

II. PRESERVATION NEWS

1. WASHINGTON After a ten year hiatus, SABR may be re-starting the effort to get a marker placed for the site of old Griffith Stadium, home to so much baseball heritage in our nation's capitol. New SABR Executive Director, George Case, son of a Senators' player, contacted our Committee and we sent him the whole file with the previous efforts by many members including Gordon Thomas and Charlie Owen. Contact George Case or your chairman for further details. With a change in political climate in D. C. and a fresh approach, this could be a plus for the city, the game, and our organization.
2. BALTIMORE And up the road they are selling off the "material culture" (that's what museum people call stuff) of old Memorial Stadium. An auction of October 7, 2000 netted about \$85,000 for the Babe Ruth Museum. Gordon Thomas sent us the auction sheets with the final bids (7 pages) plus we have nine pages from the local papers, Washington Post, and the SCD.
3. NEW YORK An interesting piece by Bert Sugar in the 2000 All Star Game program noted the start of ballpark memorabilia with Ebbets Field in 1960 and the renovation of Yankee Stadium in the mid-1970s. Oh for the days of seats for under \$10! (3 pgs) Today, a 1923 box seat from the Stadium topped \$1000.
4. PHILADELPHIA The State of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Athletics Historical Society joined forces to erect a marker to remember the Baker Bowl. The plaque was dedicated at a Phillies game at Veterans Stadium on August 16, 2000. It was on display at the park for the rest of the season, and then placed at the intersection of Broad and Lehigh. At the August 16 ceremony, Bob Stevens was on hand and at 93 he is the oldest ex-Phillie. Eight pages of stories, letters, and copy available.
5. WASHINGTON again, RFK Stadium lost baseball almost thirty years ago, but the oldest circular stadium in its class seems to be surviving with local events, soccer, etc. In a sports switch, the hoops and hockey teams came back to the city, while football left for the distant suburbs. Still, RFK has found new life with its no-frills amenities as it passes forty years of service. Two local articles of last March & June.
6. TORONTO A late entry, but the Eastern Avenue diamond of 1886-96 was honored with a ceremony on September 17, 1999. Built for \$7000, the park held 2250. Called Sunlight Park, the site now has a Toyota dealership. Toronto Sun (1 pg)
7. BROOKLYN The Brooklyn Dodgers newsletter notes in its November/2000 issue that a NYT article placed some Ebbets Field lights on Downing Stadium on Randall's Island, the flag pole as the Canarsie Casket Company in Brooklyn; and the foul lines in a fan's home in East Meadow, Long Island.
8. BIRMINGHAM The "Out of the Park" newsletter of the Friends of Rickwood Field cites interesting events in the efforts to restore that 1910 vintage minor league park. Opened before old Comiskey, Rickwood now house local baseball, old timers and vintage games. For more information, contact the Friends of Rickwood at 2100 Morris Avenue, Birmingham, AL 33203
9. KANSAS CITY Old Municipal Stadium at 22nd & Brooklyn was honored with a marker on April 6 of last year. The ballpark housed some great teams in the majors, minors, and Negro Leagues including the Blues, Monarchs, Athletics, Royals, and football Chiefs.

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10. **QUEENS** Dexter Park, home of many famous baseball greats in the New York area, received a plaque recently at its Jamaica Avenue/Dexter Court location. The park hosted games 1911-1955, including many contests of Max Rosner's Bushwicks. (3 pages)
11. **CHICAGO** Congratulations to committee member Jim Peters, who reports on efforts to get Wrigley Field designated as a local landmark. Of course, the owners, the Tribune Company, would not back the efforts, citing its plans to maintain the team at the current location. Seventeen pages of the well-written ballpark summary and five pages of local stories available.
12. **BOSTON** In a major move by the Save Fenway Park organization, the group is submitting a nomination for the classic ballpark to the "America's Eleven Most Endangered Places" list promoted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. While this designation does not guarantee any funding or special protection for Fenway, it does give the cause for its preservation a national forum. Your chairman, citing the steadfast support for Fenway as shown by this Committee's members, wrote a letter of support. The excellent case study for Fenway plus several pages of support letters (10 pages in all) available. To get involved with Save Fenway Park contact Kimberly Konrad, PO Box 873, Boston, MA 02103 (617) 367-3771 www.SaveFenwayPark.com The group puts out an interesting newsletter.

