

Welcome to the C.N.A. E-Bulletin Vol. 3, No. 3 – January 15, 2007

An electronic publication of the Canadian Numismatic Association
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SPECIAL SECOND ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

INTRODUCTION

Two years ago to the day, on January 15, the first C.N.A. E-Bulletin was e-mailed to just over 1,000 people whose e-mail addresses we had on file from all fields of numismatics: C.N.A. members and other collectors; dealers; executives of clubs and associations; addresses that were passed on to us by others; people that provided us with their e-mail addresses when joining or renewing their membership or ordering correspondence courses, etc. Rather than being sent through the existing C.N.A. Website at www.canadian-numismatic.org, it was decided to register a new Web hosting site called www.canadiannumismatic.org (no hyphen) through Look Communications in Toronto, whom your volunteer editor has been using since he got a computer.

At the request of C.N.A. President, Charles “Chuck” Moore, I agreed to set up the mailing list and get the bulletin off the ground even though I had numerous other responsibilities. I presented a position paper to Chuck, which basically stated that it would not be in competition with our scholarly Journal mailed to members only, but rather light-hearted and humorous. I proposed “weird” money humor and unusual backgrounders on banks and financial organizations, interspersed with hobby news.

At first, we published twice a month (on the 1st and 15th), then three times a month (1st, 10th and 20th). We are now attempting to publish every Friday night, which is 4.3 times per month, as long as people do stupid things involving money and you keep sending us e-mails and articles.

Due to the free publicity obtained from Canadian Coin News, World Coin News, Coin World, Numismatic News, the ANA Numismatist, local and regional coin club bulletins, national publications, flyers at coin shows and local coin clubs as well as word of mouth, our distribution swelled to the current count of 2,345. The rest, as they say, is history,

We thank you for your continued support, be it submissions or simply remaining on our distribution list. Although a number of you have sent us e-mails, the two biggest supporters have been Ralph Trimble, the error coin collector turned stamp collector, who sent us lots of non-numismatic jokes (most of which we haven’t used yet) and Tony Hine, who submitted both non-numismatic jokes and weird articles about money (again, a number are still unpublished).

As we enter into our third year, the length and content will remain the same for the main part, although we will try to work in more content about numismatics rather than just background on banks, credit cards and stupid criminals after other people’s money. We will again be issuing a few special bulletins dealing exclusively with the annual C.N.A. Convention. Because of our backlog of humor, we will be including one or two jokes in each issue, both “money” related as well as non-numismatic.

We do expect to make a few changes. For one thing, we will mention more about the Canadian Numismatic Association and their executive (which we have been pretty well neglecting in the past). After all, this is the electronic publication of the C.N.A.! With the increased frequency to

weekly, we will also include some serious stuff such as how to protect yourself from burglaries and avoiding credit card scams. We will also offer advice and ask for your opinions dealing with club meetings such as how to reward speakers, auction rules and commissions and suggesting unusual programs.

The only reason I might want to turn over the editorship to someone else is if I finally receive those promised millions from Nigeria.

HOW I GOT THIS GIG

In case you wondered how I got this gig as editor of the C.N.A. E-Bulletin, I answered the following ad:

IF....

- a) You are a natural loud-mouth,
- b) Your job leaves you at least 3 hours a day to spare,
- c) You are a shameless self-promoter,
- d) You like to work alone,
- e) You like to search out the weird and unusual such as stupid criminals, bank robbers and members of the C.N.A Executive,
- f) You don't mind writing the whole thing yourself because chances are you won't hear from anybody, and most importantly,
- g) You don't have much of a social life.

If the answer to all of the above is YES, we have an opportunity to put your qualifications to good use! There is no financial remuneration, but it might keep you out of trouble!

Now how could I resist such temptation? Except maybe for the part about keeping out of trouble!

WE HAVE MAIL

From Gar Travis: "You're going to keep doing this to us? You mean there's more? :)"

In the last bulletin, we announced that we would be publishing a special Second Anniversary Issue today, and the above was one of the responses we received (actually, the only one). I think Gar summed up the C.N.A. E-Bulletin very well with this brief e-mail. He shows the same kind of humor as we try to include in the bulletin. If he was serious, he would not have added the smiley at the end of his e-mail and he...along with 2,344 other recipients...could simply tell us to delete them from our mailings. I certainly do not expect to run out for crazy stuff about money...ever!

