On behalf of Boston 2026, I had been giving interviews (on podcasts, local radio and newsletters), talking about the wonderful sights I was planning to see, such as Queen Elizabeth II's classic Rolls Royce, the Lego display, the Jenny Inverts and my philatelic friends.

I was ready and psyched for the show. I had all the events entered on my digital calendar. My non-serviced first-day covers were organized and ready for the American Bison stamp. I had signed up for volunteer shifts and arranged to meet some of the non-philatelists with whom I had spoken about the show.

However, I wasn't done with the international.

The most newsworthy event at Boston 2026, at least from my point of view, was the announcement of the U.S. Postal Service Stamp Encore winner (2018's Mister Rogers). I covered the unveiling for The Virtual Stamp Club by watching a live

YouTube feed and sending emails. It would have been easier in person. More fun, too.

I probably should have deleted the events from my digital calendar when I canceled the trip. Instead, while I replaced toilet seats, I knew I "should have" been at one of the Writers Unit events. When I missed a high note at a band rehearsal, I knew I could have been mixing with high society at the American Philatelic Society soiree at the Museum of Fine Arts.

And, on the first day of the show, all my grandchildren visited, not only the one who lives locally but also the pair that lives near Washington, D.C. They were heading to a family reunion. Yes, I realize they came to our house more to see my wife than me, but I enjoyed their visit.

Still, it's rather daunting to realize how well everything went without me.

Oh, well, there should be another "International" here in the United States in 2036 or 2037. I'll only be 83 or 84. See you then.

•

I did keep in touch with people in Boston during the show, and so I heard right away about the dismal turnout at our Council and membership meetings. I wish I had some encouraging words or possible solutions, something I haven't said here before. I don't agree with the proposal to turn over the Writers Unit to the American Philatelic Society staff to run, and I haven't heard anything from the APS that says it wants to take charge.

I do know that people everywhere, not just in philately, are reluctant to volunteer and help lead organizations. I think it's a combination of work requirements and today's society. Many jobs are more than 40 hours a week; with the internet, you can be reached and can do much of your work from anywhere – any time. That is a two-edged sword. The time left in the 168-hour

week, people want to spend with their families, their friends and their other pursuits.

But there is also the aversion to doing something for others, without a direct benefit such as compensation, career advancement or sometimes even being thanked. I see organizations, in and out of philately, regularly seeking officers and even members.

I was a member of the Computers in Philately Committee until we realized it was no longer needed. Most collectors who wanted to use computers were already doing so by that point. Some even knew more than we committee members did. We disbanded.

Is there no longer a need for writers in philately? Is everything extemporaneous stream-of-consciousness speaking on podcasts and videos? Or do all those presently writing about stamps and covers know all there is to know about putting together words and illustrations? I don't think so. I know I have more to learn. Based on what I read, others do, too, even if they don't realize it.

also had a passing interest in worldwide stamps, and was started in collecting by my father, who collected Germany and Denmark in addition to United States. Ken, for his part, once had had major U.K. and British Commonwealth, as well as France and Colonies collections, in addition to his worldwide topicals of ships, airplanes and railroads.)

Flash forward to early 2020, at which point I had seen the success of Randy's three magazines. I also had spent years as a newspaper publisher and more as a media management professor, plus a lot more years in philately.

In early 2020, I emailed then-APS Executive Director Scott English pointing out what Randy had tried to tell Bill Welch and/or Keith Wagner 20+ years earlier: AP content was mostly about foreign stamps, while APS members were almost entirely U.S. only or primarily U.S. collectors. Scott emailed me that he needed to check my assertion that the majority of the AP's content was on foreign stamps! Then I didn't hear from him again on this topic, but about three issues later, the AP suddenly switched to overwhelmingly U.S. content and it's stayed that way in the six years since then. (Unfortunately, more relevant AP content has apparently done little to stanch the slide in APS membership numbers, due primarily to age, but I can't help but think that more editorial attention to APS members' interests might have cumulatively done wonders for the APS from, oh, about 1970 to 2020.)

As an aside, Randy's magazines and, to a lesser extent, *Stamp Collector* under Ken Wood, also benefited from their personalities coming through in their writing, which nearly all philatelic periodicals lack and which has helped philatelic YouTube videos and podcasts. More actual humor also would not be unwelcome; some of us still remember Gretchen Heather Mitchell's funny columns about dealing in *The Stamp Wholesaler*.

To be fair, philatelic media are not the only ones who occasionally, often or always are not guided sufficiently by

knowledge of – and caring about – the audience. The U.S. newspaper industry, which dates from 1704 (unless one counts one issue of one paper in 1690), didn't start studying its audience until the 1930s, with primitive surveys on demographics. The first two U.S. academic articles on newspaper readership were "Psychological Leadership for Journalism," by Nelson Crawford, in the *Journalism Bulletin* of January 1926, and "A Scientific Method for Determining Reader-Interest," by George H. Gallup, from the March 1930 *Journalism Quarterly*. Readership surveys started getting more sophisticated in the 1960s, and especially in the 1980s: see the first and second (1989) editions of the great Leo Bogart's *Press and Public: Who Reads What, When, Where, and Why in American Newspapers* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates) and, secondarily, his *Preserving the Press: How Daily Newspapers Mobilized to Keep Their Readers* (Columbia University Press, 1990).