Also, on the NL front, thanks to Tom Shieber for sending us photos of the Braves Field marker, erected in 1988 in cooperation with this Committee, the Sports Museum of New England, and Boston University. How time flies.

Our Committee is always interested in the news or proposals to mark the sites of former parks in any major or minor league city. We can refer people to other SABR members who have had success and failure in getting markers erected. We can all learn from what has and has not worked in the past, and, as is the case with Griffith Stadium, projects get a new life in new times. In general, getting the property owner to agree to any designation is the best first step after one has performed the solid research necessary to document the site. Where to place a marker; what to place on the marker; where/when to have the ceremony; what agencies/governments/organizations to involve (especially the parts of government dedicated to historic preservation and designations); and, most fun of all, raising the money/finding sponsors completes the short list of requirements.

We welcome other marker stories and samples for our files as reference for people making a first effort at some ballpark site.

Our Committee files contain the papers for various success and unsuccessful projects in Boston, New York, Jersey City, Chicago, & Washington to name a few.

As the roster of pre-1950 parks shrinks to a smaller and smaller cadre, let us try to recall the sites if we can not convince folks to keep the facility.

For the ambitious Committee member looking for a project, a definitive list of all parks that have markers would be a great addition to our files. Major and minors, Negro and All-America Leagues, College and high school...there must be hundreds! Anyone interested?

We also remind members to take the opportunity to take photos of older, soon-to-be forgotten ballparks. Twenty years or more from now, such illustrations will be in high demand.

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III. RESEARCH Here are some of the research questions and related news items of the past year.

1. Tom Barthel seeks info on the parks of the Texas League (1931-32, & 1948), Florida International League (1949 & 1951), and Carolina League (1951) e-mail at tomart0@yahoo.com. He is working on a book on Joe Medwick.
2. John Hollway seeks a diagram or illustration of Newark's Rupert Stadium. e-mail at jholway@erols.com. 5511 Callender, Springfield, VA 22151.
3. William McNeil was researching the California Winter League and was interested in information about White Sox Park in Los Angeles. e-mail wmcneil@vgnernet.net 5 Woodland Drive, Pittsfield, MA 02101.
4. Pierre Salazar was undertaking the ambitious plan of a Yankee Stadium model of the 1923 version. e-mail psalazar@kemperinsurance.com. 617 Dawns Ridge, Cicero, NY 13039.
5. Charles Link of the Univ. of Delaware, Economics Dept., Newark, DE 19716 wants to know the exact breakdown of seats by number in each price range for the new Comerica Park in Detroit.
6. Kris Boyd of the Danbury Mint was seeking color photos of the old Municipal Stadium in Kansas City and Arlington Stadium. They were doing miniature models of the parks. Just FYI. They solved their problems before we got to them.
7. Ed Rose at e-mail ENR@herald-sun.com was interested in information about the circa 1905 Kane, PA ballpark.
8. Another FYI, Sarah Talalay of the Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel needed general information back in June on ballparks and their development as a part of baseball history. We sent a big packet of information.
9. Clay Latimer of the Rocky Mountain News called last May and asked about attendance before/after the classic parks of the 1909-1915 era opened. It was a mixed set of figures.
10. Joshua Levine at 4148 Whitsett Avenue #108, Studio City, CA 91604 e-mail Wite@aol.com asked about Worcester, MA ballpark of the NL in the early 1880s.
11. Gordon Brown has provided us with the 1990s list of all Independent League Ballparks with name, dates of operation, and seating capacity. Thanks! (5 pgs).
12. Kevin Tulley has written a summary of Reading, PA's Laurer's Park, 1907-1943. (3 pgs)
13. From the SABR-L, Ron Selter notes that the CF at Tiger Stadium, so long listed at 440, was really closer to 425. Information provided by Bob Timmeran and contrasted to other distances over time by Ron. Shades of the ever-shrinking LF line at Fenway! Ron also wrote a summary of distances at Bennett Park in Detroit. (5 pgs in all)
14. Scott Schiamberg of 283 St. Paul Street, Brookline, MA was looking for blueprints to Wrigley Field. (617) 739-0156.

