After a particularly harsh winter, the kind of winter you remember from childhood, it is time to think about summer activities. Remember to include the American Philatelic Society. First, let us know if your vacation plan might include a temporary forwarding address. Let us know so we can re-route circuits during your travel time. If you will be away from your home for more than seven days, let us know the dates so we can notify the appropriate member on each of your circuit lists to skip your name for that mailing. You will automatically be placed on the next circuit list to arrive after your return home.

During your travels, slip in a visit to the APS:
- Tour your headquarters, the American Philatelic Center (APC) in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania
- Conduct some research in the American Philatelic Research Library
- Browse through sales book inventory that is in-house at the time and buy stamps for your collection and bring a want list
- Access the reference collection maintained by the American Philatelic Expertizing Service (APEX)
- Visit the stamps and cover shop to look through and buy from donated philatelic items
- Inspect and purchase items at Stampstore that you have placed on your online wish list
- View the Washington free frank, the letter sent by the first United States president just after his inauguration in 1789
- Visit the Smithsonian’s Headsville post office at the APC
- And much more

The annual APS Summer Seminar, June 21–26, is another great event that is full of philatelic energy. During the week, you will have plenty of time to visit the Sales Division to browse the regular and clearance inventory.

Volunteer Work Week, July 27–31, is another opportunity to look through the sales books for bargains, while helping the society with tasks that might not be possible to accomplish otherwise without volunteer assistance.

Visit Stampshow in Grand Rapids, Michigan, August 20–23, where you can browse through the philatelic stock of more than 100 dealers. The Sales Division will have a booth with regular and clearance circuit books available for buying stamps and covers.

Get out of the heat and into the air conditioning this summer and work on your collection. The sales circuit circulations do not take a break, so continue asking for regular circuits and for clearance circuits. You will find the list of offered categories, with a form to request circuits, on the back cover of this issue of The American Philatelist.

Use Stamps to Pay Postage

As stamp collectors, we should recognize that other collectors might appreciate receiving mail on which today’s stamps have been used to prepay postage. In the case of circuit packages, it is a courtesy to the next member on the circuit list to affix some of the postage in the form of stamps. This is particularly important for the hobby, because fewer stamps are being used these days and we have noticed a marked increase in requests for used modern stamps, especially post-2000 stamps. And, it is not just the United States where demand is on the increase.

It has been a couple of years since we included a plea for use of postage stamps when mailing circuits. Now is the time to resurrect that plea and ask that circuit members keep a stash of stamps on hand for mailing circuits, especially when the con-
tents are related circuits of U.S. material. Just make sure the postal clerk applies the meter label for the difference or a zero-meter label if no additional postage is needed. The zero meter fulfills the security indicator requirements of the U.S. Postal Service on packages. See the nearby example of what happened to a parcel we sent in November 2003 that did not have the zero meter affixed. In most places, the package must be mailed through a postal clerk anyway, so placing stamps on the package is logical for helping to perpetuate the hobby.

May Special

The Sales Talk column in the March AP addressed ratios determined by dividing the number of sales books in a category by the number of members requesting that category for circuits. U.S. covers 1900–1945 had the highest ratio at 18.5.

This means that we are overstocked in this category. U.S. picture postcards are in the same situation with a ratio of 17.8. The U.S. blocks category, which include any type of blocks of U.S. stamps along with booklets and panes, has a ratio of 11.

For the month of May and until June 15, 2015, we are offering direct on-demand circuits of these three categories, one category per circuit. There will be no $5-charge and no 5 percent buyers fee, although the usual $2 insurance fund fee will be charged. The request should not be so specific that there might not be any books available to send. Providing two or three areas of interest within the category will help us when filling a circuit for you. All three of these categories can potentially have circuits with so much bulk that they would be sent in larger boxes than we normally use, therefore the postage to return the circuit also would be higher. The special for the clearance circuits for May through June 15, 2015, includes only the categories of France, French Colonies, and Australia. These will be sent in the regular flat-rate Priority Mail packaging and no buyer's fee will be charged.

E-mail us or send a note stating the following: Direct on Demand — choice of U.S. Covers 1900–1945 or U.S. Picture Postcards or U.S. Blocks; clearance — choice of France or French Colonies or Australia; along with your name, APS member number, and circuit mailing address.

“5 For 10” Categories (Needs)

You can earn coupons for free blank books for every 10 completed books (clearance books do not qualify) containing material from a set list of categories. For more information and the list of qualifying categories, visit www.stamps.org/Stamps-Needed, or contact us to obtain a hard copy of the list. It is important to note that single-country books usually have better sales.

U.S. Officials
U.S. Plate Number Singles
U.S. Precancels/Perfins
British Caribbean Saints
Hong Kong
Norway
Poland
Portuguese Colonies
Egypt
Israel
Korea

What the Sales Division Offers

“Mini-Stamp Shops” delivered to your home • $8 million inventory
More than 160 collecting categories • No buying limit
$215 average value per sales book • Buyer satisfaction guaranteed
Sellers' books insured while circulating • 40,000 books in circulation

Questions? Contact us via e-mail at salesdiv@stamps.org, by phone at 814-933-3803, ext. 227, or by mail at APS, 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823.