

Our 25<sup>th</sup> Year

# PNC<sup>3</sup>



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# Coil Line

Journal of the PNC<sup>3</sup>  
**Plate Number Coil Collectors Club**

American Philatelic Society Affiliate # 185

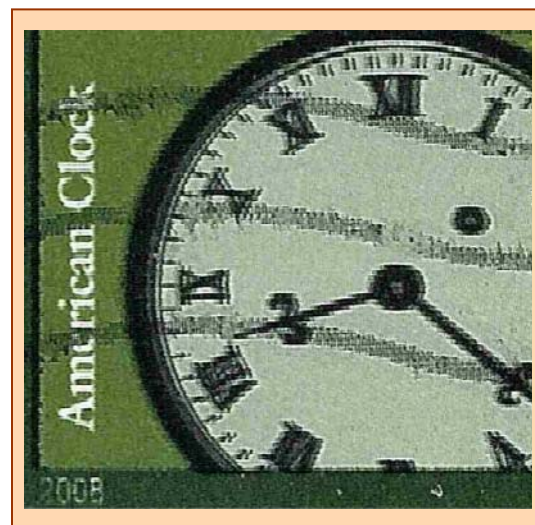
Vol. 25, No. 8

August 2012

Whole No. 290



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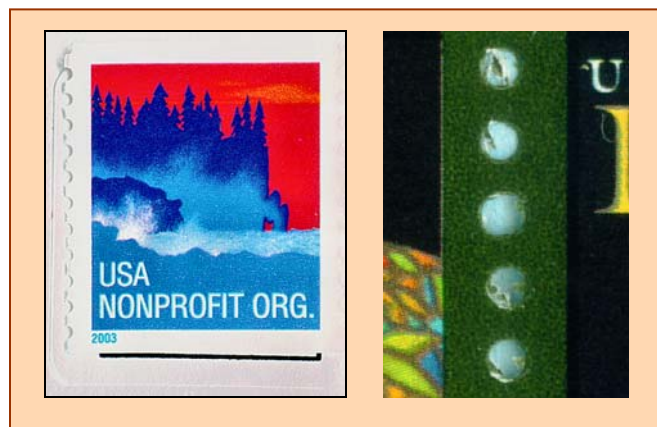


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**PNC<sup>3</sup> Autumn Auction!**  
Consignment deadline *this August 18<sup>th</sup>*  
(See July issue for Consignment sheet on inside wrapper)

# Coil Line

*Journal of the Plate Number Coil Collectors Club*

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All content matters, letters to the Editor, and advertising questions should be sent to **Coil Line**, c/o Ronald Blanks, PO Box 9282, Chesapeake, VA 23321. Phone 757-478-8719; email: [coillineeditor@yahoo.com](mailto:coillineeditor@yahoo.com). For mail delivery problems, contact the mailer below.

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## President's Message

*from the PNC<sup>3</sup> president ...*

The Annual Meeting of members is nearly upon us. I hope to see many PNC<sup>3</sup> members in Sacramento at the club table on the show floor, and at the Annual Meeting on Saturday afternoon at 1 p.m. in Room 304.

Even if you can't attend the event, you can still help the club. If you know of someone who will attend StampShow, please encourage them to stop by our table and/or visit the meeting. We can show them the many ways that PNC collecting can boost their collecting enjoyment and extol the benefits of membership in PNC<sup>3</sup>. I'll be at the table throughout the show hours (except for our meeting times) and I always enjoy chatting with members and guests. As usual, we plan to have a display copy of the latest version of the PNC<sup>3</sup> Catalog of Plate Number Coils. Collectors are always impressed with the quality of that publication and the comprehensive treatment of PNCs therein.

If you are planning to be there yourself, please be aware that we plan to have a digital scanner there to record special PNC items. The PNC<sup>3</sup> Catalog Committee has developed an archive of images of rare or unusual PNC items that we plan to use to illustrate future Catalog chapters, and would like to expand its content with images of items not frequently seen. Please bring any unusual, rare, or interesting PNCs with you so they can be scanned into our image library.

