

Welcome to the C.N.A. E-Bulletin Vol. 2, No. 14 – May 10, 2006

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INTRODUCTION

We have been having fun in the C.N.A. E-Bulletin about the money that the Nigerians have wanted to send us...providing we sent them some money first. Well, not to worry, that's all behind us! How do we know? The Nigerians told us!

We received e-mail from no less than the Director-General of the Foreign Management Office of Nigeria, stating that efforts have been intensified towards improving the image of the country against "the monumental fraud accosted it." They warn me not to ignore their e-mail, and bear no responsibility for any loss sustained if I fail to respond. What I found interesting is that the National Committee on Money Laundering and Financial Crimes is involved, the first time that I heard that all those previous e-mails I received might be financial crimes.

How do they intend to resolve the issue? "It will be appreciated if you will reconfirm your banking and contact particulars so as not to remit your fund in error," they state. "We have approved the payment of your contract proceed and this will be credited to your designated bank account."

Let me get this right. I should not send my personal banking information to some scam artists in Nigeria that previously send me e-mails, but instead, I should send it to the people in Nigeria who send me the latest e-mail!

WE HAVE MAIL

From Ralph Trimble: "In the last E-Bulletin, you wrote: 'The two thieves are charged with theft, mischief, possession of burglar's stools, possession of coin-operating break-in devices, possession of property obtained by crime, and obstructing police.' Possession of burglar's stools, eh??? OK, is this some really GROSS offence they were charged with, or did they actually bring little stools along with them to sit on while they burgled???" (Ralph is the editor of www.re-entries.com specializing in BNA stamp re-entries. It would be another editor who caught us!)

From Lou Fontaine: "Re jumping ship to collect stamps. Its not **YUCK**. There are many members that collect stamps and coins and postcards and currency and script and Canadian Tire money and yes, CNA Journals. Any of these hobbies are quite challenging and not to be taken lightly." - I'm surprised you are the only one that e-mailed us about my comment in the last issue in which I mentioned that Ralph Trimble used to collect coin errors but jumped ship to collect stamps. I know all you stamp collectors will forgive me for adding the word in jest when I tell you that Ralph and I have lunch with a bunch of other STAMP collectors on Saturdays at a little restaurant on Avenue Road.

From Jeff Korda: "I read in one of the newsletters that you used to browse at Carmichael's Coins at the Bloor subway station. I too used to spend many hours across from Rutheford's drugstore getting lost in the piles of coins. At one time I owned all 7 or 8 installments of "The Story of Funny Money," a series of comics printed by Mr. Carmichael. Alas, my mother, in a fit of Spring cleaning frenzy, tossed them out along with my hockey coins and baseball cards. I don't miss the cards and the coins so much but I often think of how nice it would be to read through Funny Money again. I wonder if you or anyone in the association that you know would have copies of "Funny Money" that I might borrow or buy." - I remember the comic books. They were

quite interesting, especially if you lean towards socialism. Does anyone reading this have one or more of the series? Let us know at cnanews@look.ca.

From Lou Fontaine: "Re the ribbon quarter, I went to Shoppers and asked for 2 rolls, no problem, I got them. The employees were very nice and usually asked how many would you like? A commissionaire behind me saw me get some and he asked for a loonies' worth." - Looks like they are getting good press, unlike what happened to a lot of people at Tim Hortons.

From Tony Hine: "How to get a white and pink quarter at Shoppers Drug Mart: The easy way is to pay cash for a small purchase (but are there any items under a dollar for sale at SDM?). The other way when making a credit card purchase, ask for an exchange of quarters. The cashier may allow you to wait for the next cash sale when the drawer is open, or ask another cashier making a cash sale to sell you a quarter. Finally, you could wait to get one in change, or search your spouse's change purse (don't you do that anyway?)" - As I also said about the Poppy quarters, wait a while and you are bound to find some of the 30 million in your change.

From Lou Fontaine: "I received some of these e-mails (supposedly from PayPal) that you described. To protect other CNA members from being scammed, have their accounts cleaned out, using your ID to sell items, or to have headaches because of responding to these, this is what I do to check out the following:

1. *Account in arrears* - What to do? Go to your eBay account and check "My messages." if your account is in arrears the message will be there. If the message is not there then you are not in arrears. What to Do? Delete it from your e-mail INBOX. eBay does not send messages such as this regarding your account by e-mail.

