

MATCH TIPS for New Collectors

by "Billboard Bill" Thomas

Have you heard of a new gimmick called e-fax? It's great for people like me whose computer is not tied to a phone line. I have a phone fax, you get yourself a free e-fax number, and it enables me to send you a fax which gets translated into an e-mail message somewhere in a deep hole in Colorado, and my fax appears on your "You got mail" screen. It costs nothing, as you get lots of advertising with your messages. Call up e-fax, get you a phone number, and tell me what it is so I can send you messages quickly. Our RMS Editor has such a number already—978-389-0396.

Wave of the future - phones are becoming so abundant that soon many folks will have to dial the area code along with the 7-digit number even to call next door. This is occurring in my area (407) right now. It's an inconvenience, but it avoids having new area codes assigned.

Do try to get to AMCAL late this month in Bakersfield, CA, as it does lotsa big things. Any California club membership makes you an AMCAL member, but even if you're not c'mon west and have fun. In June, comes UES in Hagerstown, MD, the east coast version of AMCAL. If you travel about the country on business, try to make your travel plans mesh with attending a swapfest or club meeting this year. A third multi-club coalition has formed - the recent Southern Swapfest in LA was such a success that the 3 hosting clubs (Lone Star, Mid-South, and Southeastern) have formed a troika to have such swapfests each year. Next year's will be in Jacksonville, FL. Current pres. is Rosie Rundell.

If you're worried about lugging an oversized display to a convention, look at the large business portfolio carriers, like a giant portfolio with zipper on three sides, at Office Depot, etc. I've checked mine as airline baggage by

inserting a 3/4" slab of plywood in it to keep the baggage manglers from mangling it. Office Depot also has large display panels in blk&whte that neatly fold into a smaller size for transporting. Since everyone can't visit your home to see your terrific covers, a display is the only way you can get your covers admired by other collectors. Clubs have their own display rules—the RMS rules were published in Jan..

There are cover sizes, cover types, and cover categories. Size is pretty straightforward - there are many different cover sizes, starting with 10-strikes and going all the way up to the huge 240-strike ones you buy at scenic attraction souvenir stands. Type of cover refers to the manufacturer's identity, which has largely disappeared. Not many years ago, we had a dozen or more cover types by just one mfr—Universal. They had Jewels, Jewelites, Uniglos, Foilites, Filigrees, Florentines. And then there's categories, which means the kind of covers you collect. You choose your own categories, and they can be limited to subject matter like banks or bordellos, or to certain types like Matchoramas or Jewelites, or they can be a combination of size, type, and category, like 20-strike Florentine covers with girlies on them. Pick your own categories, depending on your personal preferences or history - if you're a retired mortician, funeral home covers might be an appealing category for you.. No one will laugh if you choose some odd, obscure categories. There's a small group who collect covers with manholes on them. How you sort and group your covers in your albums is purely up to you—the important thing is that you can find a cover when you seek it. Some categories file easily by alphabet or by geographic locale, while others like Xmas ones may need to be filed by color.

Please do not let your collection become trashed after you die. There are those who buy up collections, and even if your survivors don't sell off your covers, ask them to donate them to a club or to some new collector so that they will continue to circulate in our hobby, won't you?

[Got hobby questions? I'll try to help. Write me at 222 S. Ranger Blvd., Winter Park, FL 3279, or phone or fax me at 407-657-0222. I'm at home