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15. Matthew Demaio (212) 522-6518 mattdemaio@aol.com is researching the site and remaining parts of Brooklyn's Washington Park with an eye toward a marker. Is that OF wall the oldest fragment extant of a major league park?
16. Eric Parsons (513) 886-9470 seeks the definite breakdown of all seats by section/price range for all parks. e-mail esp506@mizzou.edu
17. Art Lierman is looking for design assistance with a 1600-seat ballpark with a budget of \$2.1 million. art@golden.net
18. Chris Epting at e-mail Chris11996@aol.com needs information on La Palma Field in Anaheim, where the A's trained in the 1940s. He is considering a marker.
19. Jennifer at MBI at (203) 853-2000 called a while back for photo information on Atlanta Fulton-County Stadium. 47 Richards Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06857
20. Bob Turck at (734) 426-4410 needed photos of Tiger Stadium and leads on blueprints. e-mail turckr@aol.com.
21. Thanks to Ed Hartig who provided Simon Inglis some info on ads at Wrigley Field . We posted Simon's research request in the last newsletter (1 pg).
22. Bart Whitaker e-mailed SABR last spring and asked for any data on ballpark protection devices such a netting behind the plate, etc. Bart is with ISA Sports Marketing. isa@mindspring.com. (770) 457-7300.
23. Linda Yergler at yergler@nidlink.com asked about diagrams of baseball fields as they were thinking of building one in their North Idaho community.
24. Another run at the Foxx/HR Record/St.Louis Sportsman's Park Screen issue. Bob Tiemann and Phil Lowry set the record straight--again. Says Tiemann, Foxx hit the screen just once in 1932, and Ruth hit only one home run into the RF pavilion (without screen) in 1927. "Foxx would have gotten a share of the record (59 to 59) only if the screen situation had been reversed: screen up for Ruth in '27 and screen down for Foxx in '32. (5 pages available).
25. More from Ron Selter, this time on the Baker Bowl and its effect on hitters. In the "By the Numbers" Nov/2000 issue of the Statistical Analysis Committee Ron summarizes the 1929-1937 data for both the home and visiting team. In sum: the opponents' composite team BA was higher at Baker Bowl for every season in that era: .3155 at Baker vs. .2857 at home. For the Phillies, the results were "somewhat more extreme": .3102 at home and .2635 on the road! The Committee and author have graciously let us offer copies plus some back-up material to anyone interested. (9 pages in all)
26. Francois Elmaleh e-mailed us, seeking leads on ballparks drawings and blueprints. fanfo@elmaleh.com. (813) 835-5304.
27. Tommy Luckadoo has eight original seats from old Comiskey and he wants to be authentic in his restoration. Tomluck@aol.com

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Some of these may be very dated, but it is interesting to see what people are seeking in ballparks info.

IV. BALLPARKS MEMORABILIA

1. "The Best Seat in the House," Cleveland Plain-Dealer, 8-30-00, (2 pgs) stadia seats collected & restored.
2. "A major league stadia find in a minor league park," SCD, 8-11-00, (2 pgs), Shibe and Yankee Stadium seats in Greensboro, NC War Memorial Stadium.
3. Last day of Pittsburgh Three Rivers and memorabilia issues; SCD, 11-3-00 (2 pgs)
4. Auction of items from old Memorial Stadium by our own Gordon Thomas, SCD, (2 pgs) 12-1-00.
5. "Fans Line up for Stadium Pieces on the Web," WSL, 10-26-00 (1 pg).
6. I just received a Seitz & Company newsletter regarding their stadium memorabilia for sale. They are good references for what is available in this market, plus advice on restoration. 1772 Selby Avenue, St. Paul, MN, 55104-6030 (651) 646-3659.
7. "Halper Auction Ignites," SCD, 7-28-00, selling of famed baseball collection, (2 pgs)
8. From several sources we hear of the USPS plans to issue special stamps honoring the classic ballparks. The sites included are Fenway, Ebbets, Yankee, Polo Grounds, Tiger, Crosley, Forbes, Shibe, Comiskey, and Wrigley. Unfortunately, several SABR members have noted some errors in the illustrations, including bad infields and one too many light towers on Fenway's LF wall.
9. Dan Bonk of our Committee announced a new series of classic color postcards of Forbes Field. Series 1, published in 1998, had cards 1-12, and Series 2, has numbers 13-24. At \$15/set, this is a great collection of color shots of a National League classic. And, you can get both sets for \$25! Contact Point Four Sports, 920 William Pitt Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15238. Thanks to Dan for sending our files a set.
10. A tradition in ballparks calendars ends this year with Charles Brereton of PO Box 307, Concord, NH 03302. His 2000 "Real Diamonds" calendar with wonderful photos of old ballparks will probably be his last product. He is trying to stay in business with a sale of his past calendars (all 8 years 94-01 for \$45) and four of the 01 issue for \$35. Charles makes a great product; so let us hope that he can keep going.
11. "Miniature ballparks a hobby for teacher," Reading Times, (1 pg) 11-11-00