Although I realize that some of you might remain on our mailing of this bulletin because you know I am a very sensitive guy and you don't like to see me cry when you advise me to remove you, I venture to guess that most of you actually get an idea or a laugh or two out of the odd column.

It is a labor of love for me, spending many happy hours reading your e-mails, reviewing print media, searching the Internet for stories about money and bank robbers, keeping in touch with the Royal Canadian Mint for breaking news...and even learning to speak and write American, eh (have you Canadians noticed the missing "u" in a number of words (like "labour" earlier in this paragraph)?

We regularly search through The Toronto Star, MoneySense Magazine, Metro, North York Mirror, North York Post, Catholic Register (not much help there). We also picked things up from news services and television networks.

We also hear from a few people. Tony Hine has provided us with a number of articles he cut out from publications such as the National Post and the Globe and Mail, other times e-mailing us with suggestions. He has been our number one contributor. A number of you have e-mailed me with Internet links or letters to the editor. I will not repeat them here, but since most of the submissions that were published included their names, they already got recognized for their contribution. I only wish the list was longer! To that end, how about making a belated New Year's resolution that you might actually have a chance to keep? Repeat after me: "I will send in an e-mail at least once a month!"

I would also appreciate hearing from you about specific contents of a bulletin as you receive it. Was there a column you especially liked? What do you not like reading about? How is the length? Do you want more humor? More serious stuff? Drop us a line at cnanews@look.ca and tell us.

OUR FAVORITE COLUMNS

We can't help including stories about the Nigerians, stupid criminals and banks, all involving money in one form or another. Although we will save our Nigerian write-ups for another issue, we dedicate the next two columns to the other favorites.

STUPID CRIMINALS

Here are a few examples of recent robberies that I discovered on the Internet, taken from USA Today, CNN, Reuters, www.fbi.gov, www.bankrate.com, Floridumb.Blogspot, Nothingtoxic.blogspot and others:

Police were notified that a safe had been stolen from the Airport Playfield golf course in Cincinnati, Ohio. A search located it in the nearby woods. They figured a stolen safe dumped in the woods near the Airport wouldn't stay there long. Police speculated it had been dumped because the thief couldn't get it out of the area. So police staked out the safe, and about 8:40 p.m. two days later a man came to retrieve it. He carried it about 100 yards, but police said the safe weighs 150 pounds, so he put it down and tried to pry it open. A police dog tracked him down and bit him on the ankle. Police charged Howard Davidson, 35, with safecracking, receiving stolen property and possession of criminal tools.

A Florida resident, Henry Gordon, 52, attempted to rob a woman at an ATM of the Fifth-Third Bank in Orlando as she was walking away from the machine after making a withdrawal. As Gordon tried to snatch the cash from his 41-year-old victim, she gave him a swift kick to the groin. Gordon managed to escape, slowly, into a wooded area nearby. Police were called and located Gordon, who was positively identified by the victim, according to the police report.

A Florida man, Paul Crawford, entered a Dunkin Donuts, displayed a handgun and demanded money from the safe. Once the manager had the money, he realized the gun was a toy and a struggle ensued. An employee, Kelcey Griffin, grabbed the money and stashed it outside the back door. After fighting with the manager, Crawford retrieved the money from the back door and fled the scene. Griffin admitted to detectives that he had planned the robbery with Crawford and was arrested. Crawford turned himself in later that afternoon.

Another Florida man, Xavier Florence, 20, attempted to rob a store in his neighborhood, but chickened out after it was too late. He walked into the Dixie Way Food Store carrying a rifle and aimed it at the clerk. He told her not to move, but then pulled down the bandana that was covering his face and said he was "only kidding" and just making sure she was ready if someone were to rob the store. He then went to a cooler and grabbed a soda for which he paid at the counter. Police were called and Florence was arrested.

