



Man's mailbox  
**EXPLODES** - 8A

Treatment plant  
impresses ADEQ - 14A

VERDE VALLEY  
**Living**  
Let's Move Fit Kids - 1B



50¢

WEDNESDAY

Cottonwood  
**JOURNAL EXTRA**

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# Art Cover Exchange award stuffs man's mailbox

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LARSON NEWSPAPERS

Buzzard Air Local Post out of Cottonwood saw a giant increase in volume after more than 400 art covers — colorful, hand-designed envelopes — arrived at the home of David Snyder, master of his own "fantasy local post."

The once-in-a-lifetime honor, a sign of respect and recognition from the international philately organization, Art Cover Exchange, went to Snyder, who said Aug. 10 he was surprised to receive it.

An avid stamp collector and creator of dozens of Buzzard Air art covers, Snyder said ACE officials originally told him another member won the award.

"Since I nominated him, I had no trouble with that," he said.

Snyder said Buzzard Air is a fantasy local post located in Cottonwood where he claims to have trained "highly intelligent buzzards to deliver the mail since January 2008."

His colorful and humorous buzzard designs have proved very popular with other club members, but Snyder denies he has any talent.

Great Ace Day is the premier annual event for ACE that take place Aug. 1. On that day, a target member nominated and voted on by club members is inundated with thematic covers all marked "GAD" and postmarked Aug. 1.

"All members are encouraged to participate by sending covers to all members and several extra to the GAD target," Snyder said.

Then the art covers started pouring in during the first week of August, each one hand-drawn, hand-lettered or hand-stamped, all with unique designs, many displaying humorous photographs and salutations.

A photo of large tabby perched in front of the helm of yacht, for example, bears the message, "Mutiny? Of course not. The captain enjoys long swims. Happy GAD."

Another envelope displays the photograph of an obese dachshund that reads, "The great Jabba the Hutt will listen to your plea now."

These and many other messages were spread around the dining room table at Snyder's home, which he shares with his wife, Dianne. The couple has collected stamps for more than 25 years. Scores of volumes organized by country, including 13 containing stamps of the U.S. are proof of their

## History of Exchange

In 1935, Leonard J. Turley formed the original Art Cover Exchange, known as the Ace of Clubs. His concept was simple: "Send a cover with a handmade cachet to a member and receive one in return."

Using ingenuity, members mailed covers from post offices with names like Bald Knob, W. Va., and painted an appropriate cachet. Special cachets were sent to commemorate birthdays, seasonal and religious holidays and special events.

Most important was the cover and the exchange. Everyone was welcome to draw or paint in their own style, write a friendly message, affix postage and send a cover to another member.

The club closed down at the start of World War II. During the 1980s, Turley's descendants revived Art Cover Exchange.

Today, in addition to hand-drawn or painted art, members use a variety of artistic methods for decorating their covers, including computer art, stickers, rubber stamps, collage and just about anything else that will adhere to a cover and go through the mails.

dedication to the activity.

"It's a hobby that keeps me out of trouble," Snyder said.

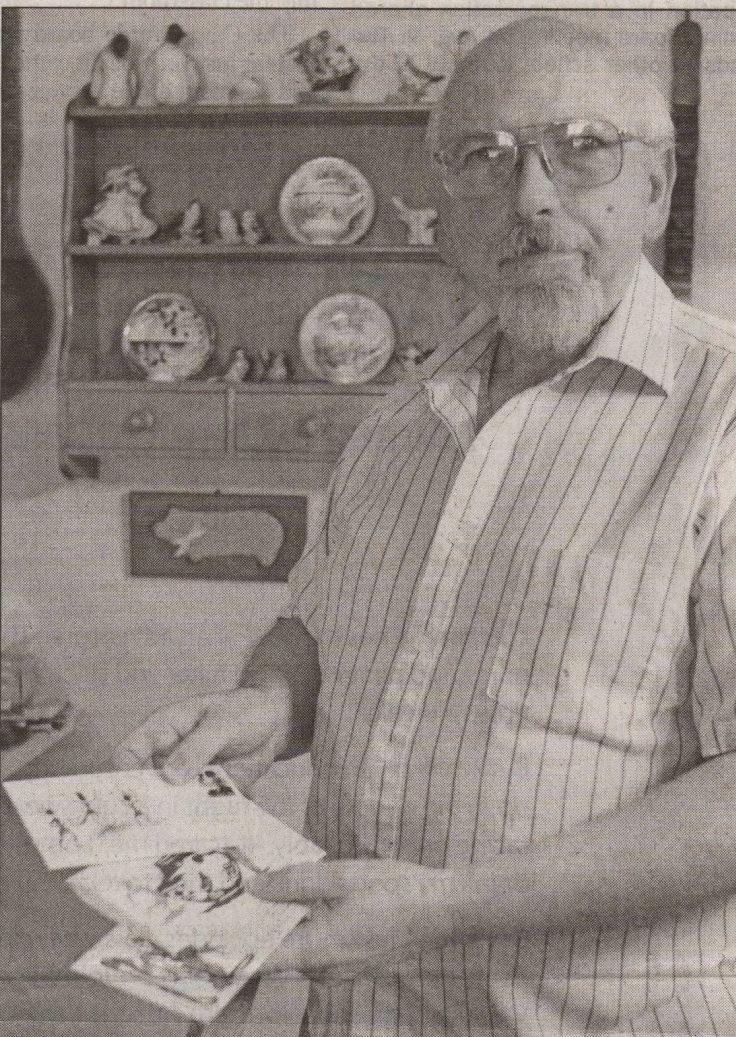
Snyder said he has been a member of ACE for a little more than three years.

The Art Cover Exchange "promotes art, philately, friendship and correspondence among its members. The special emphasis of the group is in the artistic presentation of postal covers for exchange," Snyder said.

Under the rules of the exchange, Snyder is supposed to answer each cover sent to him with one of his own, but he is excused from answering them all this time.

His dedication to the activity was one of the reasons he received the honor from ACE. He estimated he mails out as many as 50 of his own, hand-designed envelopes each month.

"Everyone loves to receive something special in the mail," Snyder said.



**HUNDREDS OF ART-COVERED ENVELOPES** were delivered to Verde Villages resident David Snyder early in August as a result of his membership in a unique type of pen pal club (above). Art Cover Exchange focuses on the envelope, or "cover," rather than an enclosed message and boasts international membership. The club chooses a member annually to inundate with beautifully designed covers to be mailed on Aug. 1. Dave Snyder, a Verde Villages resident, shows some of the best "covers" or envelopes, he has received during his three-year membership exchange (left).

Photos by Michele Bradley/  
Larson Newspapers

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