These days, a high percentage of all types of media have one or more employees with the title of Audience Editor (or another title with "audience" and/or "engagement" in it). With almost everyone in the media industry knowing close to nothing about the industry's history, and a very high percentage knowing close to nothing about media management unless/until they are forced into it, such Audience Editors and their champions often claim that U.S. mass media or news media had no knowledge of audience interests, beyond paid circulation numbers or TV/radio ratings, until relatively recently (false/absurd, as already noted) and that media companies now know far more about their audiences than ever (true, but now the problem is data overload).

In fact, the biggest and best study ever conducted on newspaper readership remains the *Impact Study* (2001), by the Readership Institute, Media Management Center, Northwestern University. Sponsored by the Newspaper Association of America (now News/Media Alliance) and the American Society of Newspaper Editors (now American Society of News Editors), the *Impact Study*

surveyed 37,000 randomly selected Americans who were asked to respond to 450(!) data points organized into 88 (yes, 88) questions about their newspaper readership, other media usage, demographics, lifestyle and more (including how much sleep they got and how closely they were following the 2000 presidential election). The *Impact Study* analyzed "47,500 stories, photos, graphics and other news and information items in the [100] Impact newspapers" ("The Power to Grow Readership," 2001, page 6). As the study concluded,

"The top factors, ranked in order of their potential to build RBS [Reader Behavior Scores], are: 1. Intensely local, people-focused news. The specifics of this factor are community announcements, stories about ordinary people and obituaries. 2. Lifestyle news, which includes health, fitness and medicine; home, garden and real estate; food; fashion and beauty; and travel; 3. How we are governed and global relations. This includes coverage of politics, government, war and international conflict. 4. Natural disasters and accidents. 5. Movies, television and weather. 6. Business, economics and personal finance. 7. Science, technology and the environment. 8. Police, crime and the judicial system. 9. Sports. Includes all levels and types of sports."

Specifically, Americans asked newspapers for significant quantities of 1, 2, 6 and 7; more feature and less news-oriented approaches to 2, 3, 4, 7 and 9; fewer stories and fewer photos of 4 and 8; shorter and less complex coverage of 5; less national and more local coverage of 8; and longer, more complex and more international coverage of 7. This was sincere input from serious newspaper readers, not fluff or scandal that cynical journalists would say the public would ask for; readers' preferences were all journalistically defensible, if not improvements, and economically feasible. U.S. journalists mostly fought implementation of – or ignored – the study's results anyway.

Which brings us back to *The American Philatelist* magazine under decades of editors, especially Bill Welch. Give readers what they want (especially about people), and if you don't know what they

want, ask them. You might be pleasantly surprised, or at least not disappointed.

Ideally, every reader would get a publication individually customized for him/her (digital printing presses used in the

magazine industry have had this capability since the late 1990s!), but printed philatelic publications don't have large enough circulations to bother. But let's do what we can for readers.

Book Review

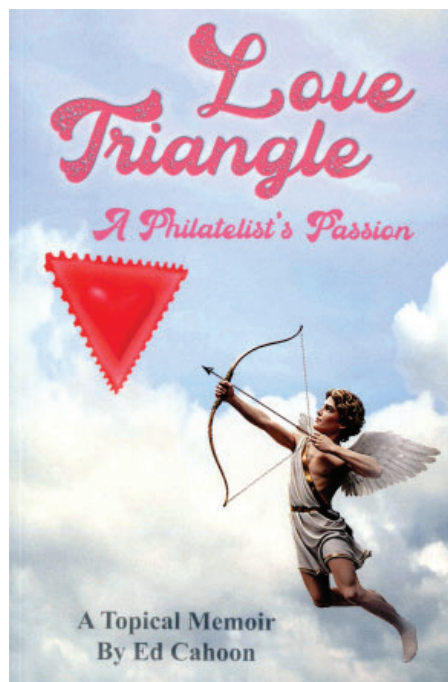
Love Triangle: A Philatelist's Passion, by Ed Cahoon, 338 pages, 6 by 9 inches, card covers, perfect bound, self-published, USA, 2025, ISBN 979-8283838472, \$39, available from Amazon.

As with many collectors, author Ed Cahoon was introduced to stamps as a youngster, put them aside and, as an adult, returned to the hobby and expanded his interests into serious areas of focus. He then caught the exhibiting bug and developed friends and correspondents along the way, learning from and sharing with others. His grandfather, who also had the collecting gene, gave Ed a box of French stamps, mostly the Sower issue.

**Alan
Warren**

A few years later he was rummaging around an abandoned house when he discovered a footlocker that contained bundles of stamps. These were, in fact, "bundeware"; that is, 100 examples of a stamp tied together with string. He was still not stimulated enough to collect stamps in earnest. That occurred one day, a few years after he began his career in the Air Force, when he found his bundles, some glassine envelopes of stamps and a beginner's album that he had put aside.

