

## MY TOPIC: *by Don Neal*

# CHRISTINA ESBECK

Christina Esbeck numbers among those of us who love cupcakes. She loves the different flavors and the fun way they can be decorated. She also collects cupcakes on stamps and claims to have the world's only complete cupcake topical collection.

It started at a stamp show when Christina was looking for stamps from every country in the world. She came across a stamp with a cupcake on it and looked for others, but they were few and far between. She solicited the help of the ATA to create a custom checklist for her new topical interest. The checklist she received was helpful, but Christina discovered that she had cupcake stamps that weren't included on the checklist. She was excited to add her stamps, and the quest for more began.

Christina's comprehensive cupcake collection includes stamps and covers from Mexico, Australia, the United Kingdom (with a special cupcake postmark), Gibraltar and other countries. She discovered unique and elusive circular cupcake stamps from Belgium while working at Stanley Piller's dealer booth. Lots of people share Christina's enthusiasm and excitement about cupcakes on stamps and help her with her collection, offering her stamps with muffins on them, but her discerning eye knows the difference.

Collecting cupcakes on stamps has spawned other topical interests – the



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ingredients that make the baked treats, including cocoa beans, sugar, flour, butter and vanilla.

Ultimately, Christina plans to exhibit her topical collection with cupcake stamps surrounded by the stamps featuring the ingredients. She has a friendly

competition with her father to see who will be first to complete a one-frame exhibit.

Christina is no stranger to stamps shows. The nine-year-old Missourian has attended the St. Louis Stamp Expo several times and has volunteered at the USPS booth and in the youth room helping other young people find stamps to fill their buckets and have some philatelic fun. She also is grooming her younger siblings to be topical collectors. This incredible young philatelist aspires to one day be a teacher because she enjoys working with little kids. I'm sure some of her classroom activities will include collecting stamps and making cupcakes. ☐

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