Concerning the Catalog Committee, we are still looking for more volunteers to help with developing new Catalog chapters. The limiting factor in expanding the Catalog is that we don't have enough hands to do the work involved in putting together the data and text to document earlier PNC issues. We seem to be able to keep up with the latest PNC releases, but have not been successful in recruiting volunteers to prepare chapters for older PNCs. It would be great if more members took on this special task. The current members of the Committee are more than willing to help orient and assist new members with getting started. If you are interested, please contact the committee at [catalog@pnc3.org](mailto:catalog@pnc3.org). – Gene Trinks

## Welcome!

If you are a new reader, PNC<sup>3</sup> is in its 25<sup>th</sup> year. We are a community of stamp collectors specializing in the plate numbered coil issues of the USA. The first PNCs were issued in 1981 and, in February 1988, a network of PNC specialists established our club. *Coil Line* was launched in May, 1988 and serves (along with other club literature) to inform collectors on the many aspects of PNCs. Studies include scarce numbers, varieties, printing methods, market values, PNCs on mail, and more. Thank you for visiting, and we hope you'll join us!

## PNC<sup>3</sup> Regional Meetings

### Annual PNC<sup>3</sup> Meeting APS StampShow – Sacramento August 18

All PNC<sup>3</sup> members, please note: The annual PNC<sup>3</sup> meeting will take place during the APS StampShow in Sacramento, California, August 16-19. The APS show is being held at the Sacramento Convention Center, 1400 J Street (at the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> Street), Sacramento. The PNC<sup>3</sup> meeting is scheduled at 1 p.m. on Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, in Room 304 and is open to all.

More information about APS StampShow is available at the website [www.stamps.org/Stampshow](http://www.stamps.org/Stampshow).

The show organizers can be reached at [stampshow@stamps.org](mailto:stampshow@stamps.org) or you may contact Barb Johnson at 814-933-3803.

The annual PNC<sup>3</sup> Board Meeting is also slated for Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. in the same location (Room 304). This meeting is also open to all.

### Want to Sponsor a Regional Meeting?

Contact Tony Bruno for suggestions. He can put you in contact with others who have taken on the task. Several members have made it a regular habit of promoting meetings in their area.

#### Regional Meeting Chairman

Tony Bruno, PO Box 624, East Lyme, CT 06333-0624; email, [tbbee@aol.com](mailto:tbbee@aol.com)

(PNC<sup>3</sup> meeting notices in this column are free. Please submit details to the Editor 3 months before the meeting.)

### Coils Off-Sale and Going Off-Sale

The July-September 2012 (Quarter 3) edition of *USA Philatelic*, the USPS sales catalog for collectors, lists the following coil items as sold out:

- (10¢) Patriotic Banner strip of 25 from 10K roll, self-adhesive (Sennett-made, issued 7/4/2007) [Avery-Dennison 3K and 10K versions remain]
- (5¢) Seacoast strip/25 from 10K roll, sa (Ashton-Potter, 6/2003 reprint, PNC every 22<sup>nd</sup> stamp)
- 1¢ Tiffany Lamp in 10K rolls (4/28/2009 reissue with “2008” year date) [only strips of 5 remain].

On the online message board of the Virtual Stamp Club in early July, a poster reported trying to place an order for strips of 25 of the above 1¢ Lamp that was still listed in the catalog. However, the collector was informed that they also were sold out. The recent reprinting (listed as 10/2011) without back numbers remains available as 10K rolls, strips of 25 with PNC, and strips of 5.

The following coil issues are listed as available only while supplies last, and will not be offered after September 30:

- 44¢ Flag strip of 25 from 10K roll, self-adhesive (item 787830; full 10K rolls sold out in late 2011)
- 44¢ Flag rolls of 3K, sa (item 787740)
- 44¢ Flag strip of 25 from 3K roll, sa (item 787730)
- 44¢ Flag rolls of 3K, water-activated gum (787140)
- 44¢ Flag strip of 25 from 3K roll, wag (787130)
- 44¢ Flag strip of 5 from 3K roll, wag (787120).

