

Foundation to offer graded certificates

The Philatelic Foundation will begin numerical grading of stamps effective Oct. 1.

In a press release issued Sept. 9, Foundation chairman George J. Kramer said: "PF certificates have always addressed the evolving demands of the philatelic community concerning those factors which determine a stamp's value in the marketplace.

"Our ability to recognize change, coupled with our desire to respond to the needs of our clientele, has led to the development and implementation of this program."

The Foundation has issued more than 425,000 certificates of authenticity in its 60 years of operation.

The new, optional grading service will provide a numerical grade based on a point system as well as an opinion regarding authenticity.

Initially, the Foundation will offer graded certificates for the United States stamps that are valued in the Scott *United States Specialized Valuing Supplement*. These stamps include 19th- and 20th-century regular and commemorative postage stamps as well as airmail stamps and other back-of-the-book issues.

The Foundation will also

grade some stamps that are not listed in the Scott valuing supplement. These include revenue stamps, newspaper stamps without gum, savings stamps, Confederate States of America stamps and U.S. possessions stamps.

The Foundation will continue to issue nongraded standard certificates for items that it will not grade. Examples are covers, stamp multiples other than coil pairs and line pairs, and other categories of U.S. and foreign stamps.

Graded certificates will cost no more than the current standard certificate the Foundation issues. A full description of the Foundation's graded certificate service is to be available on the Foundation's web site at www.philatelicfoundation.org.

As of Sept. 13, the description of the service was not on the web site.

Application forms for submissions for expertizing can also be downloaded from the Foundation web site.

The Foundation becomes the second of three major expertizing services in the United States to offer graded certifications. Professional Stamp Experts, which pioneered numeri-

cal grading of stamps, has offered a stamp grading service since 2000. The American Philatelic Society's expertizing service does not offer graded certificates.

The Foundation is celebrating its 60th anniversary.

It is a nonprofit educational institution chartered by the state of New York in 1945.

Educational programs produced by the Foundation include the video disc *The Pony Express: A Postal History*.

For additional information, call the Foundation at 212-221-6555. Write to Philatelic Foundation, 70 W. 40th St., 15th Floor, New York, NY 10018. The e-mail address is philatelicfoundation@verizon.net.

The Foundation is overseen by a 22-member board of trustees. Their names are listed at the Foundation web site. ■

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RARITY
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RARITY VENTURES, LLC
760 MARKET ST, SUITE 501
SAN FRANCISCO, CA. 94102
TEL: 415-421-8080
FAX: 415-291-8324
TOLL FREE: 800-509-8682

WWW.RARITYVENTURES.COM