

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Mark Maestrone

Welcome Golf & Basketball Members

I did not have space in my President's Message in the Fall 2017 issue to extend a warm welcome to our new golf and basketball members. Most of these collectors were members of two other study groups (the International Philatelic Golf Society and International Filabasket Society) which sadly had to disband. It made perfect sense for SPI to pick up the slack and offer a place for these collectors to reconnect with each other and engage with the greater sports and Olympic philatelic community. I hope that some of these new members will actively participate, especially in contributing content of one sort or another to our journal!

Los Angeles 2018 – 24th World Olympic Collectors' Fair (WOCF)

Next year's World Olympic Collectors' Fair will be held in Los Angeles, California. This will be the third time a US city has hosted the WOCF – a record unmatched by any other country except Switzerland. The dates of the 3-day event and main venue will be announced shortly. We hope that many of you – especially those on the West Coast – will join us for this annual Olympic extravaganza.

The Fair has been an almost annual event since its inaugural meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1994. The 24th WOCF will be a dual presentation by SPI and the Olympian Collectors Club.

In addition to the standard bourse of dealers in Olympic memorabilia, pins, numismatics, and philately, the show's organizing committee is planning some exciting activities. The program is expected to include a tour of Los Angeles Olympic venues, special evening reception, silent auction, banquet, and Olympian autograph sessions.

The International Association of Olympic Collectors (AICO) will also take this opportunity to hold its biennial General Assembly during the Fair. Three positions on the Executive Board will be filled by a vote of the member clubs. AICO will also be conducting meetings and other activities.

Look for a save-the-date eBlast to be mailed to all SPI members in the near future.

Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays

Once again, the months seem to have flown by. Here we are facing the end of the year, with new beginnings just around the corner. I'd like to take a page from Ben Franklin who, in his great wisdom, advised: "Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man." On behalf of the officers and directors of SPI, I wish you and your families seasons greetings and a healthy and prosperous 2018!

In this issue ...

Have you ever wondered about how the Olympic salute came about, or noticed how it resembles the fascist salute of the 1930s and 1940s? Manfred Bergman takes us on a journey to discover the roots of the salute in Part 2 of his article, "Paris 1924, I Owe You."

Ice hockey has been much in the news this year with North America's NHL owners deciding against a break in the schedule for the 2018 PyeongChang Olympic Winter Games. Ice hockey's philatelic commemoration has, however, not suffered. Kon Sokolyk reviews Canada's final set of six stamps honoring ice hockey's centennial, while Mark Maestrone covers the Canada/USA joint issue for the History of Hockey. In other sports, Norm Rushefsky presents an article on baseball first day covers with cachets promoting various MLB teams. Our golf expert, Patricia Loehr, shows some meters publicizing golf along with at least one other sport.

From Europe is an article (reprinted from our German sister society, IMOS) by Wolfgang Marx on gymnastics private post stamps, accompanied by a very informative explanation of the German private posts by Thomas Lippert.

In the interest of kindling enthusiasm for first-time exhibiting, Norm Jacobs provides his top ten practical tips on getting started. For all collectors, Manda Kowalczyk of the Smithsonian's National Postal Museum provides guidance on how we should be caring for our collections to preserve them for future sports and Olympic philatelists. We hope you enjoy this issue!