Lastly, while not shown as scheduled to go off-sale, the following item is flagged as available only while supplies last:

- (5¢) Seacoast strip/25 from 10K roll, sa (Ashton-Potter, 11/2004 reprint, PNC every 27<sup>th</sup> stamp, item 781434).

Of note is that the above Seacoast item is one of only two self-adhesive (5¢) Seacoast formats still offered through the catalog. The other is a similar strip of 25 but from 3K rolls. It is labeled as the reissue of 4/6/2004, item 782730. Interestingly, all of the water-activated-gum Seacoast items ever offered are still available. – Doug Iams and Ron Blanks

In this issue we have major discoveries in not one but two specialty areas of PNCs: phosphor-tagging varieties, and die-cut shape varieties. And coincidentally, Robert Thompson made both finds, albeit from the same cache of philatelic treasure-hunting material. This took the form of a long-accumulated group of covers from a single source.

Yet even that group of covers itself was a sampling of sorts, which Robert explains further in his report starting on page 97.

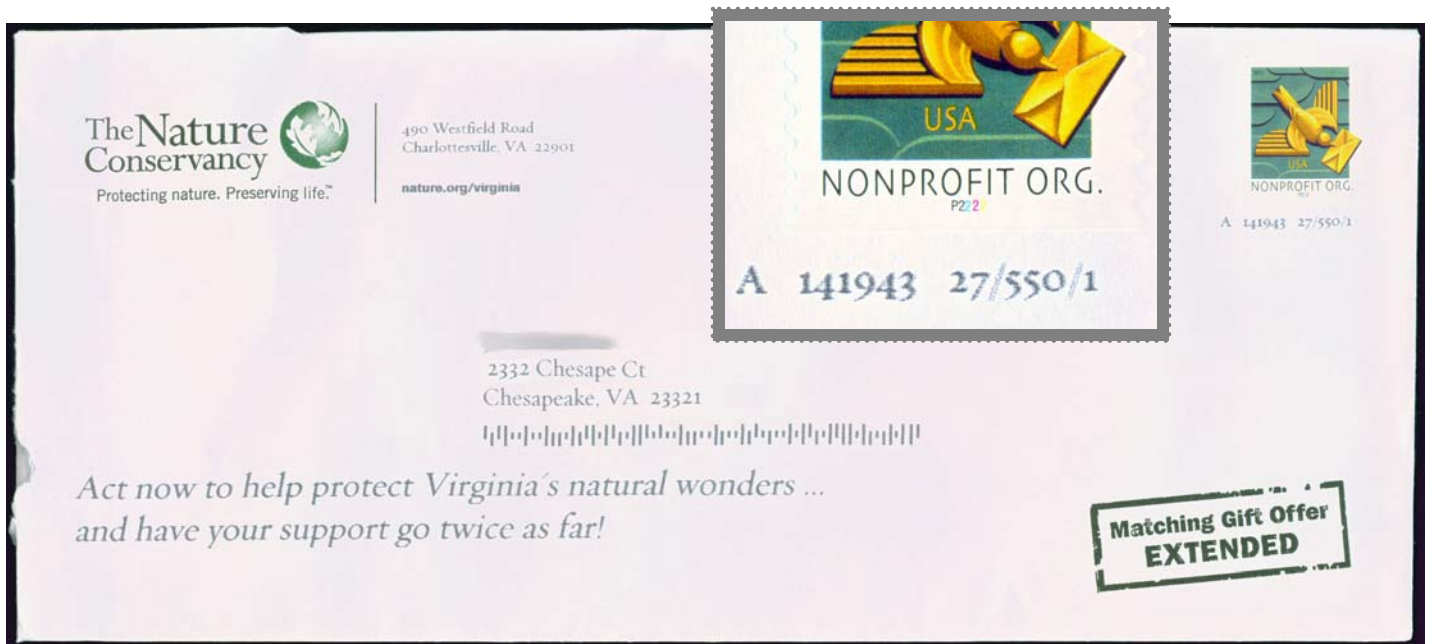
You might not have noticed, but on the “masthead” page for about the past year we have tried to recognize 25<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary milestones of past PNC issuances. In this issue on page 90, the 4¢ Stagecoach of the Transportation Series is pictured, having been released on the 19<sup>th</sup> of this month 30 years ago. The precanceled version was overprinted with a service inscription for use by authorized nonprofit organizations at postage rates at or near the 4¢ value per mailpiece.

