Work plan for the administration of the Puerto Rico Philatelic Society during 2021

By: Raúl A. Pérez-Rivera

It is exceedingly difficult to talk about oneself, but the fact that I have accepted the nomination to preside over the Philatelic Society of Puerto Rico and the new people, in our organization, and many of those who visit our Facebook page forces me to do so. know. I have been a member of the SFPR for more than 20 years and since 2002, when I was president, until now I have been linked to some position on the board. My work has ranged from running the organization to cleaning up and picking up debris after Hurricane Maria. I have been an assiduous researcher of Puerto Rican philately, and because of my work I have given a varied number of conferences, I have been the co-author of three books and I have published my findings in journals such as *Puripex*, the *Philatelic Bulletin*, *Cinderella Philatelist* and *Possessions*.

A person cannot carry out a work plan if he does not have the commitment of people to help him fulfill his proposal. To this end, this plan is the result of the commitment of all those who are on the last page and for whom I request your support with your vote.

The past administration left us a commitment, which we are obliged to fulfill, and it is the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the city of San Juan. A request was made to the United States Postal Service (USPS) for the issuance of a stamp to commemorate this important event. The USPS did not approve our request. However, we are making an effort to have the USPS reconsider. In this, **Juan Fernández García (candidate to occupy the position of Webmaster)** has committed himself, who will help us to get closer to organizations related to our objective as well as personalities in the government. Likewise, colleague **Félix L. Pérez-Folch Jr.**, who has a planned activity in front of the US Capitol, to draw attention to this matter. Felix has proven to be an extremely useful person for the organization, in different types of activities. Currently, he is a board of director for the American Topical Association (ATA), whose worldwide members collect topical and thematic stamps.

Our organization has been facing a series of challenges that have a solution. Among the most pressing is the fact that we have lost a substantial number of members. Another of our serious problems is that we have virtually run out of sources of income, having to cover the operating and maintenance expenses of our facilities. Both problems have a solution to the extent that we have the skill to serve the interests of the membership and make the Society as attractive and welcoming as possible, so that we can recover the old dynamism and social brilliance that encouraged so much in the past to know and be part of the rich history of Puerto Rican philately and philately in general.

To achieve the objectives that we all wish for the Puerto Rico Philatelic Society, those of us who subscribe to this plan, propose the following:

a. Survey those who have stopped paying the fee to determine the reason for this. This survey will include questions to determine how we can improve in keeping with the needs of our enrollment.

b. Conduct a survey among the users of our Facebook page, to determine the reason why many of those who enter and participate in it have not become members of the organization.

c. Once we have the results of the surveys, we will make the appropriate adjustments in our writings and on the Facebook page, to meet the expectations of our partners and those who want to join our organization.

We need young people in our organization. Facebook must move to sponsor our hobby in a more efficient, inclusive, and enjoyable way. We should use this great resource to advertise our availability to conduct philatelic activities (such as conferences and philatelic exhibitions) to various organizations. Modern technology, such as Zoom, lends itself to offering such activities without having to expose ourselves to the pandemic. Our partners have thousands of stamps, which they do not use, and we must use them to sponsor activities, such as the one carried out by our colleague **Jonathan Fuentes (candidate for vice-president)**, with the "Niños Escuchas." He needed 20,000 stamps for an activity, and we got them for him. Jonathan is a leader in his community and committed to serving the youth and our organization. Undoubtedly in the near future he will become the president of the SFPR.

Facebook can be used to make a special day a month or bimonthly on a particular topic, where we encourage all visitors to the page to display the stamps that have reference to that topic and "talk" about the history behind them. In the same way, we can use a special day to promote the exchange of stamps. Another way is to give away stamps in exchange for becoming members of the organization. To meet these objectives, we propose to recruit volunteers from those who are regular visitors to our Facebook page, including such recognized experts as **Byron Mitchell (co-author of books and many publications)** and Herman Cestero**,** who may have the largest collection of stamps in the world and Puerto Rico.

Several years ago, I proposed that conferences of interest to our members be offered monthly. Even before the pandemic, these talks were being offered, which were of great interest particularly for those of us who collect from Puerto Rico. However, we have an enrollment with broader interests and we inadvertently forget about this group. So, if you choose us, we will expand the theme of our conferences. In keeping with technology, we need to install internet in the clubhouse. In such a way that all our members can connect with us and participate in activities such as conferences and meetings.

The newsletter has become the main source of information for our membership, particularly for those who, apparently, do not have computers or internet service. One of the problems we have had is that this newsletter is usually sent out late, and it reaches its readers, sometimes, when the events have already passed. It is also written in Spanish which is not the vernacular of some of our partners. We are committed to at least alternating newsletters in English and Spanish (we will try to get them built in both languages) and to send them out on time.