Bevard County, Florida, Sheriff's Deputies responded to a suspicious vehicle call in Mims, Florida. A witness at the scene told deputies a suspicious vehicle was parked at his neighbor's house and that they were out-of-town. Deputies set up a perimeter around the house and waited for the suspects to exit. When the two suspects left the house, they were caught holding money, birth certificates, jewelry and other property belonging to the home owners. The two were arrested, and when the Deputies entered the home to investigate, they found kerosene lamp oil poured on the carpets and wooden floors. The two admitted they planned to burn down the home to cover their tracks. Deputies also learned that the two were involved in other burglaries in Cocoa Beach, Titusville and Mims. James Webber and David Lopez were charged with burglary, criminal mischief, grand theft and attempted arson.

Darryl Alexander, 42, of Brooklyn found bank robbery such a convenient way to raise cash that he hit the same Washington Mutual Bank branch three times in seven months. His total haul was more than \$5,000 and a guilty plea to grand larceny.

When Pilsen State Bank in Lincolnville, Kan., population 225, was robbed by two armed men, bank president Kurt Spachek was eating lunch in a room away from the main banking area and didn't know what had happened until it was over. When Spachek's bank was held up again a year later by a single robber, who he believed was one of the guys from the previous robbery, the man ordered Spachek and four employees into a bathroom. Spachek waited for the robber to leave and then jumped in his pickup truck and unsuccessfully chased the bad guy for eight miles through the farming and ranching community. "I was mad. I'd seen what it did to the employees the first time, and he had the nerve to come in the second time. I wanted it stopped before he did it to someone else."

A Brazilian businessman traveling in Germany watched by live video as a burglar robbed his house on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean in Brazil. The businessman, Joao Pedro Wettlauser, was in Cologne this weekend when he received an alert on his cell phone from the security system in his beach house in Guarujá in Sao Paulo state. He logged on to his laptop and via the Internet saw live images of the burglar at work. He then phoned his wife, who was not at the house but called the local police. "She told us the details about the thief and where in the house he was as we surrounded the house," police officer Americo Rodrigues said. He was arrested.

BANK FRAUD AND ROBOT GIRL

"Bad Jeremy" recently became a victim of ATM card fraud. Following is his experience with his bank:

This morning I called my bank and after about an hour of talking to their bank computer I finally got to speak to a live person who promptly told me that the customer service department could not help me and that I would need to speak to the fraud department. She then promptly transferred me to the fraud department telephone line and I got to talk to another computer and eventually left a voicemail, since living people apparently are not allowed to answer phones anymore. I then waited for about an hour and no one called me back. So I called them again.

I know it might seem like I was being a bit impatient, but when \$500 disappears from my account the day before my rent is due I darn well want to speak with a living breathing human at my bank about it and not some computer voice named Silicone Sally! Again, I got the customer service girl on the line who had transferred me before (and at this point I was starting to think that she was the only living person working at the bank since she was the only human being I had managed to speak to in 2 hours of calling) and again she transferred me to the fraud department. This time, however, another living breathing human picked up, and I was very grateful to hear her voice.

I like computers. I just don't want to talk to them on the phone. (Whoever invented these idiotic telephone mazes should be ... fill in the blank. There are plenty of unemployed people that could answer the phones that would do a better job than a computer and that have families to support... and some of them aren't even in India.) Anywho... fraud department woman sounded tired and worn out on the phone, like she had spoken to one too many frantic victims of ATM bank card fraud like myself. She told me she would fax some forms over for me to dispute the charges and that once she received them back from me she would restore the missing funds to my bank account. I was thrilled.

Sure enough, five minutes later the fax machine at my desk starts whirring and paper spits out of it and on the paper is printed the dispute charges forms and whatnot. I filled them out, had the notary who sits down the hall from my office notarize it, and then I faxed it back to the bank. Then I made a copy for my records and on my lunch break I made a personal trip across the river to my bank in Manhattan to present my original paperwork to the fraud department lady so she could get cracking and restoring the funds to my account.

I was very proud of myself for the calm and professional air I had as I handed her my well-written, well-thought-out paperwork that I took the time to come in and give to them so they wouldn't have to wait on the US Postal Service... Fraud department lady was not impressed. In fact... she looked kind of beaten up and told me it was her last day there and that someone named Sam would be taking over my case but that she would restore the funds to my account this afternoon and start researching the case today. It sounded reasonable to me.

