

[Continued from Insert 08.2018a]

Member involvement opportunities have increased. The traditional options of preparing and presenting a program are still available. Additionally, members can place ads, for free, in the bourse, present a less formal Afterglow session and write articles for the newsletter on a variety of topics. Volunteers are also needed for a variety of jobs at the supported shows, working on preparing Birds of Prey material for auction, and being the greeter at the door to collect attendance data. With the disbandment of the FFSC in 1999, club members have taken on many more of the tasks of running the FLOREX show, including setup and tear down, and selling cachets to name a few. Jim Pullin, Josh Furman, Jim Archbold, or Robert Fisher have been exhibit chairmen from 2002 to present, an important and tedious task. While the FLOREX show is still run by the Florida Stamp Dealers Association (FSDA), much more of the tasks are handled by club members.

When the FLOREX Stamp show moved to Orlando in 1986, members paid for club shirts in an easily seen raspberry color to establish club identity. In the most recent leadership period, the shirts were redone in a dark blue format and name badges were added for a more stable club identity. Early problems with the badges have been quickly improved by Jim Archbold.

In addition to all of the cited member involvements, there is also a cadre of go-to people behind the scenes. In the 2nd leadership period this would have included Harry and Paulette Najarian with youth activities and Paul Kolb. In the present leadership period, continuing youth activities were run by Randall and Sarah Priest, Larry Stiles, and Richard Blanchard. Other go-to people have been and continue to be David Zambon, Newton Kulp, Roy Anderson, Jim Edmunds, Richard Blanchard, Ann Dowrick, Mike Schumacher, and Gene Perry. There are most likely more really behind-the-scenes people we have missed listing.

With the added involvement of club members in all of these ways, various awards have been added to recognize and encourage volunteer involvement of club members. The door prize at each meeting is still done. Additionally, there is a new member award of a one-time auction voucher for each member for attending 4 meetings and getting a board member's signature at each meeting attended. Annual "Glue" awards are given for the 5 top volunteers of the year (with a hidden accounting system to keep track and rank all of each member's various forms of club service). Finally, there is an annual CFSC Service Award that is voted on separately from the "Glue" awards.

With all of these changes, the annual club membership fee was held constant at \$12.00 during this period. The additional costs in awards and purchases by the club were more than offset by club growth, increased income from auctions, and additional funding from shows for services rendered by club members. The club budget has expanded and yet surpluses were stacking up. The club also purchased savings bonds to get a return on the surplus funds.

Recently however, annual club dues were increased to \$25.00 to cover a change by county government to require payment for meeting room time after 8:00 PM to be charged by the hour rather than by the half hour, doubling the annual cost of our meeting room and giving us an extra unused half hour. To make use of this time, an Afterglow time has been added. The Afterglow is alternately a trading session or a prepared presentation on some specific topic presented by individual members.

Perhaps even more important is where the club goes in the future. Each of the leadership periods has been about 15 to 20 years in length. The transition is gradual and not easily demarcated. With some current leadership group members giving signs that they want to lessen their involvement and considering the time we have been in this current leadership group a change of leadership group is probably coming up in a very few years.

Who will emerge as the new leadership group? What will the leadership vision be? Will this improving trend go downhill or go on to even better things? These are all important questions to consider as the future unfolds.

Editors Note: This detailed summary of the CFSC activity stands as a testament to those that have given of their time to make the club a better place. We are stronger as a club than as individuals. Giving back to the hobby that sustains us – can be rewarding!

CFSC 50 Years From Now?

Phil Fetting

That is a good question that I have thought about for a few days before attempting to sit down and write. The problem is – I am almost as puzzled as the day I was asked to take this on! My first thought was one of: it is impossible to predict the future without visiting the past. My first contact with this club came in late 1978 or early 1979 at the age of 34. My good friend Steve Patrick, a few years younger, joined soon after in the Spring of 1979. We were among the younger members, but clearly not the youngest. In the 1980s and later, the Central Florida area has been the home of several stamp stores, sometimes four or five at a time. When FLOREX moved to Orlando in 1986, I enjoyed working with several excellent Youth Chairpersons who catered to the sometimes large number of young visitors. A few years during the 1980s we enjoyed as many as 13 days of stamp shows a year in Orlando. Linn's Stamp News was the major of 3 great newspapers and had 60-70 pages. The official magazine of the Boy Scouts had columns of stamp offers. The Scott's Catalogue covered the world in a few volumes for well under \$100.

Taking the mid 1980s as the high mark of philatelic activities, where are we 30 years later? I don't have (or want) access to the birth years of the club members, but we clearly are a club "getting on in our years". The club still has active volunteers to work the youth table, however we are woefully lacking in youth. CFSC member, John Latter has the only store left in town and he is open 3 days a week. Stamp shows in Orlando now total 7 days. Linn's is a mere shadow of itself and the other publications are either combined or gone. A set of new Scott catalogues now cost \$600 or more, plus postage.

A recent Parade article in the Sunday newspaper listed 99 ways to save money. Number 37 was to pay your bills online and skip those messy time-consuming trips to the post office. And speaking of the post office, another recent article in Linn's mentioned a plan or suggestion by the President that the USPS be privatized.

So, what will the CFSC look like in 2068? The sad answer is I don't think the club will survive in any form close to what we know. The practice of putting a paper stamp on a paper envelope will almost surely have ceased in this form. Stamp collecting may morph into a hobby involved with the assembling of artefacts from the past. It most certainly still will be a hobby, but I suspect the numbers to hold a meeting will not exist.

The Year 2068; Another View

Francis Ferguson

I have a little different vision of the club 50 years into the future. While many of Phil's points are worthy of pondering, I want to think that the core-essence of the philatelic world will still exist. The form may be different, but the function will still be there. Simple math tells me that at 109, I will not be around to witness what occurs. I want to believe that I am simply a custodian of these small pieces of paper that will give someone else joy in the decades to come. The basic desire to collect and honor history is one that drives me. I see that continuing. Store fronts are not in my vision of the future, as a more technology knowledgeable (and comfortable) strata of the philatelic world gains ground and influence. Shows I want to think will survive, for they are a social event as much as they are a philatelic happening. Time will tell.

What will the CFSC look like in fifty years? That is a darn hard question to ponder. I want to believe that again the core-essence of being a collector will drive folks to still belong to the club. In recent years, the CFSC has enjoyed a renaissance that has more than doubled our active roster to nearly 100. While the CFSC will never see (in my opinion) a roster size of 136 as it did in 1953 time-frame, I hope the future does include the club in some form. Who will lead the CFSC? For that I have no answer.

I do know as a denizen of the spirit world -- I will enjoy peeking in at the pre-meeting dinners and the meetings.

Again -- time will tell – is all I can say!