

# Mid-Cities Stamp Expo honors sport of baseball

By Stanley Christmas and Rob Hathaway

The all-time most popular baseball song, *Take Me Out to the Ballgame*, inspires the theme of the 2008 Mid-Cities Stamp Expo, to be held November 8-9 at the Grapevine Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas.

The 21st annual exhibition of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club features a bourse of 26 stamp dealers offering a variety of material that should satisfy most any collecting interest. The U.S. Postal Service always brings a great representation of the latest stamp releases.

Almost 60 frames of informative and interesting competitive exhibits are to be evaluated by a panel of three jurors accredited by the American Philatelic Society.

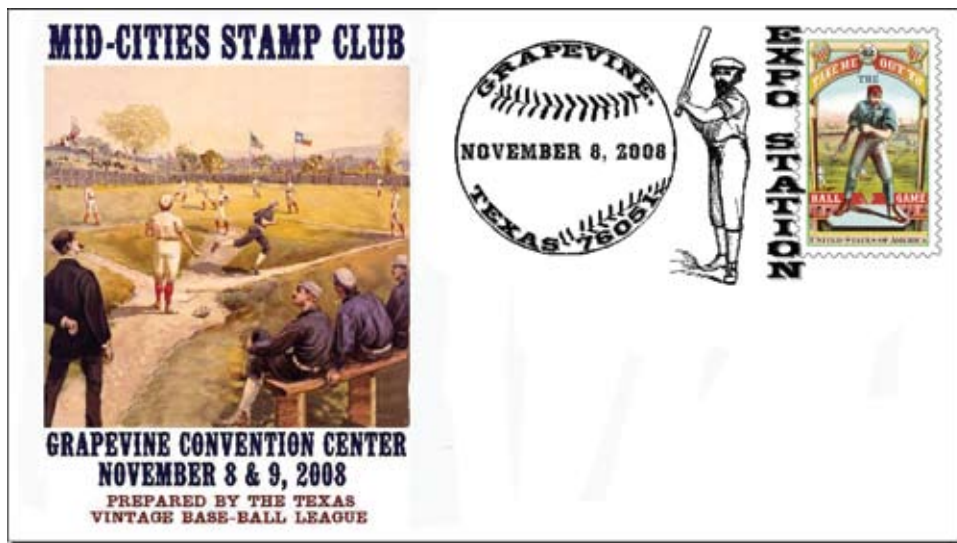
A unique one-frame exhibit explores the history of baseball by using philatelic material provided by different club members; the project is coordinated by Dr. John Barrett.

A special guest at the show is Wendel Dickason, the commissioner of the Texas Vintage Base Ball League, a living history group

that demonstrates how the sport was played between 1860 and 1880, and currently has seven local teams that dress up circa 1900.

During his special presentation on baseball as it used to be played, Mr. Dickason may ask "Who invented baseball?" If he gets the answer "Abner Doubleday," it should make his day. He loves debunking the myth the game was first played in Cooperstown, New York. This fictitious event was commemorated on the Centennial of Baseball stamp issued in 1939, even though Doubleday denied responsibility while he was alive, and he had a firm alibi precluding the possibility that he would have ever been in Cooperstown in 1839. The truth is, baseball evolved from a number of different "hit the ball with a stick" games with lots of different names and local rules. Further information about the league is available at their website <http://www.vbbtexas.org>.

A cachet and special U.S. Postal Service cancel promoting baseball has been prepared for the show; both are designed for use with



This is a mockup of the baseball-themed cachet that will be available at the 2008 Mid-Cities Stamp Expo, to be held November 8-9 in Arlington, Texas. The actual design and cancel size may differ slightly from the illustration. The cost is \$2 each plus 50¢ postage. Collectors may choose either November 8 or 9 cancellation dates and direct orders to David Stockbridge, 2410 Wills Way Dr., Granbury, TX 76049-8062.

the 42-cent *Take Me Out to the Ballgame* stamp issued July 16th to commemorate the centennial of the writing of the song. The price of a cachet with the stamp attached is \$2.00. Mail order information appears below the illustration on the previous page.

Exhibitors are recognized for their efforts at an Awards Dinner at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday evening at the convention center. The entrée of choice is lasagna. Tickets can be purchased on a first come, first served basis by contacting either Susan Baker at (972) 724-0910, e-mail baker-s@tx.rr.com, or Richard Hildebrandt at (817) 483-9234, e-mail richhilde@hotmail.com. The cost is \$15.00 until October 17; any remaining seats go for \$18.00 until October 31.

Show attendees can participate in the exhibit evaluation as well, voting for their favorite until 1:30 p.m. Sunday. The winner receives the Texas Stamp Dealers Association's Most Popular Exhibit Award at 2 p.m.

Door prizes to be given away include 11 philatelic gift certificates valued at \$25 each, and numerous items donated by the bourse dealers. The Texas Philatelic Association will have a table at the show, where members and visitors can register to win a 2009 edition of the *Scott Specialized Catalogue of United States Stamps and Covers*.

Visitors can count on the ever-popular



**Visitors to the 2008 Mid-Cities Expo may be surprised to learn that the 1939 Centennial of Baseball stamp was based on a myth.**

Chance Board and Giant Mixture Pick being in operation during the entire show.

A silent auction is open to all show visitors and offers the possibility of picking up some real bargains; it closes early Sunday afternoon, so participants must arrange to pick up their purchases between 2:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. that afternoon.

In addition to the previously mentioned activities, children can visit the Youth Activities Center; offerings include assorted educational activities, games, contests and prizes.

Show hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. For further information, including show hotel reservations, see the advertisement elsewhere in this edition of the *The Texas Philatelist*, or contact Stanley Christmas at 817-656-2925, e-mail elvira6@swbell.net. ★