After he married and began a family, Ed was stationed at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. There he joined a stamp club and learned about perforations, watermarks, quality and other aspects of the hobby. He tried briefly to collect United States issues and then a topical of automobiles on stamps. Leafing through a catalog one day, he was struck with those in the shape of a triangle. He finally decided that these would be his collecting focus.



Through *Linn's Stamp News*, Ed discovered a collector of triangles in Zimbabwe and corresponded with him. His friend eventually moved to California, not far from where Ed lived, and thus a strong friendship developed.

Over time, Ed found other triangle stamp collectors and relates anecdotes about them. Ed also collected rocks and minerals over the years and digresses briefly into that sideline.

The author takes his readers on his road of discovery and study of some of the hobby's rarities, and his eventual acquisition of a Cape of Good Hope triangle stamp and an example of a 17th-century Dockwra triangular penny post handstamp marking. Ed conveys his excitement with each new project in his pursuit of triangles. He joined with another collector to create a database of triangular stamps of the world, which the American Topical Association published as a topic checklist.

As mentioned, Ed Cahoon was lucky

to find a couple of other triangle stamp collectors, and he quotes extensively from their mutual correspondences. In one case, a collector in the Netherlands managed to visit Ed in California. Ed also reveals his contacts with mentors in the hobby who helped him with exhibiting his material. These included some of our hobby's stalwarts, such as Randy Neil, John Hotchner, Roland Essig and Ed Andrews, among others.

One chapter details Ed's developing his multiframe topical exhibit about triangles in philately. He shares the knowledge he gained from his mentors and reproduces his synopsis and plan pages. Ed achieved a gold award at GASS 2022 in Sacramento, and showed a smaller display at Boston 2026.

In an appendix, the author describes triangle stamp trivia and miscellany. Topics include the number of triangular stamps issued by decade from 1850 to 1980, the physical properties of triangle stamps, the first issued, types (postage, airmail, newspaper, postal tax, stationery designs, locals, etc.) and a listing of the many triangular stamps of Liberia from 1894 to 1953.

Ed Cahoon's book concludes with a bibliography and a glossary of philatelic terms. It lacks an index, which would have enhanced its utility. The book is nicely illustrated.

Love Triangle is written in the first person, which adds excitement for readers as the author's journey of discovery unfolds. The many collectors he has met along the way that have helped him in his quests add a personal touch, especially for episodes revealed through correspondence that he quotes extensively. His chatty style may stimulate others to take up his topic or to engage in stamp collecting altogether.

Let's Stick With Style a Bit; and Cover Some General Editing Practices

Over the next few months, I'll continue to cover many different areas of editing, processing text and producing publications – whether they are created for print or online.

**Wayne
Youngblood**

As mentioned last issue (page 6), I started discussing the use of style to enable consistency throughout your publication process. While this feature is geared towards helping those who edit newsletters or journals (of which our hobby has many!), it's also a bit self-serving. All advice doled out also is consistent with how I produce *The Philatelic Communicator*, to enable authors to submit copy in a manner that helps smooth the bumps in production and communicate their points more clearly. Unfortunately, there seems to be a serious dearth of this type of information in our hobby.

Consistency of style is the editorial glue that holds all editorial matter together. Period. Please reread that sentence again. There's a reason it appears in bold type. I just cannot stress this philosophy enough. It doesn't matter how talented the writing may be, a cacophony of voices and styles from feature to feature in a publication creates needless noise in the reader's brain. Far too few publications heed this particular truism and pay attention to consistency. Have you ever noticed that some publications are easier to read than others, but you just can't put your finger on exactly why?

Any professionally produced publication has an editorial style, which enables the editor to not only enhance and clarify authors' thoughts, but also present them in a single editorial "voice" that does not distract the reader

"Remember, writing is hard work and is a craft. Finely tuned and impressive prose doesn't just slip effortlessly from pen to paper (or from cursor to screen), as many amateur authors believe ..."

(either consciously or unconsciously) and lose the author's point.

The best editing is nearly invisible, allowing a writer to feel he or she has done the job well and the reader to navigate through your publication with pleasure and ease. Failure to do this – editorially or visually – creates a subliminal dissonance of voices, typefonts and messages that leave a reader feeling unsatisfied, often confused and – frankly – less interested in reading your publication.

In short – and I can never emphasize this enough – editing is much more than simply dropping text into a template and finding room for illustrations. It's also about smoothing out rough spots, removing redundancies, helping the author clarify his or her point and bringing everything together into a single, consistent package. There are, of course, some basic and specific rules for using the English language, but there also are many areas open to interpretation, and most every writer has a slightly different approach to many of these. It's your job to make sure that style-wise, your authors speak with a unified voice.

In these cases it isn't about what's "right" or "wrong," but what fits your publication's style. As an editor, it is important for you to choose an editorial style and remain consistent with it.

"Always spell out an acronym or abbreviation the first time you use it. Not everyone knows that APS is the American Philatelic Society, and certainly not everyone knows BoB is a collecting area (back-of-the-book), rather than a person."