Ballparks appear in calendars, trips/tours programs, art & sculpture work, exhibits/displays, photography, memorabilia sales and festivals, auctions, courses and model making. Send us anything of note and we will get it listed for everyone's interest and education.

V. BOOKS & PUBLICATIONS

1. Don Lancaster has discovered these publications in 2000

- * Another Cleveland Municipal Stadium book by George Cormack
- * Houston Astros have an inaugural program for Enron Field at \$15, p/h included
- * Pirates put out a "yearbook" that reviews 30 years at Three Rivers, \$10 plus p/h

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* Sports Illustrated came out with a Tiger Stadium Commemorative Issue; call 1-800-950-3500.

2. Texas Architect magazine, issue 5/6-2000, has a Texas sports facility theme with good coverage of Enron Field in Houston. (512) 478-7386.
3. A history of baseball parks in the twentieth century by your chairman appeared in the 2000 issue of the Texas Rangers yearbook.
4. Congratulations to SABR member Stew Thornley who has his Polo Grounds book published. \$32
5. Another stadia building/politics book, Stadium Games, Fifty Years of Big League Greed and Bush League Boondoggle by Jay Weiner. University of MN Press. Guess what he thinks by that title! TSN calls it a "detailed look at Minnesota's half-century grapple with major league sports." \$30
6. Thanks to Chris Jennison whose mini-review of the TSN's The Ballparks Book appears in this newsletter.

We welcome news about publications that cover or include ballparks, be they books, major articles, pamphlets, monographs, etc.

VI. GENERAL ARTICLES AND NEWS NOTES

1. Technology at your seats... two pieces examine how computers and interactive technology has been brought to your seat: "The View from the Cyberseats," SI, 12-18-00 and "New Game in Town, Data-baseball," NYT, 4-13-00 (4 pgs total).
2. SI had two goods rants about the problems in modern sports facilities, "Corpo-name Disease: Stop the Plague," 1-15-01 and "Suite and Sour," "by dividing fans in luxury boxes, we ruin what's best about going to a game," 2-28-00 (2 pgs total) In the "nothing changes" department, a Boston writer in 1912 lamented the passing of the common entrance at the old Huntington Avenue Grounds for the new Fenway Park where fans of different sections (and, presumably incomes) entered in separate gates at the larger facility.
3. More good lamenting: "Take Me out of the Ballgame," by Jonathan Yardley, Wash. Post (4-24-00) who questions the modern trend to have everything but the game emphasized at the ballpark, and "Bang the Fans Slowly," SI 7-31-00, where Jeff MacGregor notes that "a bombardment of ads and bad music make a trip to the ballpark just like watching TV, only louder." (2 pgs total) Thanks!
4. With all the new parks that opened on both major and minor league levels last year, the economic debates on the value of teams and facilities continues. Here are some articles to encourage the discourse: "NFL points stadiums back to cities," Reading Eagle, 11-5-00, noting the in-city stadia of Cleveland, Baltimore. and future Pittsburgh and Cincinnati; "Gateway's Scorecard, Sports complex still trying for home run as catalyst for economic renewal," Cleve. Plain-Dealer 9-10-00, noting the mixed results; "New Ballparks Prompt Rebuilding: Franchises, Neighborhoods Benefit," Wash. Post, 4-6-00; and we note a pointed article from Regulation, Vol. 23, No. 2, that questions sports & stadia benefit to cities, "Unlike most studies commissioned by stadium advocates, the consensus in the academic literature has been that the sports environment has no measurable effect on the level of real income in metropolitan areas." (15 pages in all).
5. Surface articles: "Artificial-turf company is laying out plans for growth," Phila. Inquirer, 9-25-00; "The

