



The NOR'WESTER

Published Quarterly by the Pacific Northwest Numismatic Association

PNNA is a non-profit corporation registered in the State of Oregon.

<https://www.pnna.org>

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PNNA online dues are:
Individual — \$10.00/year
Individual Life — \$200.00
Family/Club — \$15.00/year
Add \$5.00/year to most dues
for paper copies.

First Quarter

2026

January-February-March

IMPORTANT NOTICES!!

- The Annual Boeing Employees' Coin Club coin show is cancelled for 2026. It was scheduled for January 17-18 in Kent, Wash., as usual. Regrettably, the recent changes to Washington State sales tax law means very few dealers were willing to attend.
- For the same reason, the PNNA 75th Annual Convention & Spring Coin Show has been moved from Tukwila to Portland. The location will be the same as used by the Willamette Coin Club for this fall's Portland show (see page 2). The dates will be the same weekend as planned for Tukwila (April 11-12), except the show will be on Saturday and Sunday only for the public.

President's Message

by PNNA President Rick Schulz



As you know, last year the Washington State legislature passed a new state budget which the governor signed into law, and one provision of this law removed the sales tax exemption for the sale of coins and bullion. Since then, I've been bombarded with questions about what this will mean for collectors and investors. For months my answer has been a frustrating, "we'll just have to wait and see." In the past couple months,

a little information has surfaced about the state's plan. According to some individuals who have reached out to state officials, the state's plan is to focus on dealers who have retail and wholesale licenses to do business in Washington. Out of state dealers would have to complete a complicated application process to do business in the state. This news does not bode well for the future of coin shows in Washington. In fact, we recently learned that the first casualty in this new reality is the Boeing Employee's Coin Club show that was scheduled for this month (January 2026). According to a notice sent to members by club president Dave Buehler,

"The BECC Board unanimously voted to cancel our January coin show. The recent changes in tax law for the sales of coins impacted the majority of our dealers to the extent that they were not going to attend. To this end we were looking at a \$6000 loss to hold the show with a greatly reduced number of dealers and participants who were not willing to spend as much money due to the 10%

or more tax they would pay for purchases. We encourage all of our members to write the Washington State legislators to repeal this portion of our tax laws."

In mid-December, the PNNA Board held a special meeting to discuss these events as they apply to our spring and fall shows. It was decided to move our spring convention and show to the Holiday Inn Columbia Riverfront in Portland and, due to increased costs, reduce it from three days to two, Saturday-Sunday, April 11-12.

Moving the fall show is a little more problematic. Our usual dates are close to those of the Willamette Coin Club show, a major show in Portland that uses the same Holiday Inn venue. The PNNA board is considering several possibilities for the future of our fall show but, at this time, no firm decisions have been made.

What does this mean for small, local club shows in Washington? So far, all shows scheduled are expected to take place, but how they will fare is still uncertain. The first of these is the Olympia Coin Club show scheduled for the end of January. You can find further information about local shows on the PNNA calendar at pnna.org.

The Washington Coin and Bullion Association is fighting to get the sales tax exemption for the sale of coins and bullion reinstated. They are asking Washington residents to contact their legislative representatives and encourage them to reinstate the exemption. Information on the WCBA, including talking points to address this issue, can be found on their website, <https://washingtongoinandbullionassoc.org>. This is a call for 'all-hands-on-deck.' Write, email or call your representative. The more voices they hear, the better the chance they will respond positively to this issue. In the meantime, show your support for local shows. For Washington, they are the only shows we will see this year.

PNNA Spring Convention

The 75th Annual PNNA Convention and Coin Show will be held at the **Holiday Inn Columbia Riverfront, 909 N Hayden Island Dr., Portland, Ore., April 11-12, 2026**. We expect a great bourse and most of the other usual activities, including collector exhibits and youth and family programs. The next edition of *The Nor'wester* will be a 24-page full-color spring convention special edition. Also see the coin show webpage at <https://www.pnna.org/wp/events/spring/>.

PNNA 2026 Annual Awards

by *Danny Bisgaard*

The PNNA awards committee, chaired by Danny Bisgaard, selects the recipients of the various PNNA annual awards, and they will be announced at the spring convention in Portland.

Please nominate someone for the Bob Everett Memorial Award or the Nina Nystrom Memorial "Goodwill Ambassador" Award. The PNNA would like to make these awards every year.

Literary awards will be given for best club newsletter and best article in *The Nor'wester*. Eligible articles are automatically entered, but you must submit a sample of three of your 2025 club newsletters to Danny for consideration.