It is pertinent that the bulletin is self-liquidating. So we propose that it be sent by email to all those members who have an email account. We also propose to leave a space in the newsletter, to place commercial announcements, auction announcements, etc. In this matter, I have the support of colleague **Juan Fernández García**, who is a merchant and Vice-President of ACOVI, the merchant's association of old San Juan. We already have sold an ad that will cover the cost of reporting the election results and the immediate message and plans of the new board of directors.

Puripex is another of our publications where we need to improve. First, look for more varied articles and publish in both English and Spanish. As the publication currently comes out at a lower cost than previous numbers, we must aspire not only to produce a self-liquidating product, but also to produce a profit with the usual advertisements that we already have in the publication. In this regard, **Dr. Andrés R. Méndez**, who resides in the United States and is committed to producing a high-profile publication with articles in both Spanish and English, will provide us with his services.

The clubhouse needs repairs and to get them done we need to expand our sources of income. To this end, I take advantage of the suggestion of the colleague and **candidate as treasurer, J. Raúl Martínez**, who has proposed that we sell services. I have a series of lectures prepared that could be sold (eg $ 20 for access to the information), or offered free, to anyone who is a member of the organization.

Among the conferences that are prepared and that I am willing to repeat as many times as necessary, are the following: to.

a. What to do with the stamp collection I have inherited.

b. How can I make a preliminary evaluation of a stamp collection.

c. How to use stamp catalogs.

d. How to organize a stamp collection and make it more attractive to sell.

There are others of a more general nature on how to motivate your children and grandchildren to collect. In this I use the experience I have had with my grandchildren and we also hope to have the help of **Félix L Pérez-Folch Jr.,** who is a passionate motivational speaker.

We must continue to sell products through our Facebook page. The pages for different types of collections that colleague **Byron Mitchell** prepared, which despite little publicity, sold very well. We must be more aggressive and consistent in offering these products. Another source of income that we must consider is the possibility of creating a committee of experts to analyze and issue

signed certifications of authenticity for pieces from Puerto Rico. We have people with relevant expertise and reference collections, who do not have to envy others. This project would go hand in hand with the creation of a census of collectors of Puerto Rico worldwide, and the invitation of these to produce a specialized catalog of stamps and their variations, with constant updates on the Philatelic Society page with each new duly qualified finding.

We must join other organizations related to our interests such as the Cuban Philatelic Society, United States Possessions Philatelic Society and the ATA, among others. In harmony with these objectives, on January 30, 2021, the American Topical Association (ATA) approved the motion for affiliation with the Puerto Rico Philatelic Society as chapter No. 136 of the ATA, thanks to the efforts of our colleague Félix L. Pérez-Folch, Jr., who is our ATA representative.

The benefits of this membership include:

a. Include the Society every year in the *Topical Times* journal (Information from our newsletter, presentations, activities and events). Every two months, the Society will receive a copy of *Topical Times*.

b. Participate and represent the Society in events sponsored by the ATA (Warm Up to Topicals, ATA Virtual Stamp Show).

c. The Society will be listed on the ATA website www.AmericanTopical.org and will include a link to our website www.sfpr1952.org.

d. The ATA will provide awards each year for those exhibiting at Puripex (theme or topic area).

Our affiliation with the ATA will help us promote and increase our Society's membership during the Great American Stamp Show, which takes place in the United States every year. This activity is sponsored by the APS, ATA and AFDCS. The Topical Times will be available in the Society's library. At present eight members of the SFPR are members of the ATA and it is necessary that we maintain at least six as members of the organization so that there is no cost, for the benefits that have been mentioned.

To this end, we encourage everyone to become a member of this organization. I urge you to be on the lookout for a philatelic presentation by Felix (March 23, 2021), about the 150th anniversary of the state of Mississippi by registering at www.americantopical.org/events.

Fabriciano Alberto Escobar and J. Raul Martínez, have been characterized by their honesty and for their help in virtually everything that has been necessary. After Hurricane Maria, Alberto who is an engineer, along with other colleagues dedicated themselves to cleaning the premises and organizing our library. For his part, J. Raul Martinez, is the person who has always maintained the club house and understands the cost of running the club house and managing the expenses. He will be an excellent substitute for Víctor Algarín who has served as Treasurer for many years. For all the above, I request that the members of the SFPR allow us to serve them with their vote in favor of the following candidacies and by sending their vote, without delay, to the email sfpr1952.org@gmail.com with a copy to the acting President Dr. Rafael Muller, rjmullerporrata@gmail.com.

Philatelic Society of Puerto Rico – General Elections 2021

Candidates:	**Position:**
Raúl A. Pérez-Rivera	President
Jonathan Fuentes-Despiau	Vice-president
Benny Muñiz	Secretary
J. Raúl Martínez	Treasurer
Juan Fernández García	Webmaster
Dr. Andrés Méndez-Muñoz	Editor
Juez Plácido Berio	Director
Bethzaida Bonet-Tirado	Director