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- Grass is Greener," Cleveland Baseball, Sept/Oct-2000, making the field fit & help your team. (2 pgs in all)
6. "Scalping" those seats near Fenway Park, "Ticket Master", Boston Magazine, July/2000 (5 pgs)
 7. Architecture comparison of TBIA and Enron Field, noting the urban relationships of these two Texas Texas parks by David Dillon, architect critic for the Dallas Morning News; 4-7-00, (3 pgs). David gives Enron an edge as an urban ballpark in the classic mode.
 8. More on stadia naming: "Are You Ready for the Microsoft Mariners?," a somewhat impish look at stadia naming trends: and "Despite ills, firms still paying huge bucks to name stadiums," AP, 12-31-00, (3 pgs total). USA Today noted that the stock prices of 23 of the 51 companies that bought naming rights for baseball, football, hockey, and basketball facilities were down more than 50% off their 52-week highs. But, an official of a sports marketing firm states "I can tell you that there is little question that corporate America is receiving extraordinary value in most of these transactions."
 9. Marketing Blues: "Baseball, not for smaller cities anymore?," CSM, 9-19-00, concludes that Minnesota is a classic example of a city whose baseball time may have come and gone. Also, Baltimore Sun examines the possibilities of a second team in the Balt/DC market, while looking at the four other "two-team" markets in NYC, Chicago, LA/Anaheim, and Oakland/SF. "In the 18 seasons that the Senators and Orioles shared the Baltimore/Washington Market as major league clubs, the Senators never outdrew the Orioles. The closest the Senators came was in 1962, when the Orioles drew 60,479 more fans."
 10. "Beer man's gimmick is pouring on the service," Cleve. Plain-Dealer, (1 pg). Selling the suds at Jacobs Fd.
 11. Review last year's new parks with these two articles: "The New Old Ballgame," NY Daily News, 4-16-00; and "Six Hits, No Errors," Wash. Post, 4-9-00, reviewing the majors new additions in SF, Detroit, and Houston as well as the minors new stars in Louisville, Memphis, and Chattanooga. (3 pgs).
 12. With new parks go new--and higher--prices. Last year's average MLB ticket rose 11.8%, the highest increase in a decade, but the average jumped 103% at Detroit (from \$12.23 to \$24.83), 75.2% at Pac Bell (\$12.12 to \$21.24), and 50.4% at Enron (from \$13.30 to \$20.01). Last year's top average ticket prices were the Red Sox (\$28.33) followed by the Mariners (\$26.31), Yankees (\$25.94), and the Tigers and Mets (\$24.29). (2 pgs of back-up material)
 14. So why hasn't the Big Apple built a new sports facility in twenty years, longer if you don't count NJ Meadowlands? NYT piece of 1-17-01 (5 pgs) An examination of the many plans for arenas and ballparks in the big city.
 15. Just why do blacks and other minorities avoid the ballpark? Sportsline.com, 6-9-00. Is it ticket prices, a shift to other sports, ... (3 pgs).
 16. "Selected and Current Works" from the HOK folks, Master Architect Series IV (21 pgs) all sports and several countries.
 17. Now here's a revelation: in the SI piece of 5-15-00 on the high cost of attending games, "In nearly every one of the arenas built since 1990, the luxury suites put the fan in the cheaper seats even farther from the action." (15 pages). Also, "The new ballparks and arenas? In many cases they're nothing more than expensive NEW! and IMPROVED! lettering on a box of detergent."