Internal consistency removes the roadblocks to enjoyment of your publication, whether it's the way you write addresses, express dates or handle many types of punctuation. Your writers should not be required to know everything about the style you choose as long as you do – and stick with it, although it is helpful if they do at least know some of the basics.

To accomplish this consistency of style you will be editing their prose and changing some of what is written to conform to your style but, again, it's not as much about what is "right" or "wrong," rather, does it conform to your chosen editorial style?

Yes, this sounds like a lot of work – and it is – but the end product, an easily read, consistent and pleasurable reading experience for members or subscribers is well worth the trouble.

However, as an author, it is important – and your responsibility – to communicate crisply and clearly; learning about internal consistency can help improve your writing as well.

Remember, writing is hard work and is a craft. Finely tuned and impressive prose doesn't just slip effortlessly from pen to paper (or from cursor to screen), as many amateur authors believe. Nor is prose an untouchable finished work of art set in stone.

I've found, over the years, that even after writing and rewriting a piece, a good editor can always seem to find ways to help clarify my writing and make it more enjoyable and understandable to the reader.

One of the most common questions I've received from authors is, when will my article appear? There are many factors that af-

fect this, including how many articles are already in the “bank” and trying to keep the content of each issue balanced. It isn’t simply a matter of “first-come, first served,” although that plays a role as well.

But there are other factors involved with how rapidly a feature will see print, including whether it is a digital or manual (hard copy) submission, whether it has high-quality illustrations and how easy editing will be. A hand-written article submitted with photocopies will have a much longer waiting period than one submitted electronically with high-resolution scans. Replacing poor images is a time-consuming process.

Most philatelic publications, whether specifically stated or not, claim an equivalent of First North American Serial Rights (with the understanding that the publication also retains perpetual, but non-exclusive publishing rights in all media).

What this means is that while the author still retains ownership of all rights to an article, the organization may publish it again in another format at any time. You also may have it published elsewhere if you wish, although it is an accepted courtesy to let another publication know it has already been previously published elsewhere.

Simultaneous submissions

This is typically a practice to avoid at all costs; it’s confusing and it frequently is the cause of misunderstandings between editors, authors and secondary editors that result in unfortunate errors. In fact, it has been standard practice in the past for most editors to simply reject simultaneous submissions out of hand.

However, on occasion, it is necessary (or at least highly desirable) to publish a piece in more than one publication at the same time. In these *rare* cases, it is vital that all parties are kept informed, and that one of the two (or more) editors takes prima-

ry responsibility for editing. It is also extremely vital that the primary editor keeps all other editors informed of any changes by the author. Failure to do this is just begging for trouble.

This doesn’t mean the piece needs to be identical in however many publications are producing it, but all basic information must be present.

“Regardless of what some authors (and even a few society officers) assert, it is not standard practice (nor should it be) for editors to send proof copies of articles to authors for approval. This is simply asking for trouble ...”

Personal information

Even if not intended to be part of an article, it’s generally a good idea to tell your editor a bit about yourself. Some publications like to provide a brief “bio” that includes your general area of residence (state or country), as well as your current collecting interests. If you wish to include direct contact information, you may. An editor may choose to publish it or leave it out, but you’ve at least given the option.

Always keep your audience in mind

Always try to keep a clear vision of your readership and intended audience. You’ll very likely connect with your readers far more readily if you keep your communication in a conversational style and always in first person.

For example, if I write this article to “all of you,” I’m communicating in a fashion that seems more like I am bringing tablets down from the mountain to enlighten the masses (you). As result, there’s at least the likelihood I’ll lose you as a reader in fairly short order. Most people don’t appreciate being preached at.

Besides, it’s much simpler, easier and friendlier for me to write as if I’m having a conversation with you.

If you have specific writing areas or editing issues you’d like to see addressed in the future, please contact me at editor@wu30.org.

Also, the collective, or royal, “we,” when you mean “me,” also is a no-no for obvious reasons, as is referring to yourself as “the author.” If you are the author, please take ownership.

Do not assume a frame of reference

Please assume you should never make assumptions. Remember that – as an author – you are communicating with other collectors who may not be familiar with your collecting area or what you’re writing about. Do not assume anyone has a frame of reference or familiarity with what you know.

It is always the best practice to provide some background information and basics, while trying never to “speak down” to your readers. Part of not making assumptions also deals with hobby and other acronyms. This is huge.

Always spell out an acronym or abbreviation the first time you use it. Not everyone knows that APS is the American Philatelic Society, and certainly not everyone knows BoB is a collecting area (back-of-the-book), rather than a person.

Proof copies of articles to authors

No. Just. No. This is one of the finest pieces of advice passed on to me by editing veteran and my mentor, Michael Laurence, longtime editor of *Linn’s Stamp News*.

Unless there is an extremely compelling reason (or, unless you have a longtime relationship with a trusted author), this practice should always receive a hard pass.

Regardless of what some authors (and even a few society officers) assert, it **is not** standard practice (nor should it be) for editors to send proof copies of articles to authors for approval. This is simply asking for trouble.

While this may be a standard practice in academia or for peer-reviewed research publications of a highly technical nature, this is generally an exceptionally poor idea in philatelic publications for several reasons.

