

## MATCH TIPS for New Collectors

by "Billboard Bill" Thomas

How did I get this job anyway? Well, many moons ago I found I was being asked the same things by many traders and was typing the same replies over & over. So, I wrote a little 16-pg pamphlet called *Guidelines For Collecting Match Covers* & thereafter saved lots of typing. Since then I've written numerous little one-page blurbs about various hobby topics like flattening, displaying, gathering, etc. and those blurbs are sitting here in a file just waiting to see the light of day. So, if you have a specific topic that you're interested in, why not phone or fax me and if I have a blurb already written I'll send it to you for a SASE. If you send along a few nice covers too, I'll return some from Walt Disney World. And if I don't have a blurb about what you're interested in, maybe that will spur me to write one.

I believe that people joining RMS receive a small packet of some of my earlier writings, but please don't ask me for all of them as that would take many SASEs.

I hope you enjoyed the Pittsburgh convention and that you're happy with the choice of locale for 2001. Well, obviously you can't all be happy, but hey, when I go to a convention it might as well be down in a coal mine cause I don't venture out sightseeing—I'm there for the convention and the convention is in the hotel. So what if it's 120° F at Indian Wells; the hotel has air conditioning! Years ago we used to have our conventions right in the middle of a big city, like in 1982 it was right smack by Bourbon Street in downtown New Orleans, and we were in downtown Allentown, PA, and Hamilton, Ont., too. Not possible today, as hotel costs have driven us out into the suburbs. Nothing wrong with that as long as there are enough McDonald's & other such treats surrounding the hotel.

If this was your first convention I hope you learned some of the little niceties that we practice. It's often said that our hobby is the only one in which a cute young girlie can say "C'mon up to my room" to an old geezer and nobody blinks—we all drift about from room to room. I always carry a handful of some nice Disney covers in my pocket so that when I meet someone I can hand them a cover without waiting for

them to come up to my room. Those who drive, bus, or train to conventions usually have many caddies of full matchbooks out for us to take, while we who have to fly must bring only shucked covers. That's why we appreciate it when registration bags are fully shucked as they are at AMCAL.

Did you note that there were only a few gents who did not have a coat & tie on? They are the die-hard holdouts who growl, "Ain't nobody gonna put a coat & tie on me except for the funeral parlor." That's too bad, cause not too many years ago the RMS convention banquet saw all the gentlemen dressed for a banquet and all the ladies wearing long gowns. A few of the gents even wore tuxedos. Many years ago at baseball games the home team fans would sit right smack in the center field and they all wore coats and hats and starched, ironed white shirts. When the visiting team came to bat, all the men took off their coats—can you figger out why, or do you want to call or fax me for the answer?

Christmas looms upon us, so here's your chance to come up with a spectacular, one-of-a-kind gift. Go you unto a craft shop and buy a wooden box—the kind used to make women's purses. Buy all the hardware, too: hinges, handle, green felt for the inside and a mirror, and gold lace trim. Now select some outstanding covers (not a Lindy, please!) and neatly glue them onto the outside of the box, even the bottom. Once done, coat the covers with many coats of clear lacquer & then add the hardware. Add felt feet for the bottom, wrap it real well and you'll get big hugs & smooches for being so thoughtful. Have your spouse bring it to the next RMS convention; if she can't come, you bring the purse.

*[Hey, you can't e-mail me but write, phone or fax me with your questions about covers or the hobby. Send some covers & I'll send some back. I'm at 222 S. Ranger Blvd., Winter Park, FL 32792-4331. The phone & fax no. is 407-657-0222 and I'm up up until 11 PM EDT. If you have Fax4Free, your computer and my fax machine can talk to each other. Check it out, it's great. Ask Editor Mike Prero how to go about getting Fax4Free]*