

NEWS OF NOTE

DISTINGUISHED TOPICAL PHILATELIST

The American Topical Association's highest award, Distinguished Topical Philatelist, was presented to Cletus Delvaux at the Celebration Banquet of APS StampShow/NTSS on 11 August in Columbus, Ohio. A 39-year ATA member, Delvaux is a prolific philatelic writer and editor.

A retired English teacher from Green Bay, Wisconsin, Clete has written more than 100 articles for *Topical Time*, *Linn's Stamp News*, and other philatelic publications. His primary topics are journalists, authors, and poets on stamps.

Delvaux has been president of the Journalists, Authors, and Poets on Stamps (JAPOS) Study Unit of ATA since 1993. In 2000, he also assumed the position as editor of the *JAPOS Bulletin*, and he also writes extensively for that publication. He is a past president of the Green Bay Philatelic Society and edited its newsletter for 25 years.



ATA President Dale Smith (right) presenting the Distinguished Topical Philatelist award to Cletus Delvaux

UNIT HISTORY

In December of 2013, we published *The Mother of All Indexes*, which contained a complete index of all the issues of *Biophilately* and its forerunners since the beginning of the study unit. The first half of this publication was devoted to a description of the distinguished history of the Biology Study Unit.

At the recent APS-ATA joint stamp show in Columbus, Ohio, I encountered some members of the Unit who did not know about this history. This is disappointing because our study unit is one of the oldest of all the 50-some study units and its members are among the most active and involved in the ATA and in philately in general.

I am very proud of the Biology Study Unit and what it has accomplished in its 67 years of existence and I would like others to know about our Unit and its contributions. Therefore, I am offering to email an electronic copy of *The Mother of All Indexes* to any Unit member who contacts me before 31 December (jackcongrove@comcast.net).



BIOPHILATELY AWARD

The Biology Unit entered our journal, *Biophilately*, in the Philatelic Literature exhibits at the joint NTSS-StampShow in Columbus, Ohio.

It was among 19 exhibits in the Journal category. The jury awarded it a Vermeil medal. While we are pleased that this was a respectable level, it was the same as our last award and we were hoping for an improvement.

According to the evaluation form, the jury wanted to see more philatelic articles to compensate for the long lists of new issues that our readers wish to have. They also made an interesting suggestion that we consider moving the new issues listing information to an online database. This would free up space for more news and articles and enable members to perform a variety of searches. We would like to know your thoughts on this idea.

One other noted comment questioned the dues rate versus production costs, which is a topic discussed below.

All Unit members can help us raise this award level by submitting news items and articles about stamps and other philatelic items they collect. Send your submissions to the editor at the addresses listed inside the cover page.



BIOLOGY UNIT MEETING

The Biology Unit held its annual meeting on Saturday, 11 August at the joint NTSS-StampShow in Columbus, Ohio. The attendance was disappointing. Only seven members and five guests were present. The officers and directors there were Laurie Ryan (President), Chris Dahle (Secretary-Treasurer), and Jack Congrove (Director).

After introductions, the Secretary-Treasurer presented a financial report. Normally these annual membership meetings do not discuss business, but the Unit has been operating at a deficit for the past three years. This year our income was \$1,950, and our expenses were \$3,653. This included a one-time expense of \$438 to help publish the *Amphibians* handbook. If we do not do something to counteract this trend, then we will soon deplete our treasury.

The greatest expense we have by far is the printing and mailing of this journal. Last year the printing costs were \$1,506. Postage cost an additional \$1,309. We only took in \$1,412 in dues payments.

The Unit has not raised its dues since 2001. Currently, the print dues are \$20 for the US and Canada and \$25 for overseas delivery. The dues for electronic copy only are \$15. The print dues are obviously not sufficient to cover our printing and mailing costs.

Several ideas were discussed by the attendees that boil down to two options: (1) increase the dues and (2) encourage members to opt for the electronic version of the publication. Currently, print members also have access to the electronic version via the Unit website (www.biophilately.org).

The advantages of the electronic option are not only in the favor of the organization, but the members received their copy much more quickly and it is all in color. Also, because the articles are separated, the member can select only those of interest to view and download. There is no need to download the entire volume. Electronic members can also print their downloaded file at home if they want to save a paper copy.

Suggestions were offered for increasing the print dues to \$25 for US, \$32 for Canada, and \$48.50 for Overseas. The electronic membership would remain at \$15. Roger Van Laere suggested that we change our membership form so that the default is to receive the electronic version and members would have to opt to receive print copies.

The Unit Board of Directors will be discussing these matters in the near future and will make a decision on the dues levels in time for membership renewal at the first of the year.