1. The vast majority of philatelic writing is not specifically detailed “research” and does not require author review.

2. Because an overwhelming number of philatelic writers are not professional authors, they can – and do – cause significant extra work and delays for an editor by:

a. Continuously reworking an article that should have been finished by the time it was originally submitted.

b. Insisting upon multiple, usually frivolous, changes that do not affect the overall tone or meaning of an article.

c. Take far more time than necessary to review and get back to the editor.

d. Disagree with the editor’s style or language changes, which is simply inappropriate.

If I have developed a relationship with an author over time – and trust that he or she will respond in a timely, non-frivolous manner – I will occasionally send a proof for review.

Usually, however, it’s a hard “no.”

Some basic writing nuts and bolts

Now, for a few nuts and bolts. These are good tips for submitting copy to most any publication – philatelic or otherwise.

1. Electronic submissions are always preferable to ones that need to be re-typed! Many publications no longer accept hard-copy submissions. Articles may be sent as attachments to – or as body copy within – an email, sent on a CD (compact disc) or a flash drive or

“When it can be avoided, please do not send illustrations downloaded from the Internet. The resolution of those images is usually only 72 dpi, far lower than what is required for crisp print publication (300 dpi).”

sent through one of the many free file transfer services (such as WeTransfer).

2. Almost without exception, the preferred word-processing program is Microsoft Word, which has become the standard for virtually all of the publishing world.

3. Do not (I repeat, **do not**) attempt to format paragraph text when sending electronic files. Different fonts, tabs, spaces and other attempts to “help” usually cause additional work and delays to strip out formatting before text can be edited and properly formatted. It may even lead to serious errors.

Did I mention please **do not** try to format an article?

4. Please **do not** incorporate images into a text document when sending either hard copy or electronic copy. Even with recent software improvements, this creates a significant amount of extra work for the editor. Not only is the reproduction quality almost always degraded when images must be extracted and reformatted, but it’s also a lot of unnecessary effort for the editor. It’s also much more difficult to copy and edit text when illustrations must be avoided.

5. Please provide captions at the end of the manuscript, and keep them as relevant to images and as brief as possible.

Although not essential, complete sentences are preferred.

6. Provide relevant Scott numbers for all stamps you use, and please double check to make sure those numbers are correct.

7. If you do not submit original stamps and covers for scanning, please make sure you are using high-quality color photocopies or scans that are at least 300 dpi (dots per inch). It is best to never scan or copy items while they are in protective mounts or sleeves. This often leads to blurry images. It’s also usually best to use a dark background for contrast with perforations.

8. When it can be avoided, please do not send illustrations downloaded from the Internet. The resolution of those images is usually only 72 dpi, far lower than what is required for crisp print publication (300 dpi).

9. When sending your manuscript and/or scans as email attachments, please send a second message to let the recipient know what you sent. Sometimes a message with attachments never arrives, or is routed into a “spam” box.

While this is not an exhaustive tutorial for writing and editing, it does cover many of the most important points.

As an editor, you’ll find most of these tips will help make your life easier.

As an author, please heed these tips. They will not only help improve your writing, but also better the chances your article will get published – and in a timely manner.

Quick Tip: Unformatting Text

Most of us use Microsoft Word to write. Most editors expect articles and manuscripts to be in that format. Yet, when you try to paste text into an online document — a message board, an email or a website — it may look funny. The most common peculiarity is too much space between paragraphs.

That’s because Word has hidden formatting, and because the major platform companies (Microsoft, Apple,

Google and others) think their way is not just the best way, but the system you really should be using.

My solution is that after I have written my blurb in Word, I “save-as” a text file. You access the save-as menu with Control-Shift-S in Windows, Command-Shift-S (⌘-⇧-S) on a Macintosh. It’s one of the options in the File Format dropdown menu: “Plain Text (.txt),” after several older versions of Word and

Rich Text.

Once that’s done, re-open the file using the program found on all home computers: TextEdit on a Mac, NotePad on Windows. Or find the file on your computer and double-click on it, which will open it in whichever one of those programs is appropriate for your computer. Copy the now unformatted text and paste it into the online venue.

—Lloyd A. de Vries

Editors: What Can You Do to Get Writers to Write For You?

The age-old problem of motivating people to write for your publication seems to be an unsolvable puzzle if you look at some club and society publications that feature the byline of the same two or three members from one issue to the next. The content may be wonderful, and worth the price of membership, but it places a burden on the few, and what happens if one of them suddenly can't produce?

**John M.
Hotchner**

Then there is the problem that most writers will write about their favorite topics – so much so that the publication lacks diversity and may not serve the interests of the membership. So, let's stipulate that having more authors engaged in a club publication is a positive. The next question is how do you accomplish this feat?

There are quite a few ways to encourage members to produce for you, beyond the tried and sometimes successful editorial appeal to all members, and I'll present them here. I don't claim that this is a final list including every possible lure, so members' experiences are welcome in the form of follow-up articles or letters to our editor.

