

### FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I just returned from PIPEX 2012 held in Portland, Oregon. This was a major national show that had many interesting exhibits including some featuring biological themes. See page 78 for more information about the show. While I was there, I enjoyed meeting Bea Vogel, a member of our study unit from Montana, whose collecting interests include spiders on stamps. She graciously provided me with a copy of her listing of stamp issues that include images of spiders and you will find it beginning on page 120.

Many of us are now preparing for the annual National Topical Stamp Show scheduled for 22-24 June 2012, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. We will hold a membership meeting of the Biology Unit there at 10:00 A.M. on Saturday morning. I hope that many of you will attend. These shows offer lots of opportunities to further enjoy the hobby you have chosen. There are dozens of dealers who offer all sorts of philatelic items and supplies and most who participate in the NTSS have stock that caters to the topical collector.

This national level show also includes thematic exhibits that compete for the American Philatelic Society World Series of Philately awards, which means they are top quality and include many interesting and rare items. But the thing I enjoy most of all at these events is the chance to meet and socialize with others who share our common interest in collecting. The NTSS offers many activities including tours and social gatherings where you can not only learn new things, but also make new friends.

This year, one of our own Biology Unit directors, Fred Skvara, will receive the American Topical Association Distinguished Topical Philatelist Award. This award was established in 1952, and is the highest honor that the ATA bestows. Congratulations to Fred for this achievement!

The NTSS will be at the Lancaster Host Resort and Conference Center, 2300 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Contact the hotel for reservations at 800-233-0121, or 717-299-5500.

In the current edition, we have several of our regular checklists for new issues. We are still looking for an editor for Herpetology. If you collect this topic and have a listing of recent issues, but are not interested in providing input for every edition, I would be pleased to include it on a one-time or part-time basis for the benefit of others.

I invite readers to send me their suggestions for improvement on any aspect of the journal. See the inside cover for contact information. While I have found that I quite enjoy writing an article for each issue, I am sure that readers would like to see articles from other authors. So, as I mentioned previously, I am still looking for stories, letters, and other input of interest to the readers for inclusion in future editions.

I hope all of you have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Jack Congrove

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