2. *Respond now* - What to do? Go to your eBay account and check "My messages." If this same message is there then it is real, if not, delete it from your email inbox.

3. *I like your items, what are you selling or when are you going to send the item I paid for, I will send negative feedback if you do not respond?* - There is no way anyone can have the required information unless they are on eBay and you actually have the product described. What to do? Verify it by going to your eBay account and check "My messages." Usually it is not there. What to do? If it is not in your eBay messages, Delete the message from your Email inbox. Do not respond to it at all.

4. *Email about your PayPal Account* - What to do? Go to your eBay account and once there open your PayPal account and verify the message you received via e-mail. You will find that it was an attempt to get information from you, usually your PayPal e-mail address, passwords etc. Delete the message from your email inbox, do not respond to it.

All of the above are usually *attempts to get some information from you regarding your account such as user ID, password, your computer ID or anything else that can be useful to them to pull their scams*. What to do? Do not respond to these e-mails, delete them from your e-mail inbox after verification.

Remember the *saying* "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

ONA CONVENTION ANOTHER HUGE HIT

Tom Rogers, with the help of some hard working committee members (Bruce Raszmann and Toby Grimminck, just to name two), has done it again! The 44th annual convention of the

Ontario Numismatic Association held on April 21 to 23 in London, Ontario, received praise from dealers and collectors alike. The St. Thomas Numismatic Society hosted the convention.

Dick Dunn received the ONA "Award of Merit," the ONA's highest award, while Albert Kassman was selected to become a "Fellow of the ONA."

The Saturday night banquet featured Harry James as keynote speaker, speaking on the St. Thomas Church featured on the convention medal, and the trade tokens of St. Thomas, Ontario. The post-banquet reception was also well attended.

Meetings were held by the Canadian Association of Token Collectors, Canadian Association of Wooden Money Collectors, Canadian Tire Coupon Collectors Club and Canadian Paper Money Society. Other activities included a welcome reception on Friday night, a very active bourse and a fantastic hospitality committee who not only manned the hospitality suite, but also served sandwiches and beverages on the bourse floor.

On a motion from John Regitko, seconded by Fred Freeman, ONA President Tom Rogers received a vote of confidence from the membership at the annual general membership meeting for his outstanding leadership.

Everyone we spoke to felt that the location was excellent and the committee did a superb job. Therefore, they are looking forward to next year's convention which will be held at the same location.

ARREST IN \$10M TTC TOKEN SCAM

Toronto police and Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) special constables have arrested a man they allege is a key player in a counterfeit token scam that may have cost the transit authority about \$10 million. The recent arrest is part of an ongoing investigation involving Toronto police, the FBI and TTC investigators that has already resulted in the arrests of more than 20 people. More than 100 charges have been laid since the ring was dismantled in 2004.

The man in the latest arrest is alleged to have been responsible for half of the deliveries of counterfeit tokens from a counterfeit operation in Massachusetts to Toronto. "When we talk about deliveries, it's everything from the ordering to the paying to the distributing," a spokesman said, according to an article in The Toronto Star.

The investigation began with the 2004 arrest of a Toronto man whose pockets were stuffed with fake TTC tokens. It led to a complex multi-jurisdiction police investigation involving eight police agencies on both sides of the border. It is believed that a Massachusetts-based company that makes casino chips may have been unaware that what it was in fact manufacturing were about five million high-quality but counterfeit TTC tokens.

The fake tokens arrived in Canada via Niagara Falls and were then sold at a discounted price through a well-organized distribution network that spanned places such as bingo halls and bars across Toronto. Sales were also made through the Internet.

The latest arrest of Ainsworth Slowly, of Toronto, had been anticipated and worked on since February. Three Toronto brothers, Reginald, Alexander and Alfredo Beason, accused of masterminding the scheme, were charged in February with fraud and possession of property obtained by crime.

The bust has prompted the TTC to come up with a new design for a token, something that should be ready by year's end. On average, the transit system loses about \$7 million a year through fraud, a loss that represents about 1 per cent of the system's total revenue.

Ten million dollars worth, and I still can't get one of the fake tokens for my collection!

SOARING METAL PRICES DRIVE WORKSITE THEFT

Well, we have all heard of people stealing gold and silver for its melt value. But copper and nickel?

At the Royal Canadian Mint and the U.S. Mint, precious metals are well protected in secure areas, be it in bullion form, in the refining area, blanking stage, press area, packing or shipping.