1. One-on-one: Editors should make it a point to know as many members as possible. This may be difficult with national societies, but go to the society convention, look at member exhibits, Google members to see what that might unearth about their interests. Then approach them one-on-one and ask for something for your journal. It's easy to ignore the editorial appeal in the journal; much more difficult to turn down a one-on-one invitation.

2. Shorts as well as longs. Be willing, even enthusiastic, to receive short articles, experiences, questions and other brief items. Often, potential authors assume you just want the blockbuster articles that require a lot of time and research. Make it clear that isn't so.

3. Insurmountable requirements. Some editors present a long list of how submissions must be submitted. Every requirement you state may make your job easier, but it may well be seen as making the form more important than the substance, and may be seen as, in effect, a list of "Why you shouldn't bother writing for me." Better to keep your requirements to a minimum and actually tell potential authors that you welcome ideas, drafts and even hand-written submissions, and will help them turn these creations into something publishable.

4. Length and editorial policy. Some editors of my acquaintance just don't like multi-part articles and discourage them. I'd urge that you avoid that policy. What may appeal to a writer as a series of smaller pieces, may look like too high a mountain to climb if it has to be submitted as a finished pamphlet.

5. Acknowledge submissions rapidly. Again, from personal experience, it is a real turn-off when the editor who has been beseeching the membership for articles does not acknowledge a submission upon receipt. If the piece needs work and you don't have time to deal with it in the moment, say that you will get back to the author within a week (or ?) and thank them for their effort.

6. Presenting edits/suggestions. Some of what you receive will need more than light editing. If so, show respect for your (often new) author, by explaining what

you have done, or what you want them to do; and assure them that you want both them and the publication to shine.

7. Highlighting authors. Recognize (especially new) authors and their contributions in the president's or editor's columns. Bold the names of authors. Make sure that author names are included in the table of contents.

8. Republication: For especially noteworthy articles, work with your club or society webmaster to highlight them on the website. Allow your authors to retain copyright so they can reprint their material elsewhere (so long as your publication is credited as being the first publisher.)

9. Rewards: If the club treasury can afford it, offer incentives. Give authors of longer articles free dues, or free member ads. Select a yearly author of the best article, the best article by an author new to your publication and give them suitable publicity.

The goal of all of these recommendations is to foster a productive and mutually satisfying relationship between editor and author, so that the author feels appreciated and enthusiastic about being one of the contributors to a great publication. Might I add that if you develop positive relationships with your authors, you are creating a bond that goes beyond their authorship; a situation that benefits both of you.

Calendar of philatelic literature exhibitions, 2026

Oct. 15-18, Rome, Italy, Italia 2026:

This event features innovative online submissions and remote judging. For information, visit <https://italia2026.filatelia.info/> or email italia2026@filatelia.info

Nov. 20-22, 2026, Itasca, Ill, Chicagopex 2026, 60th annual literature

competition: *The nation's oldest and longest-running philatelic literature competi-*

tion is now accepting entries for philatelic books, catalogs, journals & periodicals, monographs, websites, columns and individual articles and more. Deadline for entries is Sept. 19. Visit:

<https://www.chicagopex.org/pdf-documents/2026-literature-prospectus.pdf> or email coordinator Ken Trettin, at ChicagopexLiterature@gmail.com if you have further questions.

maximum! –for Sunday mornings, previewing interesting issues that were coming up that week. The Sunday morning editors loved them because they could slot them into newscasts at the beginning of their shifts and not worry about filling up the second section (which many major market stations do not carry).

How much can you say about a stamp in half minute? *“The Jubilation T. Cornpone stamp is coming out Thursday. He was a Civil War general famous for his mistakes (snippet of the Jubilation T. Cornpone song). It’s a Forever stamp. Lloyd de Vries, CBS News.”*

However, any spot that was used in a newscast paid twice as much as a syndicated spot, so these 30-second pieces paid twice as much, \$50-\$56.

And that’s what Alan heard on WCAU, his local station in Philadelphia

Errata (Stuff Happens)

editor@wu30.org

CWCA, really?!

Delighted to see you as the new editor of TPC. It was a very readable issue.

Have to ding you on one thing, though. The CWP is the journal of CWPS (Civil War Philatelic Society), not the Civil War Collectors Association. Ahem. Okay, I can see you’re turning red. No problem. Stuff happens.

Anyway, happy to see you at the helm of TPC.

— Patricia “Trish” Kaufmann

As then-editor of the CWP, I’m not sure how I could be more embarrassed; of course I know better. It must have been a slip of the fingers (and brain) in the rush to get the issue out.

However, I’m really pleased to hear you enjoyed the issue; hopefully that’s a trend that will continue!

— Wayne

Wrong committee listed

Unfortunately, you listed the 2025 Hall of Fame committee. The committee changes each year. The 2026 committee was on our nomination document to the president and board, but maybe you did not see that. Please correct this in the next issue.

— Cheryl Ganz, chair

Tom Lera

Marjory Sente (corrected)

Thank you, Cheryl. I wish I could somehow explain how that happened, but I’m frankly at a loss. It certainly was an oversight on my part.

