

AMERISTAMP EXPO 2017

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The American Philatelic Society (APS) held its 60th annual winter meeting and stamp show, AmeriStamp Expo (ASE), at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center in Reno, Nevada, on 3–5 March 2017. This show was originally planned to be held in Las Vegas. However, the venue that the APS had arranged became unavailable, so they were forced to relocate to Reno.

This change affected the show adversely in some ways. There were only 37 dealers at the show, which usually attracts a much higher quantity. One dealer told me that several dealers decided not to attend because of concerns about the likelihood of bad weather that would prevent many collectors from California from attending.

The APS offered added incentives to attract more dealers, but this appeared to have limited success. The weather concern turned out to be valid as there was obviously low attendance compared to similar shows and some of this could have been attributed to the weather since it did snow on Saturday and some routes were closed because of it.

In any case, the low attendance did not seem to harm the bourse sales. Several dealers I spoke with on Sunday indicated that they had good results. So apparently the collectors who did attend came to spend money and did so.

The APS partnered with the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) to help kick off their 25th annual Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive. To mark this event, the NALC produced a PhotoStamps.com personalized postage souvenir sheet that was dedicated at a ceremony on Saturday morning.

Also participating was artist Jeff Keane. Keane's father Bil Keane, created the syndicated comic strip *The Family Circus* that has been part of the fight-hunger campaign from the beginning. Bil Keane passed away in 2011 at age 89, and Jeff now carries on the legacy in helping create the strip. Keane attended several autograph sessions during the show.

In addition to the ceremony, NALC had a booth at the show where they accepted food and monetary donations. The proceeds for the sale of the souvenir sheets will directly benefit the Food Bank of Northern Nevada.

A vintage 1929 Ford mail truck was on display by the NALC booth courtesy of the National Automobile Museum—The Harrah Collection.



Personalized postage souvenir sheet with *Family Circus* images
Autographed by artist Jeff Keane

Both the United States Postal Service (USPS) and the Marshall Islands issued new postal items and held first day ceremonies at the show. The USPS issued a Barn Swallow forever stamped envelope in multiple sizes and configurations at an 11:00 AM ceremony on Friday, 3 March [see *Biophilately*, Vol. 66(1), p.60].

The stamped envelopes were produced in three sizes: No. 6¾, No. 9, and No. 10. Each size comes either with or without an address label. In addition, each comes with either a moisture-activated seal or self-adhesive flap. The USPS booth had packets of six for sale containing the self-adhesive versions in each size and window configuration.

The USPS also conducted a raffle to give away the barn swallow unveiling poster. Yours truly was the lucky winner. Fortunately, a friend from home who drove to the show agreed to transport it home for me since it was much too large to be allowed as a carry-on item.

An added first day ceremony took place on Saturday for another biologically themed issue when the Marshall Islands released a miniature sheet of ten 49-cent Flora stamps [see *Biophilately*, Vol. 66(1), p.63].



Barn Swallow First Day Ceremony

Scott English, APS; Sommer DeRudder, YPLF; Michelle, USFWS; Karen Little, USPS

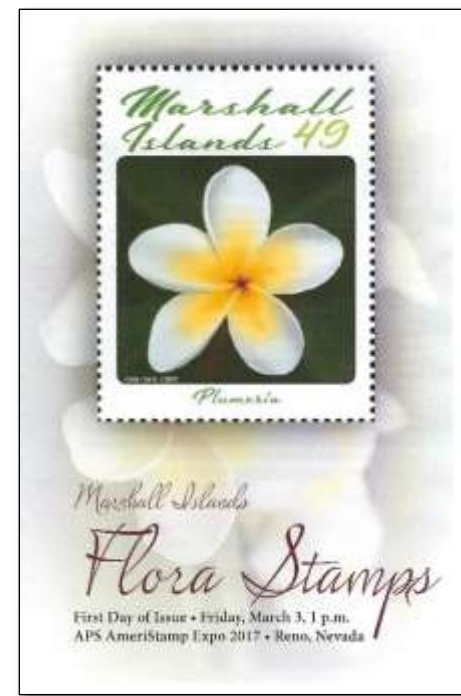
The ASE is the venue for the annual Single Frame Champion of Champions (CoC) philatelic competition. This event pits the winners of the Single Frame Grand award at each of the 30+ World Series of Philately (WSP) national shows that took place across the country throughout the previous year.

Michael T. Mahler won the championship this year with his revenue exhibit “Big Rug, Small Rug, Baby Rug: U.S. Civil War Era \$200 and \$500 Revenues.” This exhibit was the Grand winner at SESCAL 2016.

In addition to the CoC competition, the ASE holds its own regular philatelic exhibition that names a Single Frame Grand Award exhibit that is eligible for the CoC competition next year in Birmingham, Alabama, 23–25 February.

The Grand Award winner was Anthony F. Dewey for his exhibit “The War Rate: 1815–1816.”

The show had the following biology themed exhibits: Larry Fillion won a Large Gold and Best Themed Multiframe exhibit for “The W.H.O.’s The World United Against Malaria Stamp Campaign.”



Michael Bloom won a Large Gold and the AAPE Novice Award for “Guatemala: The UPU Resplendent Quetzals 1881–1886.” Michael T. Mahler won a Large Gold for “Thar She Blows! U.S. Whaling Fiscal History 1862–72.”

Anthony F. Dewey received a Gold and the APS Medal of Excellence for “The 1991 F Tulip Stamps and Their First Day Covers.” Rick Gibson won a Gold for “Smokey Bear Issue of 1984.” Sam G. Chiu received a Vermeil for “Frogs & Toads, Their Relevance to Humans.”

The Vernon and Pam Morris Best Youth and Grand Award was awarded to Alex Fillion for her exhibit “Dairy Products of the Cow.”



ATA Members Dave Kent, Dawn Hamman, and John Hamman