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Critics snap at Florida statehood stamp

STUCK ON STAMPS



JOHN FOXWORTH

Make way for the first 32-cent U.S. commemorative stamp in history as the 150th anniversary of Florida's statehood was honored March 3.

The colorful new stamp features a snapping alligator, the official state reptile, rising from a swamp.

"The alligator image represents Florida's history, strength, adaptability and ability to survive," says the Postal Service.

However, the stamp has been roundly criticized by many Florida residents who contend that Florida has so much beauty that could have been used. We agree and wonder why the Postal Service used a designer who lives in Hollywood, Calif.

Show dates

The Michigan Stamp Club will have its annual stamp show Saturday-Sunday, March 18-19, with members exhibiting 40 frames of stamps and covers. The show will be at Sokol Hall, 23600 W. Warren Ave., east of Telegraph, in Dearborn Heights.

More than 32 stamp dealers will be buying and selling stamps and supplies for collectors. The U.S. Postal Service will sell new U.S. stamps at face value. Show hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. March 18 and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 19, with free admission and parking.

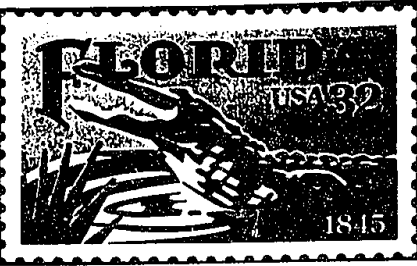
Two special cachet covers, featuring a design printed on the envelopes, are available. They honor the 50th anniversary of the Battle for Two Jims and the U.S. Merchant Marine and are franked with the 50-year-old stamps. Pick them up at the show or send \$2 for both, plus a stamped, self-addressed envelope, to Michigan Stamp Club Inc., 31890 Hoover Road, Warren 48093.

Cover story

A first day cover is an envelope that bears a new stamp and is canceled on the date the stamp was first officially available for postal use. For the Florida stamp, it was issued March 3, and the only place you could buy that stamp that day was Tallahassee. It was available nationwide the next day.

You begin by buying the new stamps from a post office, affixing them to quality 6 1/2 standard small size envelopes and addressing them to yourself or others, using peelable address labels.

Insert a card of postcard thickness, tuck in the flap, and send the envelopes in a larger envelope to Florida Statehood Stamp,



Gatorrage: The commemorative stamp marking the 150th anniversary of Florida's statehood was criticized by Florida residents, who thought that instead of an alligator, an image of the state's beauty should have been used.

Postmaster, 2800 S. Adams St., Tallahassee, Fla. 32301-9991, by April 2. Your canceled covers will be returned in a plastic protective sleeve.


Also, special "cachet" envelopes, with a design related to the new stamp engraved or printed on the left side of the envelope, are available. Use these special envelopes to prepare more attractive covers for your collection. Send \$3 and request two cachet envelopes

for the next three U.S. issues. Order from Artcraft First Day Covers, Washington Stamp Exchange, Florham Park, N.J. 07932.

John Foxworth of West Bloomfield is president of the American Philatelic Research Library. You can leave him a message by dialing (313) 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then his mailbox number, 1900. His fax number is (810) 644-1314.

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Cachet: Special "cachet" envelopes can be used to prepare attractive covers.

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REAL ESTATE FACTS
by Sandra Ladd
Max Brook, Inc.

Representing You!

In a very high percentage of all homes sales, a real estate agent is involved. To buyers and sellers alike, it is important to know who is being represented by the agent.

Traditionally, most agents have been employed by, and thus represent, the interests of property owners. The sellers pay the agent a fee in exchange for the agent's expertise in locating suitable buyers for their home. The agent has a fiduciary relationship with the sellers, and an obligation to pursue a course of action in their best interests.

Can the agent represent the sellers, what relationship exists between that same agent and any buyers who are shown the home? The relationship is that of a salesperson/customer. The agent is obligated to treat the customer honestly and fairly, but is clearly looking out for the best interests of the property owners, not the buyer.

Can buyers hire an agent to represent them? They certainly can. Just as homeowners sign an exclusive listing agreement with their agent, buyers can hire the services of an agent by signing

An exclusive buyer agency agreement. Such an agreement carries with it certain rights and obligations. The buyer has the right to expect the agent to negotiate a purchase in their best interests, paying special attention to price, terms, inspection and closing details which benefit the buyer.

Homeowners who employ a buyer's agent also have the obligation to compensate the agent for services rendered. There are a variety of compensation plans which should be discussed directly with the agent.

Dual agency, discouraged by most, is a third alternative. In dual agency, both buyers and sellers are represented by the same agent, a situation which carries with it an inherent conflict of interest.

When buying or selling a home, ask the agent who is being represented, then proceed with an informed decision.

Whether you plan to buy, sell or simply get, call me anytime at 810-644-1400, in Bloomfield Hills.

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