



“Shana Tova” everyone. I hope this year bring good health and happiness to you and your loved ones. May you also find time to enjoy your stamp collecting and philatelic pursuits.

VISIT REPORT TO APS

In my last President's Column, I advised that Vicki is going to step down as the Executive and Administrative Assistant for the Society. As a result, we have been in a dialogue with Ken Martin of the American Philatelic Society (APS) to reach an arrangement to headquarter the Society at the APS and to use administrative assistance found there. Here is the text of their report:

“On September 11-12, Howard Chapman, Vicki Galecki and Michael Bass traveled to Bellefonte, PA to visit with Mr. Ken Martin, Executive Director of the APS for the purpose of discussing the hiring of a part-time (up to 20 average hours per week) Administrator that will work for the SIP but be employed through the APS and housed inside their headquarters. We were fortunate to have the opportunity to meet with Ken for several hours over the two days to explore this initiative, and found Ken very open and easy to work with.

The APS views the SIP as an “Affiliate” and likes the idea of helping us sustain and grow utilizing their resources. The main reason for the investigation is because our current Administrator, Vicki Galecki, won't be able to serve in this role beginning January 1, 2015 and we're proactive in finding a suitable replacement to insure the Society's business is being cared for. We traveled to the APS at the direction of our President, Mr. Ed Kroft and Editor Don Chafetz, and were in contact with them before and during our visit. Ken Martin has authority to talk on behalf of the APS, though this matter must be approved by their Board. This memo is a recap and outline of the Needs of our Society, the Discussion Points with the APS, and the Next Steps we propose both organizations proceed to take.

SIP NEEDS

It has become clear to all SIP Executives and Committee Chairmen that to sustain the ongoing operations of the SIP, we need to maintain continuity through different leadership changes. It's not a mystery that all organizations, including the SIP, are struggling to find volunteers to lead and handle the day to day matters of running our philatelic society. By having an Administrator position, which Vicki has filled for 8+ years, proved the crucial need of having a responsible individual available to handle running a great deal of the day-to-day functions of the SIP. The SIP is a mini-business, a 501(C)(3) nonprofit with almost 1,000 members. The needs of our membership are widespread, and daily.

The requests for all kinds of information, Ed Fund publications, new member support, dues renewals, conventions, website, endowment, bookkeeping, President support, and correspondence are daily activities. We've been fortunate to have the services of Vicki, but our leadership understands we have to move ahead and put a more permanent individual in place to keep the continuity of excellent support for the next decade. Our Steering Committee is investigating options, and the leading direction is to hire a part-time Administrator associated with the APS to handle our affairs.

The premise behind working with the APS is:

1. Have our Administrator close to the hub of philately and all that goes on within our hobby;
2. Take advantage of the many resources the APS has, including technology, contacts, fulfillment, convention, marketing, and expertise;
3. The opportunity to be a pioneering Affiliate within the APS and spark a new position for Affiliate support (which should give us the opportunity to coop the cost down); and,
4. No matter who leads the SIP, there will be a secure location to house our operations, Ed Fund, Library and other assets in a protected manner.

Our alternative is to hire an Administrator somewhere else and go forward independently, or continue to seek voluntary support. We can run the risk of managing the Administrator elsewhere and supporting this individual

with technology and other needs on our own, or pretend that we can elicit volunteers who may or may not be able to serve reliably. Or, we can try a direction that has the chance of keeping our Society viable and protect our intellectual assets and the value of our collections. This is our Society's cross-road moment.

DISCUSSION POINTS

We discussed our needs with Ken, and his feedback was quite positive. He already met with the APS Board and got approvals to proceed forward. We outlined the variety of needs, and discussed how the APS can help. Initially, they will advertise and gather candidates for us to interview and select. Ken showed us the space within the APS that is available to host our Administrator (overlooking a beautiful park) once a hire is made.

APS will set up the computers and SIP files. The APS will provide a dedicated address, dedicated phone extension (free long distance service), technical support, i.e., the use of their server, office systems and computer backups, including Go-To-Meeting, and employment oversight. Ken won't interfere with our management of the Administrator, but will act as our liaison within the APS and help us. A 2-3 year agreement was discussed, and a preliminary proposal is being drafted, which Howard Chapman will coordinate, pending the approval of our Board to proceed.

