



Bulletin of the
PACIFIC COAST NUMISMATIC SOCIETY
JANUARY, 2026

1317th Monthly Meeting
Banana Republics Through Their Exonumia

Federico Castillo

Wednesday, January 28, 7:30 PM PST
Online



The term “Banana Republic” refers to an unstable country that relies on exporting natural resources or products. The term originated in characterizations of Central American countries that came under the control of American fruit companies, such as United Fruit (now Chiquita) and Standard Fruit (now Dole). Such monopolistic companies thrived by controlling vast tracts of farmable land, which were turned into plantations, giving them tremendous influence in the government of these struggling nations.

Join us online on **Wednesday, January 28** when **Federico Castillo** will show how corporate exonumia tells the story of the exploitation. Plan to exhibit your own banana tokens, or one of your recent acquisitions. So that everyone may participate, please take pictures of your exhibits to facilitate viewing on Zoom.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

FEELING JUDGMENTAL?

As we enter 2026, it's time to start work on the next Presentation Competition. Prizes will be awarded for the best presentation of the preceding calendar year. We will need three volunteers to serve as judges for the contest.

Judges will be expected to review the videos of all ten recorded presentations from 2025, rating each one on several criteria. Scores will be required to be submitted by **April 15** so that prizes can be awarded at the annual BBQ.

If you are interested in being a judge for this contest, please contact webmaster@pcns.org. Note that you cannot be a judge if you gave a presentation in 2025.

WRITE! NOW!

The submission deadline for the 2026 Papers Contest is the April 22 meeting. Important: Refer to the [publication section of pcns.org](http://pcns.org) for the contest rules and our copyright policy.

DECEMBER MEETING RECAP

Bill Hyder spoke on the topic of French jetons, specifically royal jetons authorized by various French rulers. These date to the beginning use of counting boards circa 1200, and date from 1200-1800. There are over 13,000 known, mostly in copper and brass. Silver ones are known but were presentation pieces. Most originate from Nuremberg, a major minting center, though later dates were produced by the French Mint. These were produced at time when most people in Europe were using counting boards at home and businesses for basic addition and subtraction, since mathematics was not usually known by the population. A counting board works on the same principle as an abacus, and millions of counting pieces (jetons) were produced for this use.

The jetons can be collected by various topics: by the ruler, by reverse images (which were often allegorical), or even by the city. The French Revolution brought about the end of royal jetons as they had *(continues...)*

PCNS MEETINGS

PCNS meetings take place at 7:30 pm Pacific Time on the fourth Wednesday of most months. Meetings are held online using the Zoom platform, thereby allowing members, presenters, and guests to attend no matter where they are located. Everyone with an interest in numismatics is welcome to attend. A meeting code/invitation link will be emailed to all members separately the day before the meeting; non-members can request a link by emailing webmaster@pcns.org.

Special occasions, such as the annual BBQ, will continue to occur in person.

PCNS CALENDAR FOR 2025-26

January 28, 2026	Federico Castillo: Topic TBA
February 25, 2026	Stephen Huston: Topic TBA
March 25, 2026	Jeff Pritchard: Topic TBA
April 22, 2026.....	<i>Speaker and Topic TBA</i>
April 22, 2026	Deadline for 2026 Papers Contest Submissions

SPEAK UP!

There are always opportunities for **you** to make a presentation. Thanks to Zoom, you don't even need to be in San Francisco. Your topic can even be something about which you have submitted or plan to submit a *Paper*. Please email webmaster@pcns.org to sign up.

DECEMBER MEETING RECAP (CONT'D)

taken a social role and promoted the royal family- which was no longer desired. They were recalled and destroyed, though other types continued to be made.

Bill showed us many of his royal jetons and discussed the significance of each variety.

To fully appreciate Bill's excellent presentation, view a recording of it on the [PCNS YouTube channel](#).

DECEMBER MEMBER EXHIBITS

Charlie showed four French jetons he has dating to around the time of Napoleon I. They all feature the same janiform obverse of Heur/Malheur (fortune/misfortune), but there were twenty-one different reverses used with the same obverse. It is not clear what they were made for, more research is being done.

Stephen Huston showed us a French jeton from 1700 featuring the Alter of Lugdunum (Lyon), from the Academy of Science, Literature, and Art.

Jeff Pritchard showed his 1575 jeton from the Netherlands featuring the Resumption of Hostilities, with a Dutch freedom hat on the obverse and Belgic lion in a walled garden on the reverse; and a 1782 Treaty of Amity medal from a recent Kunker auction (of which he is patiently waiting for delivery).

John Duff mentioned that jetons are precursors to toy coins, to help children learn about money. He showed one in the Rogers book that has the term 'jeton' in the motto of the spielmark.

Doug Ward showed a 1744 Hamburg trade coin featuring the Great Comet of 1744, discussing how that comet rarely appears but has been depicted back to Roman times.

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