In those days, a flurry of regulations and notices controlled bulk mailers’ use of “live” denominated postage with the aim of having the affixed postage value reflect as closely as possible the actual mailing rate. Over time, multiple types of postage discounts grew with different ways of sorting and otherwise saving the post office work in handling mail in bulk. Eventually by 1991, the unwieldy franking system gave way to the present system.

Nowadays, the USPS provides undenominated “presort-rate” coils that mass mailers can affix by machine when they want to use stamps. The coils have assigned values such as 5¢ for the Seacoast stamps that feature prominently in this issue’s articles, reporting on their gradual retirement as noted at left, and their recent mail use as noted on page 95. Mailers using presort coils simply pay on-account at mailing time the difference between the stamps’ assigned value and the presort postage rate.

Speaking of recent mail use of (5¢) Seacoasts, the cropped images of the nonprofit mailings shown in the article were supposed to convey the “count” of mailpieces involved in the author’s review, so the article did not have to dwell on statistics. However, at the last minute I realized that one might not tell whether or not a mailer used “two” (5¢) Seacoasts. So, I added those vertical dark lines to separate the cover corners for counting. – Ron Blanks

# Readers' Forum



“Close call” – mailer’s printing near P2222 PNC, very likely from a 10K roll

I noticed in the last Current Plate Numbers, Roll Sizes chart (July issue) that the (5¢) Art Deco Bird’s P2222 PNC is shown only from rolls of 3,000. I can report that they are also available in rolls of 10,000. – Brian Engler #1207L

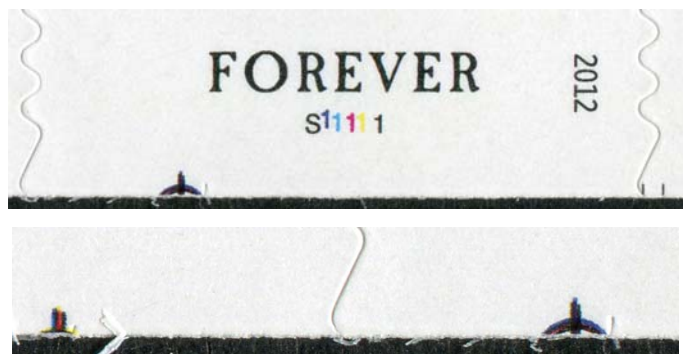
shape at the bottom. The bottom bend of the cobra does not seem as pronounced to me as on a regular cobra at bottom. My guess is that this strip came from the bottom row of the web. – Frank Covey #319L



Here are some images that I think will tickle your fancy. These are from the 2012 Four Flags issue (PNC-ID 2012-4) by Sennett Security Products. At the bottom are what appear to be three marginal markings.

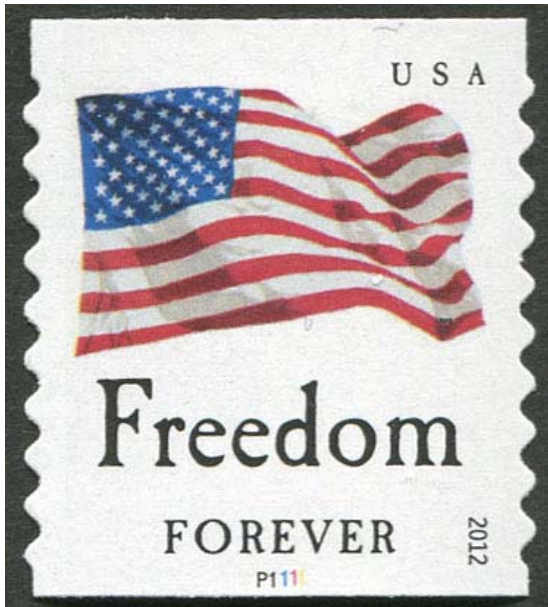
These photos are from a PS9 (plate strip of nine) that I obtained from dealer Al Haake in mid-June.