PNNA President Rick Schulz will select the recipient(s) of the Presidential Award, but you can suggest someone.

For information about how to apply for the 2026 adult and YN scholarships to ANA Summer Seminar, see the website and the included application form.

More information about the various PNNA awards can be found on the PNNA website at:

<https://www.pnna.org/wp/awards/>.

PNNA Board and Elections

See the PNNA website at:

<https://www.pnna.org/wp/info/pnna-governance/board/>.

The current board was installed at the 2024 spring convention in Tukwila, and a new board will be elected this spring. If you're not already on the board and would like to be nominated, contact Danny at the address shown on the front page.

For meeting minutes, see:

<https://www.pnna.org/wp/info/pnna-governance/minutes/>.

IMPORTANT!

Change in *The Nor'wester* Editions

Effective 3rd Quarter 2022, there are only two main editions of *The Nor'wester* each year, for the spring convention and the fall coin show. The other two editions are short letters like this edition.

This change allows the two main editions to have more pages, more articles and stories, more photos, and additional dealer ads if requested. There are plenty of full-color copies printed for distribution at shows, clubs and other events such as the Fair.

PLEASE DON'T WAIT! Submit your content now for this spring. All content including ads **MUST** be received by the end of February.

Assistance is available for editing and photography if needed. Send your content or inquiries to Eric@Holcomb.com or info@pnna.org.

PNNA Collector Exhibits

by *Eric Holcomb*

There were a few exhibits at the 2025 fall show, and we'd like a better turnout for the 2026 spring show, now moved to Portland. For updates, including how to apply, see:

<https://www.pnna.org/wp/exhibits/>.

New ANA judging criteria are in effect which place a new emphasis on educational and inspirational value, and reduce the points for rarity, so you don't need unique or nearly unique items.

Past exhibit reports, including photos of many of the exhibit cases, have been consolidated into PDF files for your convenience. See the links on the website completed exhibits page.

PNNA Memorabilia Catalog

The PNNA Memorabilia Catalog, first published as HTML files in 2001, is being revised and updated to an easier-to-read presentation format, with larger images. Recent souvenir items, especially elongated coins, will also be added. To follow the progress of the update and view and download PDF files when available, visit:

<https://www.pnna.org/wp/info/pnna-history/memorabilia/>.



An SOS with special meaning

“Hello. My name is Dennis (Halladay), and I am an addict.”

If this sounds like the start of a personal share at an Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) meeting, it’s because it is meant to.

First, because I am an addict – a Morgan silver dollar addict.

Second, because A.A. is the starting point for everything I have learned about this holed and engraved 1921-D Morgan dollar (VAM 1X1).

One of my saved searches on eBay is “1921-D Morgan,” which is how this coin came to my attention in November 2024. As soon as I saw it my brain shouted, “There’s a story there and I want to know it!” Seven anxious days and a \$23.50 winning bid later – I won’t say what my maximum was – the search began.

Google was my constant companion as I searched to decipher the inscription. Line #4, the date of 5-9-47, was the only thing I was sure of. It was a months-long hunt that turned up answers, surprises, previously unknown bits of U.S. history ... and more questions.

My first discovery was about line #1. It turned out that “SDSOS” had nothing to do with South Dakota or its Secretary of State. The second discovery was that adding “Fargo” to the search worked like a magic key that opened a door I didn’t even know existed.

I suddenly had the name of a still-active A.A.-related organization – the SDSOS Society – which explained engraving line #3. I also had a photo of a three-story brick house built in 1906, its address, and a telephone number. Unfortunately, calling it took me to a recorded message – but it gave no option to leave a message. So I mailed a letter with a picture of the coin and asked if any information about anything might be available.

Voila!

Within a week, an exchange of texts began with the incredibly helpful current president of SDSOS. He also sent me two cell phone photos that would turn out to contain huge nuggets of information that even he had not noticed before. We also eventually had a long phone chat, during which we agreed that I need to come to Fargo for a visit – “But wait until May or June,” he laughed.

It turns out that SDSOS is a non-profit organization (not an A.A. chapter) founded in 1947 by a group of Fargo area A.A. members who put together enough money to buy the house that Google showed me, which is now called “The Clubhouse.” Ever since A.A. was created in 1935, chapters have not been allowed to own real estate. Today, multiple current Fargo area A.A. chapters rent The Clubhouse to hold about 20 meetings per week.

