

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK
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Greetings to all our members, together with hopes that your summer has been filled with pleasant experiences and memories. Since I am now wearing two hats: President and Editor, you will all no doubt miss Fran's "President's Letter, which I always enjoyed, as she included the latest news about the twins. Unfortunately, I have only one Grandchild and she has just passed the age of 14 and is busy inhabiting a world with her friends which is somewhat alien to me. They seem to spend a great deal of time on their cell-phones, presumably texting or indulging in some of the new things that are available in the midget devices which they all seem to have.

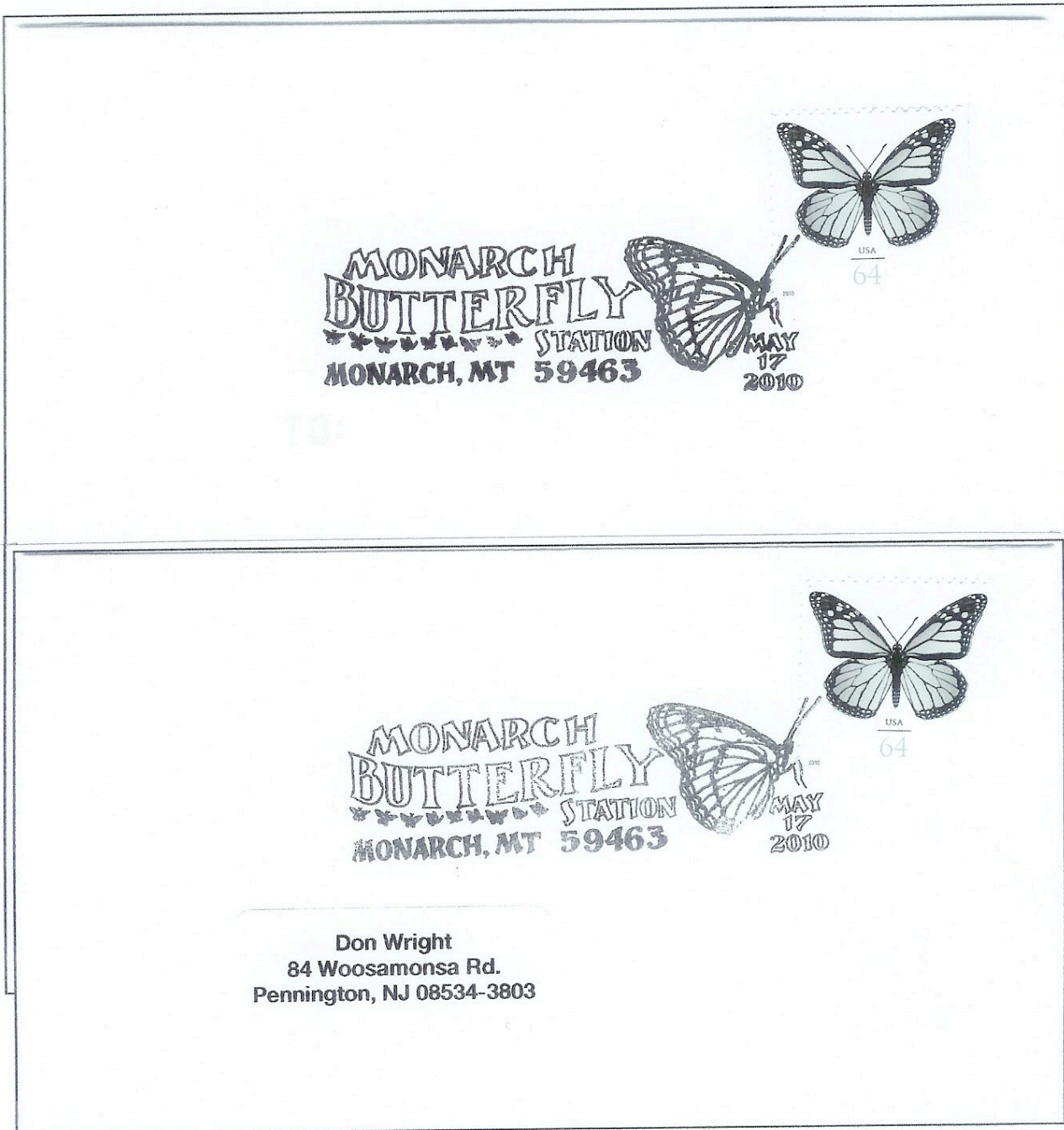
Unfortunately, my wife is having a tough time at the moment, subsequent on a fall which she had in March and which has now resulted in a lot of back pain. Of course, it does not help that she is 80 and really sad at the moment that she cannot move around as freely as she would wish. After having had x-rays, ct-scans and an MRI, they do not seem any closer to solving the problem. Luckily, I know how to cook and have now learned about washing and grocery shopping, which is quite good fun – looking for all the 'specials'. Well, that's enough of that and on to some stamp news.

We went down to Richmond, Virginia, to the recent StampShow of the American Philatelic Society. While there, at one of the general meetings, I was awarded my 25 year certificate and a pin to remember it by. I certainly did not think I had been a member that long, but the years do seem to slip by with great rapidity. The show was in the usual format, being held in a Convention Center, which is always right downtown and nowhere near any restaurants or other attractions. Still, I had a good time meeting old friends and making some new ones. One friend of mine, who hails from Columbus, Ohio was there and we spent some time discussing the Double Head stamps of Rhodesia and a book which we are both working on – together with the intake of some good red wine! One thing that was quite noticeable about the show was the dearth of dealers that specialized in thematics. However, there were quite a few that had both traditional and thematic material, so maybe they are switching over to being multi-faceted, which I think will be good for their business.

This issue sees the return of the Paleontology listing by Hans-Peter Schultze. His column had been missing due to some mix-up in communications on my part. I am sure there are quite a few members out there that collect ancient stuff! With 12 pages of Ornithology and 9 pages of New Birds, this looks like being quite a substantial issue. A minor problem arose with my ancient computer and the fact that Don Wright has a newer system. His file arrived for this issue with a .docx file extension and I could not open it. Luckily, we found that the file could be saved on his machine with a .doc extension, but it made me realize that I shall have to upgrade. I guess it's like getting a new car every four or five years and some friends of mine say that one has to have the latest "system"!

Until next time - Alan J. Hanks

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The United States Postal Service will issue a new series of postage stamps commencing in May, 2010, in cooperation with the Greeting Card Association. The idea is to let customers for greeting cards know how much postage to use on the non-standard size envelopes. The first stamp in the series shows a Monarch butterfly and it is planned that further issues will show other butterflies. Greeting card manufacturers are supposed to print a silhouette image of a butterfly in the upper right-hand corner of their envelopes with the phrase "butterfly stamp or equivalent postage required". The new value is 64c, as shown in the examples above. The first day was at Monarch, MT and a butterfly image was used in the cancellation. Unfortunately, they used the Viceroy as the image, which is a mimic of the Monarch!