18. The first season at Enron was quite exciting with 266 home runs hit there. A new 11.5 foot fence in Left-center field may cut down some of those easy homers.
19. Even TSN gets into the curmudgeon dept with a 4-24-00 comment that the new baseball stadiums have "everything a fan could want, with the possible exception of the game as we knew it."
20. If Enron was too big, then Comerica was too small. Three of the first six games were shutouts, and no homers in the first three games.
21. Sports Illustrated gave the three new major league parks a pre-season rating, and Detroit and Houston received four stars out of five, and SF got all five! Houston got the lowest ranking in any category: 2/5 stars for aesthetics.
22. Parade Magazine gave the "Worst Invention: Domestic" to the Hot Dog Blaster used at Toronto's SkyDome to "shoot" hot dogs to fans. The machine malfunctioned, "showering Blue Jays fans with fragments of meat and bun!"
23. By the time you receive this, Three Rivers may be no more. Blasting date was set for February 4.

VII. NEWS AND ARTICLES OF THE PAST

1. "The Making of a Baseball Nine," a great 1903 article with some wonderful ballpark shots, (8 pgs)
2. One-page summary of the Canadian-American League with umpire, scorers and ballpark info. No date, but it appears to be the late 40s.
3. Polo Grounds Lummus plaque finds its way back to the football Giants in NJ. (1 pg)
4. WSJ piece of 9-5-00 notes that the old Colts Stadium left Houston and is now reconstructed and in full use in Tampico, Mexico. (2 pgs)
5. Boston Globe's Harold Kaese defends local fans and warns Milwaukee about the Braves they now hold. Turns out, he was right! "The Braves were not sacred in Boston. They won't be sacred in Milwaukee. Only as sacred as the money in your pants' pocket, Sudsy old boy."
6. "Polo Grounds Live On in Hallowed Memory," as subway series recalls past, NYT 7-9-00 (2 pgs)
7. "Three Rivers at 30," memories of old stadium, AP July/2000 (1 pg)
8. "Remembering Ebbets Field," SCD, 1-7-00 (2 pgs)
9. "Sportsman's Park, The Rodney Dangerfield of historic stadiums," SCD, 5-26-00 (2 pgs)
10. Various 1914 stories on the Federal League park sites on which nothing got built! (4 pgs) Also, some data from Fred Schuld's search for a photo of Cleveland's Luna Park, including one illustration (4 pgs)

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11. "Ebbets Field and the Dodgers From 1931-1947," a senior essay by Elisha Cooper, (55 pgs)

Last words.... it has been too long a layoff from the newsletter, so with enough material for several more issues sitting next to me, we'll try another issue in a month's time to provide an overview of major and minor league parks, some attendance issues, and more in the world of research.

Keep the cards and material coming. We'll also try to thank in our next issue the many people who donated clippings and other materials.

Best wishes.

A review of the TSN ballparks book by Chris Jennison

THE BALLPARK BOOK: A Journey Through the Fields of Baseball Magic by Ron Smith Illustrations by Kevin Belford The Sporting News 2000

Years from now baseball fans may look back at the turn of the century as an enlightened, if not golden age, of ballpark construction. THE BALLPARK BOOK serves as a sumptuous and comprehensive guide to old and new ballparks, with lots of color photos, and original, two-page spread illustrations by Kevin Belford that will remind some readers of Gene Mack's wonderful panoramas from the late 1940s. There are some familiar images, but more than enough seldom and never-seen photos to satisfy, and the informed text does more than just recount events at the respective venues. Difficulty in organizing the book results in a final, catch-all section titled "Gone, But Not Forgotten" that includes shrines like Ebbets Field and the Polo Grounds with banalities such as the Astrodome and Toronto's Exhibition Stadium, two parks that should be forgotten. But this quibble should not deter ballpark fans and aficionados from adding this book to their collection quickly. Among all the lavish color and splashy design values, one image may be the most affecting: a black and white photo of Providence, RI's Messer Field, circa 1878. The players are posed formally in front of a rickety wooden grandstand that includes the most Spartan approach to luxury boxes ever seen.

A request: a new web site for ballparks has been publicized: ballparks.com. Take a look and send in your comments for our next issue. Sports Illustrated noted this site in a recent issue.

And lastly, if your interests have changed and you do not wish to continue to receive this newsletter, just let us know by any means that is convenient. And, correct any addresses with an e-mail or card.

Thanks!