The SDSOS president said engraved dollar coins used to be awarded to celebrate a member’s first year of sobriety. He doesn’t know what specific types were used or how many were given out in all, but he does know the practice stopped about 30 years ago when someone said it might be illegal to engrave – and thus mutilate – U.S. coins. He also shared a blurry photo of a 1978 Eisenhower dollar as a more recent example. The owner of that coin thinks there may be only 20 or so longtime members today who have engraved coins.

The hole in this 1921-D Morgan doesn’t show any sign of wear from having been carried on a cord, chain or ring. And the surfaces have natural, dirty gray toning, so rather than having been carried as a pocket piece it looks much more like it sat on a desk or in a drawer.

The question of “what does SDSOS stand for?” was answered by one of the photos the president had sent. It shows a framed copy of an article in the July 1948 issue of *The Grapevine*, the monthly national journal of A.A., which hangs in The Clubhouse. At the end of the article the author is identified by the initials “E.V.G.” (more about that later). Here’s the article:

New Club Room Comes from Price of a Cup of Coffee

A year ago there were 15 of us ex-stews in Fargo. Number 16, upon completion of hospitalization for his last drunk – that is, nervous breakdown – asked a 12-stepper to pay for his coffee. Because, he said, all he had to his name was a silver dollar that had come his way the day he was released. This AA neophyte, still thinking alcoholically, saw an opportunity for a free cup of coffee. The old 12-stepper saw hope. Fargo's ex Scotch-drinking Scotsman and intellectual par excellence visualized a symbol. Said he: "and your (sic) carrying the silver as a symbol of sobriety?"

So our group became the SOS group of Fargo. We purchased a new clubhouse and Silver Dollar Symbol of Sobriety Society of Fargo ND became a nonprofit corporation set up in accordance with the laws of North Dakota for giving the philosophy of AA and holding property.

The silver dollar was our own non-abstract symbol of the abstract philosophy freeing us from desperate terrifying distress, even as it is the international call of distress. And should we reach for the change for that first drink, there is that 1922 dollar with our initials and dry date suitably inscribed, reminding us of our morning pledge. Why, even the United States Mint cooperated with the words "In God We Trust!"

Now there are 50 of us. And that silver dollar? Just ask the man who owns one!

So, SDSOS stands for "**Silver Dollar Symbol of Sobriety.**" As a Morgan dollar collector, seeing the "SD" part of that name made me smile ... and a little proud. And the fact that SOS is the universal plea for help could not be more fitting for this organization.

The article says the coin that actually started SDSOS was a 1922 Peace dollar. Its whereabouts and original owner are unknown, but here's a thought: Might E.V.G. be one of the people he wrote about in the *Grapevine* article? I suspect he was.

The mystery of engraving line #2 – who was Hal Woledge? – proved to be a much deeper rabbit hole. The 1940 Census records had given me a father-son pair of suspects right at the beginning of my search. Remarkably, however, the two key pieces of information that helped pin down which one I was hunting for didn't surface until it was almost over.

All along the way, a voice kept nagging, "How can you be sure it's one of those two possibilities if you don't even know how many people named Woledge were in Fargo back then?" It was a valid question that I couldn't ignore.

Reactivating a free membership on FamilySearch and doing some poking around turned up – OMG! – a digitized copy of the January 1942 telephone directory

for Fargo and the nearby towns. It was key piece of information #1 that I needed. There on page 82, at the bottom left, were five listings for Woledge.

One was the home of H.H. (Henry Harrison) Sr. Another was his office. A third was H.H. Jr., who was listed in the 1920, 1930 and 1940 censuses as living with his parents. The last two were J.D. and J.W. Woledge. More digging on FamilySearch identified J.D. as John Dillon, the older brother of H.H. Sr. who lived 11 blocks up the street and had married into a local family with three doctors, including the first female doctor in North Dakota. J.W. was John Watson, one of H.H. Sr.'s younger sons.

Since "Hal" is a common nickname for Henry – and isn't even remotely close to a nickname for John – the SDSOS president and I agreed that the coin's original owner had to be either H.H. Sr. or Jr. – the same two suspects I had from the beginning. More poking around on FamilySearch, plus more dives with Google, turned up several helpful clues about who was the right one.

I learned that H.H. Sr. was born in 1883 and was the youngest of four children. He worked for 55 years at the local savings & loan association in Fargo, rising from stenographer to President and Chairman of the Board. He was North Dakota State Chairman of the U.S. Committee on Public Information's recruiting drive for "4-Minute Men" speakers during World War I; chairman of the county's Red Cross fund raising drive during World War II; a director at the private Fargo Country Club; and was affluent enough that the 1940 census showed him having a live-in servant.

