

Time For Some New Year's Resolutions!

- 1. Attend club meetings!** Seems awfully strange that collectors would have to be 'prodded' to attend club meetings. If I had any in my area, *I'd* certainly be a regular! Club meetings offer the chance to learn more about your hobby, meet with your peers, get recognition for your good works, and, of course...get more covers! That's what *you* get out of it! But the club benefits from your attendance, as well. Dwindling attendance threatens the very existence of clubs. With fewer 'active' members, it's the same people who do the work year after year; sooner or later, they'll have to be replaced...but by whom? A thriving club draws new collectors out of the local community's accumulators; it advertises the hobby; it brings in new covers from non-collectors. Healthy club attendance ensures the continuation of such.
- 2. Try to make at least one swapfest or convention!** Long Beach, Sierra-Diablo, Trans-Canada, Southeastern, and UES all offer annual swapfests with heavy duty trading and auctions. In the West, there's the AMCAL convention; in the East (usually), there's the RMS convention. The conventions, especially, are the showpieces of the hobby. Plus, they offer the biggest auctions, the biggest display contests, the most awards, the most abundant freebie tables, the greatest variety of hobby activities in one place, the greatest number of dealers, and the greatest single gathering of collectors from one end of the continent to the other.
- 3. Pay club dues on time!** You can actually add several years to the life expectancy of your club's membership secretary simply by paying your dues on time and thereby reducing all the additional paperwork, reminders, and resulting headaches he or she otherwise has to go through.
- 4. Keep club(s) updated on addresses changes!** It's one of the oxymoronic situations that comes with our modern, fast-paced society. We're a non-nomadic group that moves constantly! It's frustrating for everyone involved to have club bulletins 'returned to sender'. Eventually, the member will contact the club and want all those missed issues...and the club ends up paying postage on them *twice*! Not good. And while we're at it, if you keep your club(s) apprised of your current e-mail address, it saves soooooo much time and postal hassles when there's some problem or question later on.
- 5. Advertise the hobby!** Every time you tell someone that you collect match covers you're advertising the hobby, but how about something that would reach more people. It's pretty easy to get your local newspaper to run a story about your collection, or put up a display in your bank, credit union, or library. Or, you could have your club run a classified ad advertising your upcoming club meeting. Or... well, there are lots of other options.
- 6. Bring someone else into the hobby!** When you ask a friend or relative to be on the lookout for cover for you, eventually you're bound to run into someone who is already an accumulator. A little time and effort from you might be all that it would take to turn that person into an actual collector.
- 7. Support your clubs' fund-raising activities!** Auctions, raffles, drawings, and the like--Those fund raisers are what helps pay the bills. Is your club putting together a raffle album? Donate covers. Is your club auction looking for lots? Donate covers. Before the club sells anything, it has to have the material.
- 8. Be a doer!** It's easy to be an Indian...not so easy to be a chief! Does your club need officers? Volunteer. Like to write? Do the club bulletin. Good at organization? Manage the mailings or become the membership secretary. Like to work with money?(!) Be a treasurer!