

## 2023 Club Officers\*

### President

\*Brian Jones ..... 408 300 3377  
[bfj39@yahoo.com](mailto:bfj39@yahoo.com)

### Vice President

\*David Occhipinti ..... 408 723 0122

### Secretary

\*Dave Gilman ..... 408 264 1953  
[Sanjosegilmans@gmail.com](mailto:Sanjosegilmans@gmail.com)

### Treasurer

\*Andy Hilton ..... 408 3771442  
[Papa\\_hilton@yahoo.com](mailto:Papa_hilton@yahoo.com)

### Webmaster/Newsletter

Jim Steinwinder ..... 408 644 4090  
[callcps@aol.com](mailto:callcps@aol.com)

### SJSC Blog

Ron Biell ..... 408 323 8702  
[Rbiell-dsl@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Rbiell-dsl@sbcglobal.net)

## Filatelice Fiesta 2023

### Chairman

Brian Jones ..... 408 300 3377  
[bfj39@yahoo.com](mailto:bfj39@yahoo.com)

### Bourse Chairman

Tom Kinberg ..... 503 910 9552  
[stampartstamps@gmail.com](mailto:stampartstamps@gmail.com)

### Club Website

[www.sanjosestampclub.com](http://www.sanjosestampclub.com)

### Club Blog

[www.sjclubblog.net](http://www.sjclubblog.net)

### Filatelice Fiesta Website

[www.filatelicefiesta.com](http://www.filatelicefiesta.com)

### Correspondence:

**San Jose Stamp Club**  
981 Shadow Brook Dr.  
San Jose, CA 95120



the San Jose Stamp  
Club on Facebook

## APS Warns about Online Grinches This Holiday Season

### Beware Online Counterfeit Holiday Postage Scams

As we approach the holiday season, the American Philatelic Society warns about online counterfeit postage stamp scams. Ads on Facebook, Instagram, and other online social media platforms advertise counterfeit U.S. postage to unsuspecting consumers as “discount holiday postage.”

“Each year, millions of people send holiday cards to friends and family across the country. We encourage using this time of year to spread joy to everyone through the mail,” said Scott English, Executive Director of the American Philatelic Society. “But don’t let online grinches selling counterfeit postage ruin the holidays for you and your loved ones.”

The online advertisements sell so-called U.S. postage at a discount of 50% or more from the current price of \$0.66. The advertisements usually display holiday-themed stamps from Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanzaa to entice buyers to use for their holiday mailings. Other common counterfeits include wedding and love-themed stamps or stamps bearing U.S. flags. Unfortunately, the stamps are almost always counterfeit and could put your mail at risk of being thrown out.

In early 2023, the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) announced new regulations declaring that mail using counterfeit postage would be considered abandoned. The USPS can remove from circulation, open, or destroy any mail bearing counterfeit postage.

The discount sites also harvest personal information, like credit card numbers used by criminals to make illicit purchases. The advertisements and websites often use the USPS logo and images from the official first-day-of-issue ceremonies. The fake stamps look nearly indistinguishable from genuine U.S. postage stamps, and identifying counterfeit postage takes special equipment and years of training.

Counterfeit postage drives up postage costs for all consumers and threatens mail deliveries by unsuspecting purchasers. The easiest and surest way to protect yourself is by purchasing from trusted sources.

“We want to make sure your festive photos, annual family newsletter, and holiday cheer reach the right address,” added English. “Before you buy your stamps for the holiday season, make sure you’re getting the real thing.”

### Before you buy online:

1. The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) and its retailers never sell discount postage.
2. The current price for first-class Forever stamps is \$0.66, with a rate increase to \$0.68 on January 21, 2024.
3. Genuine Forever stamps are always valid first-class postage regardless of the price paid at the time of purchase - so buy as many as you’d like now.
4. You can buy online directly from the U.S. Postal Service at [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com).
5. In a hurry? Purchase in person from a nearby post office or **Approved Postal Provider™**.

