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SYNOPSIS TIP OF THE MONTH

Getting Your Ideas Out of Your Head and Into the Synopsis

Bartonsville, PA – July 2021 -- The philatelic synopsis is the short document given to the philatelic judges in advance of a stamp show to help them prepare to judge the exhibit. This often misunderstood and underrated document can dramatically shape how an exhibit is received by the judges and can have a big effect on an exhibitor's medal level.

“Nothing can trigger a case of writer's block quicker than starting at an empty page or screen.” according to Andrew McFarlane, author of *Creating the Philatelic Exhibit Synopsis: A Master Class*. “No matter how much you've researched, outlined, and planned for your synopsis, a majority of the time, it's getting started that's the toughest obstacle to overcome.”

McFarlane recommends when starting to write, use as basic a word processor or text editor as possible. “Windows Notepad is a great place to start, there are no distractions within the program, and you can concentrate on getting the words out of your head.”

McFarlane's book offers these tips for exhibitors when starting your synopsis:

- Use a basic text editor to get the words onto the page.
- Don't get caught-up in formatting, grammar, or spelling.
- Use a large display font such as Comic Sans.
- Just write, correct later.

When McFarlane heard the idea about using Comic Sans, he immediately dismissed it as something that couldn't really be a help to anyone. However, when faced with a blank screen one day, he decided to try it, and it seemed to work. “I can't quantify how much it helped, but I believe it did help me get started, so as far as I'm concerned, it works.”

He stresses that the important thing when starting is to just get writing and develop some momentum. Not being concerned with formatting or spelling helps to generate a flow that grows with every word written. Correcting and formatting while writing just slows down the initial process and interrupts that flow.

Creating the Philatelic Exhibit Synopsis: A Master Class is available by visiting www.ExhibitSynopsis.com.