I wasn't totally comfortable with my case being passed around to random people named Sam but people come and go from jobs so I hoped that Sam would be more upbeat and excited about finding out who stole my damn money and beefing up security at the bank so it wouldn't happen again. The current fraud lady just looked... kind of anemic, sort of listless?? like a big human mushroom that had been squashed?? So, I told her that if she needed anything else from me to just call and I waited for her to say thank you. She just sort of stared at me. So I asked if she did need anything else and if not I would be on my way. She said she didn't need anything. So... I left hoping that she would restore the missing funds to my bank account like she said she would so I could pay my rent and not starve and everything (at least for me) would be back to normal.

My afternoon at the office was busy so I didn't get a chance to go online to verify that the funds were restored to my bank account until I arrived at home around 6 pm.

The money wasn't there.

I don't know what fraud department girl did, but she definitely did not do what she said she would, which was to give me back my money so that I can eat and pay my rent and maybe go to

the movies or have a drink or do something else that humans do and computers don't. Maybe she has been around computers for so long she forgot that people eat... Maybe she wasn't human at all... Maybe she was a robot dressed up to look like a human. That might explain her drab lack of emotion.

Anyway.... I have no money. All I have are credit cards... And I am very annoyed with my bank. I think I might close my account with them once this is all resolved. They really let me down. They didn't do what they said they would, the most important thing, restore my funds in a timely manner so I can EAT and PAY MY RENT this weekend.

The above is from <http://bad-jeremy.livejournal.com/6964.html>

THE HEALING POWER OF HOBBIES

One of the reasons I keep staying involved in the hobby is for the good of my health. This is confirmed in an article by Shari Caudron in Readers Digest that states that hobbies keep us healthy - in both body and mind. Being an enthusiastic hobbyist is good for you, experts agree. Here is what the article says:

Hobbies reduce stress, says Alice Domar, director of the Mind/Body Center for Women's Health at Harvard Medical School. They distract you from everyday worries: If you're focused on the pottery you're making, you can't fret about work, says Domar. And knitting, or anything requiring repetitive motion, elicits the relaxation response, a feeling of overall serenity, marked by lowered blood pressure.

Hobbies provide a calming sense of control, says Domar, and research suggests this strengthens immunity. You may have little say at work, but when you're woodworking, you're in charge. You get the credit - and satisfaction - of a job well done.

We know that physical activity extends life, but less active pursuits are healthy as well. A Swedish study showed people who regularly engaged in hobbies such as sewing and gardening were less likely to suffer mental decline. Similar research in The New England Journal of Medicine found that those who pursued mind-boosting activities - such as crossword puzzles - lowered their risk of Alzheimer's disease or other dementia. "Any hobby that challenges the brain should have a positive effect on dementia risk," says lead author and neurologist Joe Verghese.

Many hobbies are social. From dealing cards at bridge to swapping tips with other collectors, engaging with like-minded souls boosts immunity. A Japanese study of almost 12,000 people found that men who engaged in hobbies or community activities were less likely to die of stroke or circulatory disorders than those who didn't.

And there you have it. So keep collecting coins. Others may think you're obsessed - you know otherwise. The mind-boggling activity of attempting to grade your coins or look for those die varieties with a 20-power magnifying glass should keep Alzheimers at bay, but it might just drive you crazy. And attending coin club meetings and coin shows not only gives you exercise and enables you to meet some great people along the way and make life-long friends, but also gets your heart racing when you finally come across that elusive coin that you have been searching for all these years.

And unlike some other hobbies, you most likely will have a nest egg when it is time to retire!

CONCLUSION

Well, I try to be somewhat original and sometimes funny. I keep receiving very positive comments, mainly when people run into me at club meetings. Those who know me have dedicated the following poem to yours truly, for which I thank them, I think:

Show me a man that laughs all the time,
Though the rest of the world is in a rut,
Yes, show me a man that laughs all the time,
And my friend, I'll show you a nut!

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

The Canadian Numismatic Association is a not for profit organization devoted to serving those who enjoy coin collecting/numismatics by promoting fellowship, communication, education and providing advocacy and leadership for the hobby.

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