## *Table of Contents*

### Page

- 4 Filatelic Fiesta Report
  - 6 Stamp Collecting Merit Badge
- 

## *Club Blog & Website*

**Blog Updates** No Activity

**Website Updates**

**November** 2023 Newsletter uploaded

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## *Remember the dates!*

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## *President's Message*

We DID it! Filatelic Fiesta'23 was a success. Despite some serious issues, we did it! Attendance was modest but enough to keep most dealers happy. There is a more extensive recap of the show in another article in this newsletter. We have some big issues facing us for the 2024 show. I find it way too much to do to serve the club as president, host a Scouting merit badge class, and serve as the leader of our annual show. The club needs someone to step forward and take the responsibility of "General Chairman". Yes, many of you can do this. You'll have my full support on what needs to be done and getting things done, but also the independence to lead. There are variety of ways we can grow and develop our show, but it needs someone to lead this. A seed of growth I planted this year is ask the other local clubs to take a

bigger role in the show. This could give a much larger team to draw from to get things done. Also, David Occhipinti would like to step down as VP. There are a variety of other jobs that need to be filled. Which job will you do? It's common knowledge that it's a lighter load when everyone grabs and pulls the oar forward. If too many sit back and expect others to do all the work to host our show, it will get canceled. We cannot continue like we did in 2023, we must have more help to continue to host our show.

I genuinely enjoy being the club president and happy to continue in that capacity. That said, if someone would like to be the club president, I'm open to handing off that responsibility. Club meetings need more speakers and presentations. What are you going to present? I'm fine with just running our club's charitable operations – Scouting stamp collecting merit badge; stamp booth at Scout-O-Rama; stamp room at church Advent Craft room; loaning commemorative covers to senior centers. There are several new programs planned for next year including a program at the Pearl Ave Library.

In conclusion, who is going to step-up to lead Filatelic Fiesta in 2024?

*Brian*

**Continued on next page...**

## DUES:

Yes, with the start of a new year, it's time for annual dues. They remain at only \$12 per year. Sharing time with a group of people who share your interest in stamps is worth it. If all you do is take advantage of our inventory of stamps and discount on mounts, you'd save more than the dues. There are plenty of activities planned for the coming year that will make this a wonderful investment. Do you have some ideas on what you'd like the club to do in 2024? Speak up!

Please send a check by January 31st made out to: "San Jose Stamp Club"

Brian Jones

981 Shadow Brook Dr.

San Jose, CA 95120

## Exhibit Frames:

Our club still owns the exhibit frames from our time as an APS World Series of Philately show. For the past few years, they've been in storage in our shipping container parked in Campbell. We currently pay \$100 a month to park the container in a business's lot. Therefore, it costs us \$1200 a year just to hold on to them. Interest has been expressed by the Boston 2026 show organizing committee. Before making a deal with them, an inquiry was made to the WESTPEX committee to see if they're interested. There are a lot of variables up in the air right now and it is highly uncertain if our frames will be going anywhere. Part of the plan is to keep a few of the frames for anything we might want them for in the future. The club hopes to make as good a deal as possible, but it is unlikely that we will receive much cash for the frames. If anybody has ideas or concerns about our frames should speak up.



# San Jose Stamp Club

APS Chapter 0264-025791

Founded 1927, Club show since 1928

December 2023



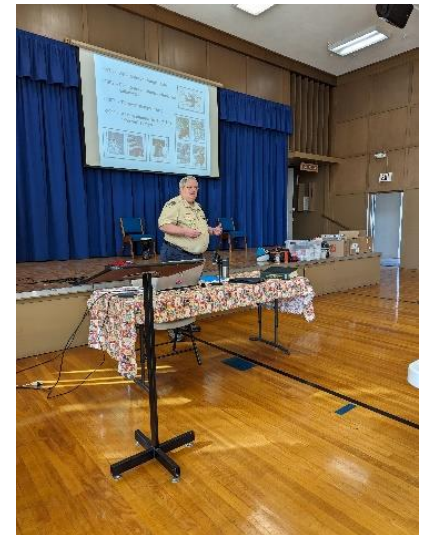
## Stamp Collecting Merit Badge



A Scouting stamp collecting merit badge class was hosted on Saturday October 14<sup>th</sup> in the social hall of the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos. It was attended by 25 young people including several young women.

The badge teaches the basics of how stamps are used, the basic principles of collecting including what and how to start a collection. The tools, resources, terminology and how to handle stamps is covered. Each scout

receives a starter kit (put together by SJSC members at our October meeting) that includes: several stock sheets, a pair of tongs, a perf gauge, a small package of hinges, and a sample of mounts. The goal is that participants have the tools to continue to collect after completing the merit badge. They also receive a package of stamps providing an example of many different types of stamps.



The SJSC can be proud of offering these young people literally millions of stamps to pick from to build their collection. They need either 100 stamps from the country of their choice or 75 stamps for a topic. The kids genuinely enjoy being to pick a country that is important to their family's heritage or topic that excites them. One of the merit badge counselors who has been invaluable the past two years has now signed up as a SJSC member. Join me in welcoming Terri Stevens to the club. It turns out we both have links back to Boy Scouts in Los Gatos dating back to the 1970s.