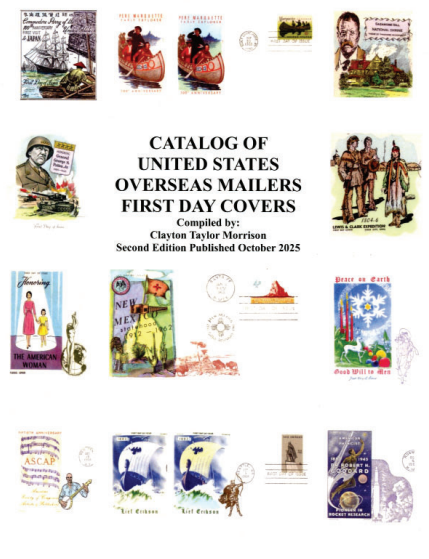
— Wayne

Book Review

Catalog of United States Overseas Mailers First Day Covers, second edition, by Clayton Taylor Morrison, 136 pages, 8½ by 11 inches, card covers, perfect bound, privately published, Cleveland Ohio, 2025. ISBN 9798283721064, \$19.99 plus shipping from Amazon.

Author Clayton Morrison and a team of fellow collectors of this material have drawn on the existing literature, plus personal information based on their collections, to compile this definitive listing of the Overseas Mailers (OM) first-day covers and cachets. The firm of Overseas Mailers Ltd. was established by Jay Leach in 1950. In 1953 he expanded his business to include first-day covers, and continued production until 1977.

In addition to his own cachet designs, Leach also embellished existing cacheted covers, including those of Artmaster, Fleetwood and others, by adding his own artwork as an auxiliary design. This catalog is a detailed compilation of nearly



350 such covers of both types. A unique feature of OM covers is an insert with historical information and other details about each cover. This catalog not only illustrates each cover, but also its insert.

The “index” at the beginning of the catalog is really a table of contents. The listing has two basic types: those

covers designed and sent by Leach to his customers, and those bearing the auxiliary design. This second category is broken into subgroups with varieties of the insert, whether the auxiliary designs were hand painted and other related aspects.

The criteria for identifying OM cachets are spelled out and a few covers without known inserts are discussed. The first and last examples of the types and subtypes are identified with timeframes. The main cover listing begins with chronological scans of the covers and inserts of those not bearing auxiliary designs. These are followed by illustrations of the add-on subtypes.

A handy appendix lists the covers by Scott catalog number, along with the page number upon which it is found, the type of cachet, date of issue, brand (Fluegel, Artmaster, OM, Jackson, etc.) and the subject of the stamp. The author and his team are to be congratulated on this detailed catalog, which will serve those who collect the covers either casually or as a specialty.

Get Yourself an Editor ...

Back in 1987, I thought I was taking a job as a software manual editor for a major U.S. corporation. The day I started, it was explained that I needed to learn to write the documentation “their way” for the software before I could be the editor.

Though I had been writing instructions for years, I self-edited the manuals. Boy, was I disillusioned when I started working with the company’s editor. I was told to write the instructions to an 8th-grade level. Write in short sentences with no multisyllable words (such as I just typed).

I was the first person in our IT department to get a personal computer as opposed to a dumb terminal with a green screen. My big challenge was to prove that manuals could be written with Mi-

crosoft Word for DOS, rather than writing in SGML (Standard Generalized Markup Language) on the mainframe.

First, I learned to type; “Press the Enter key” and not “Press any key”; because we regularly saw people looking for the “Any” key.

Then I was introduced to spell-check. Spell-check was rudimentary back in DOS days. One had to know how to spell and use a dictionary effectively.

I was able to prove that multi-chapter manuals could be produced on a PC and were easier to maintain.

Since those days, I have built instruction manuals from a few pages to more than 1,000 pages. In the intervening years, I have collected examples of writing where the author clearly needed an editor.

Examples:

- Their expecting us to come Friday.
- ... stand on the front steps waiving until the car disappears.
- I was also grossly nave (naïve).
- Could I interest you in a glass of sweat tea?
- ... a small vile of aftershave.
- His legs were covered in soars.

Perhaps the author of these examples read the text out loud to himself and thought they sounded alright. Sure, the offending word is spelled correctly, but it is the wrong word for the context.

This is why you need an editor! You are probably too close to your work to see glaring errors.

Get yourself an editor, now!

Club Newsletters

Over the course of many years in organized philately, I have produced monthly newsletters for several clubs. I lived in three states and immediately joined the local club when I arrived. More than one club had heard something about me and asked that I take over the newsletter before I had even taken off my coat.

Sometime in the late 1980s, I was approached to judge the APS Newsletter Contest.

What I discovered were newsletters that gave me no sense of where they were from, when the club met or how to join. Many did not list officers or an address.

This experience made me a better newsletter writer (cannot say editor because no one submitted anything to be edited).

So that is the beginning of a series I will try to run in our journal.

Have you been tasked with producing a club newsletter?

If you are lucky, someone was doing this before, and you have a format to begin with. I have toys on my computer to

design a logo and masthead.

You must get at least one officer on board to write a message each month. Otherwise you are making stuff up from your own experience.