I located only a few published references to him, and in them he was always referred to as H.H. The only places I found his full name were on census and draft registration records, his passport, and genealogy websites. Recently, however, a friend in my local coin club who has a membership with *Find a Grave Index* sent a photo of his marker. Surprisingly, it says "H.H. 'Harry' Woledge," but it does not spell out Henry Harrison. The born and died years it shows match his genealogy information.

Being known primarily by his initials is not at all surprising for Sr. He grew up during a much more formal era, was a leader in the local business community, and was part of upper social circles for decades. Being known by one's initials was common then – and that formality is why the SDSOS president and I ruled him out as being Hal on the coin.

H.H. Jr. was born in 1911 and was the eldest of four children, all boys. It's easy to imagine that to carve out an identity separate from his father he would have embraced the nickname Hal.

Two months into my search, I finally located a few published references via *Newspapers.com* that used the specific name Hal Woledge. They were local tennis match score reports for him and his brother John in the late 1920s and early-30s. They were key pieces of information #2 that I needed.

He and John (always referred to as “Jack” in the score reports) were obviously both excellent players. But their cousin Phil (son of H.H. Sr.’s brother, John Dillon) was truly elite. There are several Google results for Phil, and rightfully so. He went on to be a four-year member of the tennis team at USC and was the captain of its undefeated 16-0 season in 1934.

A month later, another friend in the coin club who has a membership with *Newspapers.com* sent me scans of three items about Hal. Two were published in 1952 about a song he wrote, “Suzy, I Love You,” and decided to self-publish. Details about who Suzy was were a mystery then and still are. The third article was in 1956, announcing the formation of an insurance agency in Fargo by Hal and his brother John. Two of the articles – hooray! – included Hal’s photo.

Census records show Hal was a clerk at his dad’s bank and was still living at home two months before his wedding in June 1940. (The 1956 article about the insurance agency said he was still living there.) Hal and his wife, Geraldine, divorced in 1953 and, according to FamilySearch, they had no children.

Draft records show Hal registered in October 1940 and was honorably discharged in February 1946. I tried to learn details of his military service by sending a records request to the National Personnel Records Center, but was told it is **very** likely his information was lost in the massive fire at the Military Personnel Records Center in St. Louis in July 1973. An estimated 75% of **all** records for personnel discharged between 1912 and the early 1960s were destroyed in that four-day inferno.

But Hal’s grave marker at Riverside Cemetery in Fargo has a wealth of information. It says he was a private in Company E of the 11th Infantry Regiment of the 5th Infantry Division (nicknamed the “Red Diamond” or “Red Devils”). The 5th Division landed at Normandy 32 days after D-Day and fought all the way across France during the rest of 1944. It joined the Battle of the Bulge on day two of that brutal and pivotal five-week campaign in December, and it participated in the invasion of Germany throughout 1945.

The 5th Division served in eight countries between 1942 and 1945: Iceland, England, Northern Ireland, France, Luxembourg, Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. It was engaged in combat for a total of 300 days. Its casualties were 2,659 killed in action or died later, 9,153 wounded, 1,050 missing, and 101 captured. It captured 71,002 prisoners.

The 5th Reconnaissance Regiment of the 5th Infantry Division assisted in the liberation of the Neustadt-Glewe concentration camp in Northern Germany on May 3-4, 1945, which Russian forces had reached the day before. The camp was created in September 1944, where approximately 5,000 mostly Jewish women from Warsaw, Poland, were forced to make parts for the German Air Force.

When was Hal in active service, and where? What was his specific job designation (military MOS)?

Was he a clerk, an aide, a rifle-carrying foot soldier, or something else? Was he ever wounded? Did he receive any commendations? All are details that probably went up in smoke in the Records Center fire.

What is certain, however, is that 18 months after his discharge Hal played a foundational role in the creation of SDSOS. The proof is in the second photo the group’s president had sent, which also hangs in The Clubhouse. It is the organization’s framed Articles of Incorporation that was issued by the North Dakota Department of State on November 20, 1947.

There on the top line, right after the word “Whereas” in fancy English script, are typed-in names of the three people who submitted the application:

– Russell Bersagel.

– Edgar Gaines (almost certainly the E.V.G. who wrote *The Grapevine* article).