Note also that there is a “lazy cobra” die-cut



# Catalog Corner

by Frank Covey



The 2012-edition Forever stamps in coil rolls of 100 for the first-class domestic letter rate feature “Four Flags.” Four Flag rolls from Ashton-Potter went on sale nationwide on February 22, 2012. Initial availability was limited to philatelic sales by USPS Stamp Fulfillment Services in Kansas City, MO. The value of each stamp in a roll of 100 is currently 45¢, the one-ounce first-class rate as of January 22.

The roll begins with the “Freedom” design followed by “Liberty,” “Equality,” and “Justice.” These four designs repeat throughout the roll. “USPS” is microprinted near the lower-right corner of the bottom white stripe on the flag in each design.

The P1111 plate number on the “Freedom” design shown to the left repeats every 32<sup>nd</sup> stamp. The 2012 date displays vertically in the lower right corner.

Under shortwave ultraviolet light (SWUV), a phosphor tagging break appears just to the left of the plate numbered stamp as shown below.

As with other Ashton-Potter issues, four different wrapper styles exist, i.e. bar, empty rectangle, dot and star. The “bar style” wrapper is shown below.



**Four Flags (Forever) (AP) (SA)  
Plate P1111  
PNC ID 2012-5**



← Microprinted  
“USPS”

Phosphor tagging  
break →



# Direct Mail Sightings

by Ron Blanks

A tour of one household's incoming direct-mail covers bearing stamps, begun in the June issue, resumes below. Saved from the period of November 2008 through March 2009, the small cache illustrates some interesting elements of modern postal history. Also of interest is finding PNCs among those few marketing mailpieces still using coil stamps.

Our tour shows topics of past research and some aspects of mail use intriguing to collectors as

choices for more study to enrich their PNC hobby.

The June portion of the tour showed first-class marketing mail as well as ad mail using the "standard" mail class. Next stop: more mail of standard service, but sent at preferential nonprofit rates and using similarly inscribed presort coils. Figure 1 shows this nonprofit portion of mail received over the five-month period. In a statistical twist, none of the eleven covers have PNCs; (*please see page 96*)

**Figure 1. One household's 5-month mail portion of fundraising appeals using "nonprofit org." presort coils (cropped images).**

*All of the (5¢) Sea-coasts except the one at lower right (enlarged closeup, below) are of the 2003 "small date" type produced by Ashton-Potter*



(from page 95, *Direct Mail Sightings*)

but not all of these Seacoasts are from the same roll types (not as noticeable in Figure 1 without closeups).

Of interest is the fact that at least one mailer here used a water-activated gum (WAG) version. WAG rolls have become relics, as reinforced by the first-time issuance of a 1¢ self-adhesive large-roll coil with the new Bobcat design. Some PNC<sup>3</sup> members actively track the latest (last?) uses of WAG-version presort coils. The last such direct-mail use can occur at any time for each of the remaining WAG coil formats offered by the USPS.

June's part of this tour pointed out the one use of a Mailer's Postmark Permit (MPP) cancel that tied one of the (10¢) Banner "presorted std." coils to a cover, and promised more MPP types in this part. These cancels are significant for PNC covers because they are the most common means (although still scarce, sampling-wise) that a presort PNC might be

tied. Some MPP styles even have the benefit of establishing a timeframe for the mailing, in lieu of dated contents that are often missing from covers.

Although inkjet or laser printers apply most MPP cancels nowadays, an older meter machine is pressed into service now and then. The one shown in Figure 2 barely made a good impression, but the "Dec - '08" date in the dial could still be read.

In addition to the many types of direct-mail coil frankings involving PNCs that can be collected, use of coils on prestamped courtesy reply envelopes is also a study target. The one example in this small household cache is shown in Figure 3. Here, the 2008-dated coils do not have a plate number, but the middle of the 1¢ pair shows an enlarged hole. This is at the overlap spot of two plastic pin and blade skiving arrays that "perforate" by shaving off paper.

Thus ends this tour that only scratched the surface of direct mail covers' diversity. Perhaps it will whet your interest to pursue them a little more.