Things that need to be in an effective newsletter:

- What is the next program or activity?
- Where does the club meet?
 - Be specific; 1313 Mockingbird \ Lane, 2nd floor, Room 13
 - What city and state?
- When does the club meet?
 - First and third Wednesday at 8 p.m., CST.
 - What is the order of the meeting?
- Who ya gonna call? *Ghostbusters!*
 - Where can the reader get more information?
 - Does the club have a website and/or email link?
- A list of coming events for the next few months.
- Announcements of philatelic activity locally or nationally.
- Affiliations with national organizations.

Secretary-Treasurer's Quarterly Report

Since our Winter 2026 report, we have gained eight new members. We began the quarter with \$4,835.67 in the bank; with dues payments, postage and various payments, our new balance is \$4,756.64.

A couple of members joined during Boston2026; most of the rest came as a result of Wayne Youngblood's substack article about us on May 11, 2026: <https://wayneyoungblood.substack.com/p/theres-a-new-sheriff-in-town-okay>

New Members

2114 Cole Longcor
2115 Bernard Beston
2116 Dan Undersander
2117 Daniel Grobani
2118 Michael Dodd
2119 Cynthia Carlson
2120 Sid Morginstin
2121 Alfred Carroccia
2122 Bart A. Fletcher

Respectfully submitted,
Alan Barasch, Secretary-Treasurer
Secretary@WU30.org

Robert Paul Odenweller, Sept. 19, 1938 – May 26, 2026

Robert Paul Odenweller, distinguished philatelist, author, editor, exhibitor and internationally respected authority on the stamps and postal history of New Zealand and Samoa, passed away at the age of 87. Among his many accolades (detailed later), Odenweller was inducted into the Writers Unit #30 Hall of Fame in 2006.

Born on Sept. 19, 1938, in Colón, Panama Canal Zone, Robert was the son of Lt. Col. Charles Joseph Odenweller Jr., a career United States Army officer, and Robina Katherine Watson Odenweller. Raised in a military family, he grew up alongside his siblings Charles, Peter and Robin.

Robert attended Swarthmore College before transferring to the United States Air Force Academy, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in 1960. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as an officer in the United States Air Force and served as a pilot, attaining the rank of captain before leaving military service in 1966.

Following his Air Force career, Robert devoted himself to philately, a field in which he would become one of the world's foremost scholars and leaders. Joining the Collectors Club (New York) in 1964 and the American Philatelic Society in 1968, he quickly established a reputation for meticulous research, intellectual rigor and a passion for sharing knowledge.

Over a career spanning more than five decades, Robert authored landmark works that transformed the study of Pacific philately. His books, *The Stamps and Postal History of Nineteenth Century Samoa* (2004) and *The Postage Stamps of New Zealand 1855–1873: The Chalon Head Issues* (2009) remain essential references for collectors and historians worldwide. He also wrote extensively for leading philatelic journals and served for more than 25 years as a columnist for *The Philatelic Exhibitor*.



Robert P. Odenweller (1938-2026)

Known to friends and fellow philatelist as “Bob” his leadership extended throughout the philatelic community. He served as editor of the *Collectors Club Philatelist* from 2005-12, guiding the publication through its transition to full-color production. He also wrote extensively, contributing to publications as varied as *The Philatelic Exhibitor* and *Australasian Informer* to the *German Postal Specialist* and *McKeel's*.

Odenweller also held numerous positions within the American Philatelic Society, the Philatelic Foundation, the Association Internationale des Experts en Philatélie, the Collectors Club (New York), the National Postal Museum's Council of Philatelists and the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP). As an accredited judge, expertizer, mentor and organizational leader, he influenced generations of collectors and researchers.

Bob's scholarship and service earned many of philately's highest honors.

In 1991, he signed the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, one of the field's most prestigious recognitions. He received the Alfred F. Lichtenstein Me-

morial Award, the American Philatelic Society's Luff Award for Distinguished Contributions to Philately, the Smithsonian National Postal Museum's Philatelic Achievement Award, the Royal Philatelic Society London's Crawford Medal, FIP Medal for Service and numerous other international distinctions. He was named an Honorary Fellow of both the Royal Philatelic Society London and the Royal Philatelic Society of New Zealand and was named a Distinguished Philatelist by the U.S. Philatelic Classics Society.

As an exhibitor, Bob achieved extraordinary success, winning the American Philatelic Society's Champion of Champions award in 1973 and the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie Grand Prix d'Honneur in 1980. His exhibits on Samoa and New Zealand set enduring standards for philatelic research and presentation.

Beyond his achievements, Robert was known for his generosity, integrity, mentorship and unwavering commitment to advancing philatelic knowledge. Through his writings, exhibits, expert opinions and leadership, he helped shape modern philately and inspired collectors around the globe.

Odenweller leaves behind a legacy in the philatelic community and among all who benefited from his scholarship, friendship and dedication to the preservation of postal history. His contributions will continue to inform and inspire future generations of collectors, researchers and historians.

Memorial contributions may be made to philatelic research organizations, libraries or educational institutions dedicated to the study and preservation of postal history.

Robert P. Odenweller is survived by his loving wife, Jane; his children, Liesl and Joy; and grandchildren, Anna and Keoki.

— Alan Warren