

AMERICAN TOPICAL ASSOCIATION RETURNS TO ITS BIRTHPLACE FOR 2011 ANNUAL MEETING AND EXHIBITION



In 1949 a nineteen-year-old Milwaukee, Wisconsin, stamp collector named Jerry Husak founded the American Topical Association in response to his discovery that no organization existed that could provide guidance to collectors who wished to start a topical collection. With his leadership, the ATA has become the leading topical and thematic organization with members in all parts of the world. Although officially retired, Jerry still keeps abreast of the activities of the organization and plans to travel from his home in Sun City West, Arizona, to ATA's birthplace of Milwaukee for the Annual Meeting and Exhibition.

Officially known as National Topical Stamp Show (NTSS), the show features free admission and free parking. It will be held at the Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel, 375 Moorland Road, Brookfield, Wisconsin (a Milwaukee suburb), on June 24-26. This World Series of Philately show is topical in exhibits, programs and meetings, but the dealer bourse covers all aspects of philately. Dealers specializing in countries, covers, supplies, postcards, back-of-the-book, and many other philatelic areas will be in attendance. Dealers from a dozen different states--from Oregon, California, Texas, Georgia and all around the Midwest--have reserved show space.

The largest all-topical stamp exhibition in the U.S. will be presented at NTSS. This year the Youth Champion of Champions exhibits will be held at the show. Stepping Stones exhibits by youth collectors will also be displayed.

Noted cachet maker Dave Bennett is creating triptych NTSS cachet designs that are certain to sell out. He is noted for his whimsical, cartoon-like characters. Bennett's show cancel design highlights Wisconsin icons and coordinates with the postcard cachets. Preorders are being accepted from ATA, PO Box 8, Carterville, IL 62918-0008. Cost is \$2.50 for one, or \$7 for set of three (include SASE if sending check). A set of three costs \$7.50, covering postage cost, if paid for by PayPal or credit card.

NTSS customarily provides tours of local sites for show attendees. In 2011 two outstanding tours are offered at very nominal prices. The Thursday (June 23) half-day tour will include a visit to the Calatrava Art Museum. The museum was the Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava's first project in the western hemisphere. As a result he went on to design many other great structures. The tour will include a guided visit to the new Harley Davidson Motorcycle museum and a tour of a local brewery including a beer and soda tasting session.

The Monday (June 28) full-day tour will find the participants traveling to Baraboo, Wisconsin, for a visit to the Circus World Museum. Many restored circus wagons, circus artifacts, and the original Ringling Brothers buildings can be viewed. The tour continues to the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, where all 15 species of cranes can be seen in one place. After a guided visit, the tour winds up in the Wisconsin Dells for a two-hour Upper Dells Boat Ride to see the magnificent sand sculpted formations in the banks of the Wisconsin River. Lunch is included in this tour as is a goodie bag of souvenirs. Due to some very generous benefactors the cost is just \$50, half of the cost of an individually arranged tour.

The customary Friday night ATA President's Reception finds the attendees being bused to a local restaurant for a good old fashioned Fish Fry. Fish Fries are the norm for a Friday night in Wisconsin and no place else does it up like the people of Wisconsin. The Reception should prove to be a lot of fun.

A local committee of enthusiastic and dedicated collectors has planned one of the most promising ATA shows to date. Milwaukee has a proud history of excellent stamp shows and this one will be memorable. For more information, including reservation see www.americantopicalassn.org, email americantopical@msn.com, or call ATA at (618) 985-5100.