Figure 2. Inkjet- or laser-printed (*left*) and meter-applied (*right*) Mailer's Postmark Permit cancels.



Figure 3. Courtesy reply envelope, circa February 2009 (note holes in 1¢ pair closeup).

# Phosphor-Tagged Error on BEP's (25¢) Juke Box

by Robert E. Thompson



Figure 1. Phosphor-tagged (25¢) Juke Box PNC on cover.

Recently I completed the purchase of a very large quantity of PNCs on cover from a fellow who referred to himself as an “accumulator,” not a collector. The accumulator had a friend that worked at a processing facility for returned mail on behalf of a large credit card company. The company had several names over the years, including “First Deposit National Bank” and “Providian Financial.”

His friend gave him all of the covers that were returned for one reason or another, after the return information was processed. The accumulator went through the covers pulling out the ones with plate numbers, back numbers (with and without plate numbers), “FIRST CLASS” overprints on the 10¢ Tractor Trailer coils, under-inked and misperforated coil examples, and discarded the rest.

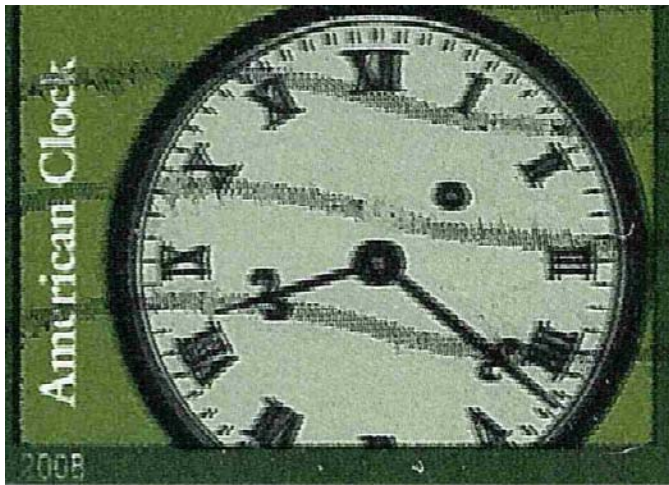
This went on from 1987 to about 2001, when the facility was closed. The cache included every first-class bulk mail issue from the 18¢ George Washington to the (25¢) Diner (through plate number 44444). It also included a few third-class bulk rate and regular issues like the 25¢ Honeybee and the 32¢ Flag over Porch. I’d estimate that more than half have some kind of auxiliary marking, such as: labels, hand stamps, Multi-Position Letter Sorting Machine (MPLSM) imprint codes, service



Figure 2. “Genuine” opinion certificate for phosphor-tagged (25¢) Juke Box PNC 222222 on cover.

markings applied by machine cancel, machine postmarks and handwriting.

Among the covers, I have found the first fully phosphor-tagged error on the (25¢) Juke Box issued January, 1997, with plate number 222222. The stamp is on a cover (Figure 1) and has been expertized (Figure 2). The cover has two auxiliary marking hand stamps on the front and one on the back. Since the time of the initial discovery, I have found a second copy with plate number 222222 on cover as well. I understand that the next edition of the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of U. S. Stamps and Covers* will assign a new catalog number for this error, 2912Bc. I have yet to find any mint examples. (please see page 100)



**10¢ Clock (2008 coil) with double impression**

## Double Time

Bob Murrin has found a used pair of the 2008 version of the 10¢ Clock coil (Scott 3763) that shows a horizontal doubling of the black ink. It makes the minute marks around 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock extra long, and causes an extra set of minute marks around 12 o'clock. It also causes the Roman-numeral hours to be very blurry.

Since this 10¢ Clock coil issue was printed with a web-fed offset press, it is not a true double print like you can get with a sheet-fed press when a sheet stays in place and receives a second impression. Instead, you get this type of doubling with offset printings when the offset blanket roller picks up multiple impressions from an inked plate before the blanket engages with the web paper.

