

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

When I took over writing the editor's page, I set some guidelines for myself. And one of those guidelines was that I would try to avoid discussing the weather. So I am not going to write anything about the deep freeze most of us have been experiencing lately. This is the March issue of our journal and I can see Spring from here, so on to subjects of more interest and importance.

In this issue, Chris Dahle concludes his two-part feature on Herbs and Spices beginning on page 17. We also have articles from two of our newer members. First is one on raising chickens by Dawn Hamman, based on her new one-frame exhibit on that same topic. The second is about the fire salamander from Vic Eichler, who points out that amphibians have not received the emphasis they deserve when it comes to philatelic recognition. I also suspect that several people do not realize that salamanders are not reptiles, since many of them greatly resemble lizards. Turtles, which are reptiles, are often also confused with amphibians.

We have continued our Letters column and have received several comments regarding a new policy implemented by Linn's Stamp News to discontinue their "New Issues" column in their weekly editions. Please keep your letters and e-mails coming. This sort of exchange is one of the primary goals of our Unit.

This edition is missing our Mammalia and Marine Invertebrate columns. We expect to continue them in June.

The American Topical Association, our parent organization, will hold its annual National Topical Stamp Show 27–29 June 2014, at the Renaissance St. Louis Airport Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri. Please read the news item about the show on page 7. The Biology Unit will hold its annual membership meeting at the show on Saturday, 28 June at 10:00 A.M. I urge all of our members to attend, not only for a chance to meet everyone, but also because I am totally convinced all of you will enjoy the activities that the show has to offer. There are too many to list here, but in addition to dozens of dealers, you will find top notch exhibits on a great variety of topics, society meetings and presentations by philatelic experts, and social activities to satisfy almost every wish. Check out the ATA website (<http://www.americantopicalassn.org>) for more details.

Lois Herrmann, one of the Directors on our Unit Governing Board, has indicated her desire to step down from that position effective at the annual meeting this year, scheduled for the National Topical Stamp Show in June. As a result, we are seeking nominations to fill her Director position. Please contact President Hanks, Secretary Dahle, or me if you are interested in running for this office, or if you would like to nominate another member.

Congratulations to Chris Dahle, who has recently received his full certification as a philatelic judge by the Committee on Accreditation of National Exhibitions and Judges (CANEJ). This achievement is not easy to accomplish. Prospective judges must complete a series of four judging apprenticeships with an above average rating and attend several judging seminars sanctioned by CANEJ. In order to even qualify, the candidate must have prepared an exhibit that was awarded at least a vermeil medal at a World Series of Philately (WSP) show within the past two years.

Jack R. Congrove

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Please see the Biology Unit website (www.biophilately.org) for membership applications. Several payment options are available. Send applications and payments payable to the Biology Unit of ATA to:
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