– and, yes, Hal Woledge. Not H.H. Jr. and not Henry, but Hal.

At least for now, it seems my research quest has come to an end. But I still have questions, including:

1. When and why was this important item in Hal’s life (the coin) given up by the family?
2. How did it come to be in an eBay auction?
3. Did Hal’s wartime experiences play a role in him becoming involved in A.A.?

Basic details about Hal’s closest relatives give no good clues to help answer any of them.

Hal’s youngest brother, Richard, passed as a child in 1926.

Hal’s dad passed in 1956.

Hal passed in 1969.

Hal’s brother, John, passed in 1972 and had no children.

Hal’s mom, Mary, passed in 1973.

Hal’s brother, William (John), passed in 1983. He had one child, a daughter, who never married and passed in 2023.

Hal’s ex-wife passed in 1995. The engraved coin presumably went to her – or maybe it didn’t. But since she and Hal had no children, where might it have gone if not to her?

I contacted the eBay seller of the coin, hoping he might be able to help. It turns out he has a coin shop in northeast Virginia, about 85 miles west of Washington, D.C. – which is 1,300 miles from Fargo. He said the coin was part of a big group of low-grade Morgan and Peace dollars he bought from the estate of a local man who had accumulated them over the years. He apologized for not knowing more.

While none of my remaining questions are likely to ever be answered, I am still enormously grateful that the coin found its way to me. Not just because I am a 1921-D Morgan collector, but because of the privilege it has been to learn about and share its story.



Pacific Northwest Numismatic Association Scholarship Program for ANA Summer Seminar 2026 Adult/YN Scholarship Application

The PNNA is offering two full one-session scholarships, for an Adult and a YN (Young Numismatist) collector, to attend the 2026 ANA Summer Seminar, held on the campus of The Colorado College in beautiful Colorado Springs, Col. Session 1 class dates are Sunday, June 21, to Wednesday, June 24; session 2, Sunday, June 28 to Wednesday, July 1, 2026. (Plan on arriving on Saturday since classes start Sunday morning.) Summer Seminar is an opportunity for numismatic scholarship and camaraderie offering students a wide and varied selection of week-long courses suited for anyone from the curious beginner to the most advanced numismatist. YNs, ages 13 to 17, stay in a Colorado College dormitory with a group of experienced chaperons and mentors. Along with attending classes, YNs participate in a variety of special activities and events. *The PNNA may award the YN scholarship to a young collector in the 18-22 age range, as of the first day of the seminar, if there are no qualified younger applicants. Otherwise all applicants age 18 and older will be considered for the adult scholarship only.*

Each scholarship includes tuition for the class of your choice, a double-occupancy dorm room and the on-campus meal plan. The PNNA also provides an additional \$250 of travel expense reimbursement for the YN scholarship recipient.

The winners will be Adult and YN collectors who are PNNA members, complete this application and are selected by the awards committee. *If you are not a current PNNA member – please submit \$10.00 dues with the application (\$5.00 YN dues). Please add \$5.00 if you want paper copies of the PNNA's quarterly newsletter (The Nor'wester) mailed.* Deadline for receipt of applications is Feb. 28, 2026. Please submit completed applications to the address at the bottom of this page. Summer Seminar information and class listings are available at <https://www.money.org/summer-seminar>. Questions: Danny Bisgaard, 503-510-6931 or sdbisgaard@gmail.com.

Name _____

PNNA Member # _____ Birth Date _____ / _____ / _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Attach a separate sheet (for items 1 to 4) answering the following:

1. List the names of any numismatic groups to which you belong.
2. List any numismatic activities that you have participated in. Examples: numismatic exhibits, coin club talks/presentations, club officer or board positions, etc.
3. Write a paragraph about your numismatic collecting interests and how you got started in the hobby.
4. Tell why you wish to attend the Summer Seminar.
5. List your course preferences for Summer Seminar, including session number: (check ANA website for catalog)

1st choice: _____

2nd choice: _____

3rd choice: _____

A course catalog and class listings are available on the ANA website. Please contact Danny Bisgaard or the ANA for any questions.

Please note that popular courses tend to fill up quickly – however, every effort will be made to fulfill your 1st choice.

Applicant's Signature: _____

Parent's Signature (if YN applicant under age 18): _____

Date: _____

Receipt Deadline: February 28, 2026

Mail applications to: PNNA Scholarship Program, Danny Bisgaard c/o S.N.S., PO Box 2051, Salem, OR 97308.
(Or you may email Danny a scan of your signed application.)