How Do I...

An Occasional Series

This Week: Preparing Club QSL Cards with an embossed gold seal

As part of the Cumberland Amateur Radio Club 60th Anniversary celebration we will be operating an On-The-Air Special Event Station – K3IEC. We will offer a commemorative Special Event QSL Card bearing an embossed gold seal.

The 60th Anniversary QSL Card is our everyday QSL card with the addition of an embossed gold seal placed on a paper strip that slides over the traditional K3IEC QSL Card.

Our QSL Manager will prepare the QSL cards using his customary process. Some cards may be hand-written. Some cards may have a label strip produced by N3FJP Amateur Contact Log.

This article describes the process or preparing the embossed gold seals and paper strips.

Materials Needed:
- Embosser with custom die for the 60th Anniversary
- Gold Foil Seals compatible in size and shape with the embosser die
- White Paper
- Scotch Tape
- Paper Cutter
- Layout Mat
- Folding Template

Background Information:
A typical QSL card is 3.5 inches vertical by 5.5 inches horizontal.
Measure the QSL card that you intend to use. You may need to adjust some of these instructions to suit the card you will be using.

The gold foil seals we used are 2 1/8 inches in diameter. They are provided on a roll having backing paper for easy removal of the seal. There is a small division between adjacent seals.

Special Event participants are requested to send their QSL Card to the CARC QSL Manager along with their Self-Addressed, Stamped Envelope (SASE). The CARC QSL Card Manager will verify

the contact, prepare a QSL Card with the contact information, slide a paper strip bearing an embossed gold foil seal over the QSL card, and slip the assembled product into the SASE for mailing.

Step	Procedure
1	Cut the roll of seals to produce the desired number of individual seals, still attached to their backing paper. The goal is to make it easy to insert a single seal into the embosser.
2	Emboss one seal at a time. Position the seal between the halves of the die. Very lightly squeeze the embosser to hold the seal in position without actually embossing. When you are satisfied with the placement of the seal, squeeze the embosser firmly and hold it in place for 10 to 15 seconds so that the foil seal will conform to the image and text on the die. Release pressure. Remove the embossed seal and set it aside. Repeat until all desired seals have been produced.
3	Cut paper strips to suit the size of the QSL card and the foil seal. A sheet of 8 ½ by 11 paper, cut horizontally into four 8 ½ inch strips, 2 ¾ inches wide was used for the 60th Anniversary project. Each letter size sheet of paper will yield four 2 ¾ inch strips without waste.
4	Prepare a folding template to help ensure consistent results. The template should be slightly larger than the QSL card in the vertical dimension. This is necessary so that the paper strip can easily slide off the template and slide onto the QSL Card. I used a piece of pressboard such as you will find on the back of a writing tablet pad. For a 3 ½ inch high QSL card, I cut my template to 3 9/16th inches high.
5	When folding, allow for the paper strip ends to overlap and be taped together where they will be when positioned on the back side of the QSL card. If you consider the paper strip to be 8 ½ long, and the face of the card to be 3 ½ inches high, you have 5 inches of paper available for your use on the back side of the card. Using the slightly oversized template I created in the previous step, I folded one end of the paper strip at about the 2 inch position and the other end of the paper strip at about the 3 inch position. The template allows a small amount of "wiggle room" without any need to precisely measure each fold.
6	Align and secure the overlapped ends of the paper strip using cellophane tape. Do not tape the paper strip to the QSL Card. It needs to slide on and off.
7	If you wish, you can affix a foil seal at this step, or save that operation for a later time. Peel the foil seal off the backing paper. Position the foil seal on the front of the paper strip. I felt I was able to neatly position the seal using nothing but my own eyesight and fingers.
8	Slide the assembled paper strip off the template and set it aside. If you find the paper strip is too snug on the template make adjustments to your folds on the next strip so that the paper strip more freely can be slid off the template.

	For verification purposes, slide an assembled paper strip onto a QSL Card to confirm that the dimensions and folds allow easy positioning. Adjust, as needed.
9	Provide the QSL Card Manager with the QSL Cards and Paper Strip Assemblies. You may wish to provide a few spares in case of accidents or mistakes.

Figure 1 - Gold Foil Seals

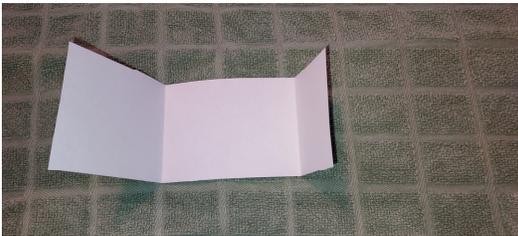**Figure 2 - TheStampMaker.com Desk Embosser**

Figure 3 - 8 1/2 by 2 3/4 paper strip, with folds. The center section should be slightly larger than the QSL Card vertical dimension. See Figure 5 for "in-use" view.

Figure 4 - Folding Template slightly oversized (vertically)

Figure 5 - Paper Strip ready to be taped shut

Figure 6 -- Finished product

I'll see you on the radio.

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