In view of the latest metals pricing, is it possible that one day soon all copper and nickel coinage will also have to be protected? Farfetched you say? Remember not that long ago when the price of beef went up so high that Brinks was delivering it to grocery stores? Okay, that's called an "exaggeration" to make a point.

THIEF DISGUISED AS GUARD ROBS ITALIAN MUSEUM

A thief disguised as a security guard duped the unsuspecting staff of a top Italian art gallery into giving him more than 200,000 euros (\$253,100), according to Reuters.

The thief showed up recently at the Pitti Palace, a grandiose renaissance construction in central Florence and one of Italy's best known museums, wearing the same uniform used by employees of the security firm which every day collects the institution's takings. After the cashier staff gave him three bags full of money, he signed a receipt and calmly walked out.

The robbery was only discovered 30 minutes later, when the real security guards turned up to collect the money.

NEW LOTTERY TICKETS IN OFFING

If you live in the Toronto area, you will have read in the papers about how the Provincial and Federal governments are short-changing Torontonians when it comes to helping fund social, health and transit programs. If you live anywhere else in Canada, you will have read about Toronto politicians continuously complaining about being short-changed when it comes to helping us fund social, health and transit programs.

Due to the shortage of funding, we might get a brand new collectible for those of us that collect lottery tickets. Lawyers have given the go-ahead to explore the idea for Toronto to run a lottery to raise money. Heck, in Toronto, it's a lottery every time you cross the street.

A City of Toronto Councilor, Sylvia Watson, thought that the city could do wonderful things if it set up a hospital-style lottery and invested the proceeds in new programs for children, youth and seniors. Now that I turned 65 a few weeks ago, I'm all for that last part!

STUPID CRIMINALS BUNGLER GAMBLING DEN ROBBERY

Two hapless Chinese thieves gassed themselves to death with cyanide along with five intended victims while trying to rob a gambling den in the city of Ruichang, the Xinhua news agency reported.

A court in nearby Jiujiang Thursday sentenced their three surviving accomplices to death for the robbery, carried out last June.

One of the three passed out for several hours from the effects of the gas -- but still remembered to rob the dead of 15,950 yuan (\$1,990), five mobile phones and a gold necklace when he came around, Xinhua said.

STUPID CRIMINALS HELP THEMSELVES HELPING TOURISTS

Two police officers from a special unit designed to help tourists have been arrested for extorting money from two foreigners in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Not satisfied with about \$260 they got from the tourists in the middle of Rio's famous Copacabana beach for allegedly possessing drugs, they accompanied the Czech and the U.S. citizen to their hotel to get more money. The tourists alerted hotel security guards who called the police and the two officers were arrested on the spot. The two arrested officers were from the special Tourist Police Battalion.

The trouble started for the tourists when they were sitting in a beach kiosk-bar. They apparently had received a pack of leaflets from a person handing out flyers on the beach when they were immediately approached by the two officers, who accused them of having drugs in the package. "There is no investigation or case against the tourists," the state security spokesman said.

The officers were charged with exceeding their authority and an investigation is under way to determine if they planted drugs on the tourists.

WHAT MONEY WOULD BUSINESSMEN USE ON MOON?

Making money on the moon is an essential part of the U.S. plan for space exploration, NASA officials said after a four-day strategy workshop with international space officials and scientists. Billed as the first meeting to determine what explorers would do if they return to the lunar surface after more than three decades, the gathering drew some 180 participants from more than a dozen countries, including China, Russia, Japan and the nations of the European Space Agency.

Shana Dale, NASA's deputy administrator, said one clear goal was to do business. "The teams recognize the critical importance of space commerce -- having real companies going to the moon and making money," Dale said at a telephone news conference. "The government needs to be a trailblazer and enabler with a desire to see commerce take off."

Maybe we can help them decide what sort of money they should use on the moon. Send your ideas to cnanews@look.ca. Keep it light, eh! If you want to be serious about it, send your idea to NASA.

To start you off, here is my idea: In war-torn Europe, many things became acceptable as a medium of exchange, for example, nylon stockings and chocolate bars. Therefore, I would not be far off if I suggested...Mars Bars!

UNUSUAL WAY OF SPENDING GOLD AND SILVER AT FACE

Gordon Leitch believes gold and silver coins are the only legitimate forms of legal tender, with paper money and checks constituting fraud on the part of government. But the office of Oregon's Secretary of State would not accept his \$100 filing fee in \$20 gold pieces when he

wanted to pay his candidate filing fee for governor of Oregon, on the grounds that no bank would accept the coins for deposit.