The Scouts take their newly picked out stamps home need to organize them into a coherent collection. They returned with their stamps organized on Sunday of Filatelic Fiesta. One of badge requirement options is to visit a stamp show, so coming gets their collection approved and completing a requirement.

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Sadly, stamp collecting is one of the rarest earned badges in list of 130 badges. It is typical that each year only a little over 1,000 Scouts earn this badge. Annually, only bugling has fewer earns than stamp collecting. By comparison, Coin Collecting typically has in the range of 3,000 earns a year. It is a very real possibility that stamp collecting will stop being its own badge and it would become an option for "Collecting" merit badge will teach a young person how to collect pretty much anything. The hobby needs to take the challenge of beefing up the earn rate of this badge or risk losing it.



Hosting a stamp collecting merit badge class is non-trivial as it involves being a registered Scout leader, taking the class for merit badge counselors, and taking the safety class. Then you have to get on the schedule, find a venue, promote the class and register the Scouts for the class. Why is all the effort worth it? The many thank-you's from the scouts and then there are notes like the one below make it more than worth it.

Hi Brian,

I just wanted to send you a huge THANK YOU to you and the rest of the adult volunteers for your work on the Stamp Collecting MB. My son, Steve, loved learning about stamps, looking through stamps to put together his collection, visiting the stamp show, and then telling his grandparents about what he learned (unsolicited, in fact!). He brought his Stamp MB binder with him to LA so he could show his 91 year old grandma, who in turn, went through a closet and pulled out binder after binder of stamps...it turns out that his grandfather, who passed away when my husband was in high school, was an avid stamp and coin collector...I had heard this, but was still surprised to see what is reportedly only a partial stamp haul. Steve is looking forward to showing his collection to his uncle, who inherited the rest of the family stamp collection, when he arrives on Friday.

Anyhow, I know putting together events and sessions for kids is a lot of work, so I wanted to let you know that this Scout really enjoyed it, as have his parents and grandmothers as well.

Thank you again for sharing your time and experience with the Scouts!!  
(Name changed to protect his privacy.)

So, yes, it is worth the effort! A BIG thank you to everyone in the club who contributed to soaking and sorting the stamps and helped build the kits.

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## Club Member/Dealers

### Richard Clever

Asia Philatelics, 3276 Andora Dr., San Jose, CA 95148  
Phone: (408) 238-0893 Email: [richard@asiaphilatelics.com](mailto:richard@asiaphilatelics.com)  
Web Site: [www.asiaphilatelics.com](http://www.asiaphilatelics.com)  
(China(PRC), Japan)

### Ron Biell

Euro-Asian Stamps, P.O. Box 20562, San Jose, CA 95160  
Phone: (408) 323-8702 Fax: (408) 323-8702 Email: [rbiell-dsl@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rbiell-dsl@sbcglobal.net)  
Web Site: [www.eurasiastamps.com](http://www.eurasiastamps.com)  
(China, Japan, Baltics, Russia, W. Europe, Covers Worldwide)

### Doug Gary

Douglas Gary, P.O. Box 457, Campbell, CA 95009  
Phone: (408) 274-3939 Email: [doug\\_gary@hotmail.com](mailto:doug_gary@hotmail.com)  
(USA & Worldwide Postal History, Stamps, Autographs, Postcards)

### Deepak Jaiswal

Stampbay, Inc, PO Box 50848, Palo Alto, CA 94303  
Phone: (650) 387-3885 Fax: (650) 561-4044 Email: [info@stampbay.com](mailto:info@stampbay.com)  
Web site: [www.stampbay.com](http://www.stampbay.com)  
(India including India used abroad)

### Walt Kransky

Walts Postcards  
Web Site: [www.thepostcard.com](http://www.thepostcard.com) Email: [wrsky@att.net](mailto:wrsky@att.net)  
(philatelic material, covers, postcards)

### Gary Morris

Pacific Midwest Co., PO Box 730818, San Jose, CA 95173  
Phone: (408) 532-7100 Email: [garyucb@aol.com](mailto:garyucb@aol.com)  
[www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com), Seller Name: superbstamps  
(Hawaii Stamps & Covers, Other Worldwide Stamps, Linder and Lighthouse Stamp Supplies)

### Denis Norrington

Arrow Stamp Company, San Francisco, California.  
Phone: [415-425-6683](tel:415-425-6683) Email: [denis@arrowstamp.co](mailto:denis@arrowstamp.co) Web site: [www.arrowstamp.com](http://www.arrowstamp.com)  
(Worldwide Stamps and collections)