## 1¢ Rolls: WAG vs. SA

Lack of back numbers on the 1¢ Tiffany Lamp (July's column) did not carry over to the new 1¢ Bobcat – this is because the shortage was of food-grade ink for back numbering WAG (water-activated gum) rolls. But they don't need food-grade ink for the SA (self-adhesive) Bobcat since no one is going to lick the liner. Like previous large-roll coils from Ashton Potter, the 1¢ Bobcat back numbers drop down to three digits when in the hundreds and down to two digits when in the tens near the inside end of the rolls.



**10¢ Clock closeups: 9 o'clock and 12 o'clock**

## Plate Numbers on BEP Test Stamps

In late 2001, Bob Rabinowitz wrote the U.S. Treasury Department's Bureau of Engraving and Printing, asking for some information about BEP-produced self-adhesive large-roll test coils. The BEP response in March 2002 indicates that in early 1997, the BEP switched from using a photolithographic method to make offset plates to a computer-driven digital process. Photolithography uses a multi-step light-sensitive chemical process to produce offset plates from images projected from conventional film (note that the Scott catalogs use the term lithographed instead of offset). The digital process uses computer software image files.

The heart of the letter says:

The "conventional film" came with master marks, also known as plate numbers, stripped onto them. It was determined that it was not necessary to remove the marks, even though they served no practical purpose for the simulated coils. Approximately five years ago, our Photolitho Section started using a "digital direct to film [offset] and direct to cylinder [gravure]" technique. The "digital direct film" did not have master marks stripped onto them for the reproduction of simulated coils. But in actual stamp production, the plate numbers would naturally be added. In both instances, the decision to leave the marks on the "conventional film" and the decision not to add marks to the "digital direct" system was based solely on step-saving procedures for simulated coils.

This explains why the Scott TD136 test coils have no plate numbers while the earlier TD126, TD133 and TD133A test coils all have plate numbers. Please note, this only applies to the BEP. Number details of private-printer test coils might vary. (*Singles of these test coils are shown on page 100.*)

## Classified Ads

**PNC used singles**, used strips, MNH PS5s. Great prices! Guaranteed quality! No hassles! Visit <http://www.angelfire.com/ca5/HimesPNCs> or send LSASE for lists to John Himes, PO Box 453, Cypress, CA 90630-0453. Please specify what you collect. Or e-mail [johnwhimes@yahoo.com](mailto:johnwhimes@yahoo.com). Member 957L

\* \* \*

**Back numbers** - Specialized list by number of digits, colors, locations. Printed list by mail or Excel file by email. Doug Iams, Varieties and More, PO Box 7651, Santa Rosa CA 95407, [dugeyes@msn.com](mailto:dugeyes@msn.com). Member 625

## Membership

### New Applicants

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949-939-4884, [wnthiba@aol.com](mailto:wnthiba@aol.com)

Names of applicants are published for review. A member who questions the suitability of a prospective member should contact the Membership Committee c/o Robert Thompson with the objection (see page 90 for contact choices). Applicants are accepted as members one month after publication if no objection is made.

### Reinstated

Charles L. Still (2124)

<b>Previous Membership Count</b>	<b>589</b>
<b>New Members</b>	<b>2</b>
<b><u>Reinstated</u></b>	<b><u>1</u></b>
<b>New Membership Count</b>	<b>592</b>

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### Address Changing?



Change of Address forms and membership applications are available from Harvey Wales, Secretary, 13 Birmingham Place, Vernon Hills, IL 60061. Email: [Secretary@pnc3.org](mailto:Secretary@pnc3.org). **Membership form is also on our website at: [www.pnc3.org](http://www.pnc3.org).**

*Notice: Residential addresses and barcodes on covers less than 20 years or so old as shown in Coil Line are digitally modified for privacy.*