Leitch refiled and provided a candidacy statement to be placed in the election pamphlet that the state will distribute to voters. He paid the \$1,000 fee for placement in the pamphlet with 1,000 U.S. silver dollars, which were reported to be worth nearly \$9,000. The state accepted this payment, but then Leitch filed a lawsuit to oust the other candidates from the ballot, arguing that their filings weren't valid because they didn't pay their fees in gold or silver. A judge threw out the suit, but Leitch said he intends to appeal to the state Supreme Court.

More proof that some retired people have too much time on their hands, but I decided I would vote for him if I could after I read that his campaign promises include a 30-percent discount on taxes paid in those precious metals.

THREE BOYS ACCUSED IN SEVEN BANK HOLDUPS

Three boys - two ages 14, the other 13 - have been charged with a string of seven bank robberies that has police and youth-crime experts shaking their heads. The boys were arrested at a Sky-Train location after a bank branch in suburban Surrey was held up. One 14-year old has been charged with two counts of bank robbery and one of obstructing a peace officer. The other two face one robbery count each.

But RCMP suspect the trio in as many as seven holdups in Surrey, Vancouver and suburban Burnaby over a six-week period. They apparently used Vancouver's elevated rapid-transit line to get to bank branches located near stations, and then flee afterward.

Tellers were handed a note in each of the robberies. The young robbers apparently got away with small, undisclosed amounts of cash, according to the Canadian Press.

NINE ARRESTED IN ALLEGED STAMP FRAUD

Spanish police have arrested nine people in an anti-fraud raid on two companies that persuaded 350,000 people to invest in postage stamps, coins and art guaranteed-return funds run by Forum Filatelico and Afinsa Bienes Tangibles.

Potential investors were offered high returns from the purchase and management of a stamp fund which was apparently made up of over-valued - or even fake - stamps and whose returns did not apparently come from the fund but from money received from new clients," police said, according to Reuters News Service.

Police raided 21 homes and offices and sealed the safes where the two firms kept their stamp collections that were supposed to guarantee investments in the funds.

PROOF THAT NUMISMATISTS ARE FUNNY

Your editor just celebrated his ascension to Old Age Pension, also known as 65th birthday, so the government sent me what at first I thought was another credit card to add to my collection. It turns out it is an I.D. card that will enable me to get a discount on Thursdays at Shoppers Drug Mart. Does that mean they will give me 15% off when I asked for some more Pink ribbon quarters?

But what did my numismatic friends give me?

From Roger: 65 cents worth of vintage Canadian Tire Corporation gas bar coupons, from the 80s.

From Vince: a card that reads "How's fifty bucks for your birthday sound?" on the cover. When you open it, sure enough, there are indeed fifty bucks on the inside - the word "Buck" was written 50 times. Well, at least the card is numismatic that I will add to my collection of numismatic greeting cards. He also added an envelope full of Hell Bank Notes. I assume it was because he knew I always wanted money to burn, and not that I had to bribe my way out of anything when the time came.

From Rick & Sandy: a card that reads "You don't find many birthday cards that have a real, honest-to-goodness fifty-dollar bill inside...but keep looking!"

From Paul & Carolyne-Marie: a card that reads "We made sure we didn't get you a funny card for your birthday...we know how easily people your age pee their pants!"

From Ron: a card that reads "A special friend should have understanding. You have understanding. A special friend should have patience. You have patience. A special friend should get an expensive birthday present...lucky for me, you've got patience and understanding!"

From Ingrid: a little wooden statue with a card that reads "Here is a little wood-man from Slovenia to keep you company, while you are writing your CNA newsletter."

Not bad, new numismatic greeting cards and some Canadian Tire & Hell Banknotes to add to my collection. And a reminder via the little statue that people enjoy some relief from the serious side of the hobby.

Incidentally, you will be happy to know that the fact that calories don't count on your birthday has been scientifically proven.

CONCLUSION

I have decided to hold off publishing 2006 C.N.A. Convention news until the next issue. So much will take place at Niagara Falls, Ontario on July 20-23 that I need time to whittle down the information into less than book-length.

John Regitko
Your C.N.A. E-Bulletin Editor
Canadian Numismatic Association

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