We discussed how other Affiliates function, and Ken shared numerous examples of other Societies and their structures. A number of Societies have paid Administrators or Directors, but may need to switch to a coop position due to financial difficulties. Smaller Affiliates have limited resources, but may desire or need limited Administrator support.

We discussed the SIP pioneering a new Affiliate Administrator position, with the ultimate aim of:

1. Reducing our costs by offsetting the burden with other societies also utilizing the position and the position going from part-time to full-time;
2. Helping the APS develop an Affiliate Sustainability Program to support other societies' need to maintain their operations; and,
3. Provide a means for other societies to buy Administrator services from us as needed. There's an opportunity for the SIP to get in on the ground floor of this initiative and benefit operationally and economically in the long term.

NEXT STEPS

Everyone outlined a Phasing process, going slow and steady, in transitioning our Administrative functions from Vicki to a new hire:

Phase I (Deadline: 3/31/15)

- Get SIP and APS Board approvals to proceed;
- Sign an Administrative Services Agreement between the SIP and APS (Howard and Ed);
- Interview and Hire an Administrative Assistant (Vicki and Mike);
- Train the new Administrator (Vicki and Mike);
- Implement a communication link between the new Administrator and our President (Ed).

Phase II (2nd half 2015)

- Continue developing the Administrator's duties and responsibilities;
- Market the Administrator service to other APS Affiliates to help share the cost;
- Move the SIP's Ed Fund bookstore to the APS Fulfillment Center;
- Work on finding Donations and Grants to help fund the Affiliate Initiative.

Phase III

- Develop the Administrator into a full-time position;
- Improve the Society's technologies, i.e. Website, E-Library, On-line Membership, marketing, remote meeting capabilities, etc.;
- Expand the quality of the SIP's services and products to its members.

CONCLUSION

The SIP needs to figure out how to keep supporting our members' needs and offering the myriad of products (Israel Philatelist, publishing books) and services (Convention planning, Education, Membership, Accounting and Banking, Estate). We're at a critical juncture in putting a long-term plan in place to position our Society for the next decade and beyond. Our leadership sees the need for a paid Administrative position because volunteerism is lagging, and the needs of our Society are real. As we migrate to eliminate printing the Israel Philatelist and distribute it via the internet, the goal is to use any savings to fund the Administrator position.

Over time, it will be imperative that we work to get other Affiliates to use the service and help reduce our costs

even further. Our investment in the E-Library software and the Society website may provide new revenue sources by licensing our technologies to other Affiliates that need to digitize their journals or need web services. Every move we're making now is an attempt to insure the Society of Israel Philatelists is a relevant philatelic organization going forward in this 21st Century.

Very truly yours,
Mike Bass"

JOURNAL NAME CHANGE

It has been suggested that the time has come to change the name of our journal after 55 years. Many members collect not just Israel stamps or postal history but Judaica-related topics and stamps, Holocaust material, and postal history of the forerunner, pre-forerunner British Mandate periods. These collecting interests reflected in part by articles submitted to **The Israel Philatelist** journal suggest that the title of our journal may be too narrow and may cause prospective members to refrain from joining our Society because of a narrow focus. **THERE IS NO INTENTION TO CHANGE THE NAME OF OUR SOCIETY.** The decision to change the name of our journal is a membership decision which will be the subject of a vote via our web site and at our annual general meeting at NOJEX in New Jersey at the end of May, 2015. Our esteemed editor, Don Chafetz, will be writing further about possible names to replace the current name.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We continue to ask our members for help. Please contact me if you wish to do so. With Vicki's departure, we will need more members to assist- whether it is at NOJEX in May 2015, at the 2016 New York International Show or with processing membership applications from new members.

SIP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE-

OCTOBER 19 MEETING

Our executive convenes at least quarterly to discuss matters our next meeting will occur in mid-October. I have asked the individuals listed below to lead discussions on specific topics:

- Mike Bass, Vicki Galecki- APS
- Sam Adicoff- Consolidation of Financial Accounts
- Don Chafetz- Digitization
- Vicki Galecki- Website
- Jesse Spector- Publicity
- Howard Rotterdam- NOJEX preparations
- Don Chafetz- Name Change for IP
- Other Matters

THANK YOU

My thanks to all of you for continuing your membership in our Society. Please encourage others to join. My thanks to the volunteers who support the efforts of the Society and to the stamp dealers who work with the Society to serve the needs of our members. ■