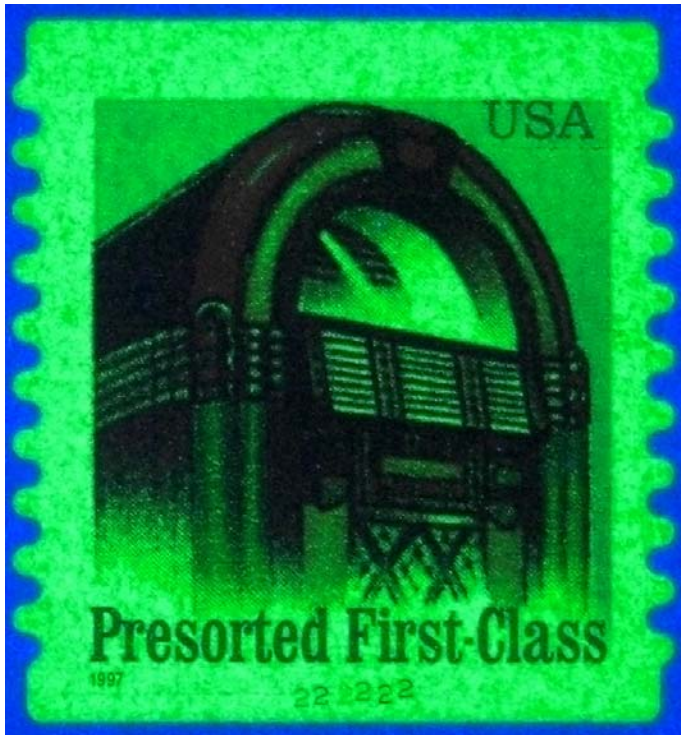
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*\*Image credit: courtesy of Ron Blanks*

(from page 97, *Phosphor-Tagged (25¢) Juke Box*)

Figure 3 (below) shows a closeup of the tagged PNC under shortwave ultraviolet light.

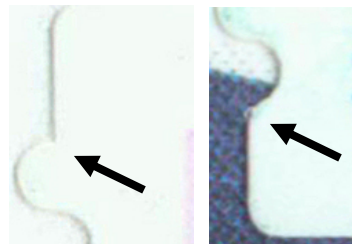


**Figure 3. Closeup of PNC under SW-UV.**

Also for the same issue and involving the same plate number (222222), I have found two examples on cover with the square transition die-cut shape (between an outer corner and the first die-cut “peak” at a side, also called “square shoulder.”) The example shown in Figure 4 is on a cover with a machine cancel service marking on the front with a postmark of 10/19/98, from Houston, Texas. Again, I have not found any mint examples.



**Figure 4. First “square” transition die cut found for BEP’s (25¢) Juke Box issue** (see shape enlargements of left-side corners, below)

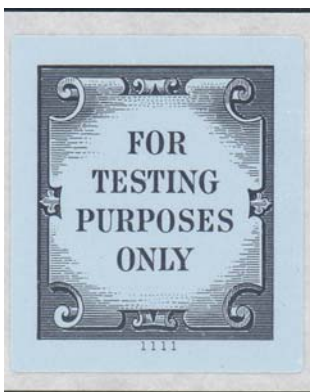


*upper-left*     *lower-left*  
**die-cut square transition**

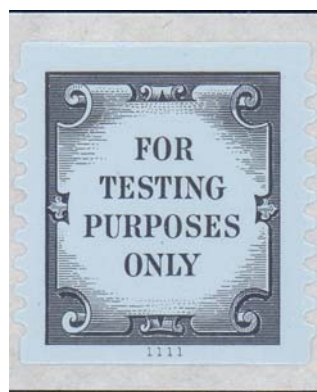
[According to Dan Forgues’ last census update of round and square shapes reported for BEP large-roll self-stick coils (July 2011 issue, page 114), no square examples were known for any (25¢) Juke Box before now. – Editor]

(from page 98, *This and That*)

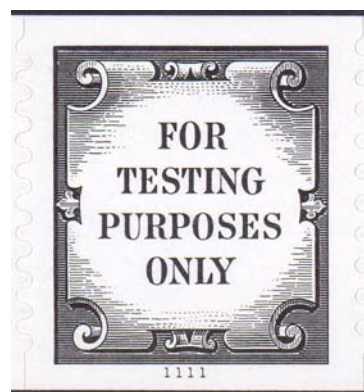
**Self-adhesive test coils**



**TD126 (PNC “1111”)**



**TD133 (PNC “1111”)**



**TD133A (PNC “1111”)**



**TD136**