



BIRMINGHAM & FERNDALE STAMP CLUB

February 2022

People started exchanging cards and handwritten letters to both lovers and friends during the 17th century, but it was in the 1840s that the first Valentine's Day cards were mass-produced in the U.S. Sold by Esther Howland, known as the "Mother of the American Valentine," Howland is credited with commercializing Valentine's Day cards in America. She is remembered for her elaborate, crafty cards made with lace and ribbons.



Happy Valentine's Day

Notes from our January 18th club meeting:

Members were put to work addressing and stamping almost 500 envelopes advertising our February 19, 2022 FERNPEX show at the Royal Oak Elks Club.

The fliers will be mailed near the first of February. Sixteen club members assisted in the effort.

The club received a thank-you letter from the NEXT Senior Center for our annual donation to use their facilities for club meetings.

Chris Crossley presented interesting historical information he discovered by following up on information gleaned from an old postcard.

60 auction lots were presented with 32 sales.

Upcoming events:

February Club meetings are scheduled for the 1st & 15th.

FERNPEX 2022, February 19th.

Modern Stamps Sale #499, February 26th at its Oak Park facility.

Ken Rusch, President
Fred Como, Vice-President
Phil Kwasny, Secretary
Robert Helbig, Co-Treasurer
Faisal Qureshi, Co-Treasurer
Michael Swope, Editor-Webmaster

See www.birminghamstamp.club for more info.

SOME CURIOUS ZIP CODES

By Dan Maddalino

They may seem mundane, but the five digits we place at the bottom of an envelope can send a piece of mail from Maine to Palau in the Western Pacific. Here are six of the most interesting ZIP Codes in the USPS system.



The only boat with its own Zip Code

A narrow street dead-ends at the Detroit River, where a black-and-white boat bobs in the water, emblazoned with a [Postal Service](#) eagle. This is the mail boat J.W. Westcott II, the only floating ZIP code in the United States.

The little boat's ZIP code, **48222**, is reserved for mail addressed to the freighters that work the Great Lakes. It is administered by the J. W. Westcott Company of Detroit, founded in 1874 when its main job was vessel reporting — telling companies, and the families of sailors, where their ships and loved ones were.

Today, its official motto is “mail by the pail.” It chugs out to passing freighters to deliver parcels to the crews, often by hoisting the mail with a rope and bucket. It's been a registered post office since 1948.



Ship bound mail gets dropped off where the street ends.

Mr. Zippy asks:

Without “googling” it, what is the lowest number for a US ZIP Code and where is it assigned?

ANSWER: The lowest zip code is not assigned to a residential area. It is assigned to a single building in Holtsville, New York. That building is the IRS Central Headquarters located there. The ZIP Code? **00501**

Now, hey! Fingers off the computer keys. What is the highest number for a US ZIP Code and where is it assigned?

ANSWER: The highest ZIP Code number is assigned to Ketchikan, located on the panhandle of Alaska. The ZIP Code? **99950**.



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SOME CURIOUS ZIP CODES

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OK smarties, where will you find the designer code 12345? Yes, you found the ZIP Code 12xxx is assigned to Schenectady, New York. However, only the mail going to the General Electric office complex located there gets the sequence "12345".



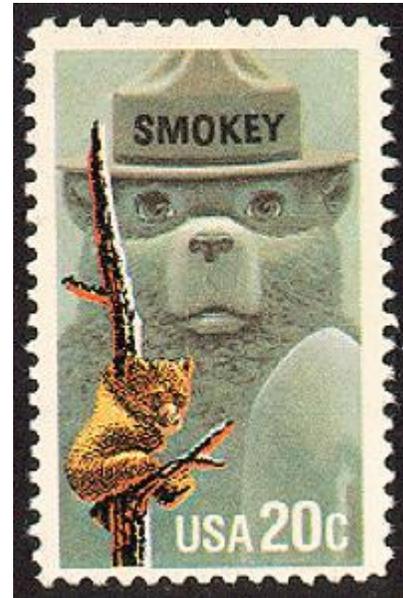
Now for you New Yorkers, or should it be asked of those from Connecticut? Either way, here it is: If 06xxx is ONLY assigned to Connecticut, then



why is the ZIP Code for Fishers Island, New York 06390? Well, Fishers Island, part of Long Island, Suffolk County, lies just a few miles off the coast of Connecticut, but *the island belongs to New York*. The only way to get to this island is by ferry service from Connecticut, and that's

where all of this islands mail comes from. Thus, the Connecticut ZIP Code **06390**.

Finally, what does Smokey the Bear have to do with ZIP Codes?



Only one cartoon caricature has its own specially designated ZIP Code. That one is *Smokey the Bear*. His Washington DC office still receives so much mail each year from school children that he has been assigned his personal ZIP Code: **20252**. ~~~HAPPY ZIPPING!

