

You Might Be A “Stamp Nut” If...

by John L. Leszak

(This column was written by then Mekeel's & STAMPS editor John Leszak. As one of the most popular “Editor's Albums”, we run it every once in a while, so I thought I would share it with Stamp News Online readers...who might also qualify as “Stamp Nuts”.)

There's a time in the careers of some philatelists when their endeavors pass from casual to what some may consider to be nearly obsessive. There are many folks who embrace this hobby with so much passionate fervency and zeal that their lives revolve around philately. They literally eat, drink and sleep in a mystical philatelic realm of existence. Those who practice such extreme philatelic desires can justly embrace the righteous title of “Stamp Nut.”

Stamp Nuts display their philatelic enthusiasm with great flourish. They reach that status when their enthusiasm for the hobby exceeds the details devoted to other affairs in life.

You might be a Stamp Nut and not even realize it! If you're uncertain of your own personal Stamp Nut status, I've prepared a series of scenarios to help identify the symptoms of this exquisite status. Please read through them, check off those that apply personally to you, and then determine which level of Stamp Nut proficiency you've reached!

You might be a Stamp Nut, If...

- You schedule your vacations around stamp show dates.
- You wear more than three philatelic pins on your hat, coat or tie.
- You walk barefoot through your home and find a stamp stuck to the heel of your left foot.
- You read *Mekeel's & Stamps* while taking a bath.
- Your coffee keeps getting cold because you're so engrossed in stamp work.
- Your electric bill gets mixed up with a bunch of loose covers.
- You have Thanksgiving Dinner at a restaurant because your dining table is cluttered with stamps.
- You only clean your desk when a key stamp or cover turns up missing.
- You start buying your spouse ties or scarves that have stamp motif patterns.
- You have more than three addresses in your email address list that contain the words “stamp” or “cover.”
- You visit the housewares department at a store and discover plastic bins that would be good for your covers.
- Your car trunk is filled with philatelic purchases.
- You own more than six pairs of tongs but can only currently account for one pair.

- You overhear your mother-in-law murmur, “What’s he doing in that stamp room?”
- You have a permanent stamp soaking operation in your kitchen.
- You soak stamps while taking a bath.
- You have neighbors who save the stamps from incoming mail for you.
- You suddenly realize that you’ve been working 10 hours nonstop on your stamp collection.
- You frequently sleep in a recliner because your bed is covered with a philatelic “sorting project.”
- You read old stamp auction catalogs in your spare time.
- Your letter carrier seeks a new assignment and specifically identifies your mail volume as the reason.
- You plaster more than four stamps on your outgoing mail.
- You look in the trash bin at the Post Office for discarded envelopes with commemoratives.
- You dream about perfing stamps.
- You turn down tickets to professional sporting events so that you can catalog stamps.
- You tell your kids sleeving covers is a “family activity.”
- You use your lunch money to buy stamps.
- You bring large philatelic purchases into your house under the cover of darkness, or while your spouse is out.
- You recycle old style Dennison peelable stamp hinges.
- You buy your spouse stamp catalogs for your wedding anniversary, and she doesn’t collect stamps.
- You know the exact number of stamps in your album.
- Your dream date is someone who can help you watermark stamps.
- You can easily visualize U.S. Scott #948 and #1075 without consulting a Specialized Catalogue.
- You can recite your APS membership number from memory.
- You wish you could find a pair of pajamas with a stamp-related motif.
- You drive more than 100 miles to attend a stamp show.
- You know the rate to mail a one ounce first class letter to Canada.
- The only pictures in your photo album were taken at stamp shows.
- Postal clerks post a “closed” sign at their windows when they see you coming with an armload of parcels.
- You mail out want lists to dealers.
- You stir your coffee with stamp tongs.
- You scrutinize incoming mail for interesting cancels and utter words like “Ooh!” and “Aah!”
- Your friends believe that you’ve become “unhinged” because you’d rather work on stamps than go bowling.
- You know the birth dates of people in your stamp club.
- Your spouse considers philately to fall under the “for better or for worse” category of your wedding vows.
- You dabble in selling part time to supplement your collection.
- You like to trade stamps with friends.
- You enjoy showing your latest acquisitions to philatelic friends.

- You've met new friends while waiting in line to enter a stamp show.
- You learn an ancient Tibetan method of bladder control to sit in the same chair for 10 hours at a stamp show.
- You have philatelic penpals around the world.
- You see foreign places in the news and stamps from those countries come to mind.
- You ask postal clerks if you can cancel the stamps on your outgoing mail.
- You work on stamps while watching television.
- You fondly locate the first stamp you ever mounted in your collection.
- You sort stamps while chatting with house guests.
- You use a speaker phone or headset so that both hands are free for philatelic activity.
- Your friends think that you've gone insane and encourage you to try other exciting activities, like sky diving.
- You've been thinking about writing a letter to the editor.
- You haven't vacuumed in two months because there are too many stamps on the floor.
- After rearranging your stamp room, you suddenly realize that there was a rug underneath all those boxes.
- You have a cat or dog named "Perf."
- You have a coffee mug with a stamp motif.
- Your idea of "Winter Sports" is adding supplements to your album.
- You volunteer to take other people's mail to the Post Office, so that you can buy new issues.
- You buy a lot of shoes because you need the boxes for your cover collection.
- You daydream about exotic places after working on your stamps.
- You make photo copies of timely philatelic articles and send them to your friends.

If you checked 3 or less, you need more time with your stamps.

If you checked 3-10 you're an adventurous Stamp Nut.

If you checked 11-20, you're a serious Stamp Nut.

If you checked more than 20, you're a Super Excellent Master Stamp Nut and entitled to the rank and privileges thereof.

How did you score? Can you think of any other qualifiers that should be included in ascertaining if others are Stamp Nuts?