



News from the American Philatelic Center
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Andrew Oleksiuk Receives 2007 Kehr Award



A smiling Andrew Oleksiuk — winner of the American Philatelic Society's 2007 Ernest A. Kehr "Future of Philately" Award — mans the Stamps for Kids booth at the annual Taste of Chicago food festival. Photo courtesy Randall Sherman.

Andrew Oleksiuk, of Chicago, Illinois, has won the American Philatelic Society's 2007 Ernest A. Kehr "Future of Philately" Award. Established in 1991, the Kehr Award recognizes a philatelist who, for at least five years, has made philately attractive as a hobby to newcomers, worked directly with newcomers, especially young people, or developed and administered programs to recruit newcomers. The award is named for Ernie Kehr, long an activist and patron in the field of junior philately. Kehr was the author of *The Romance of Stamp Collecting* in 1947, which had a major impact on two generations of new collectors.

The award was presented to Oleksiuk by APS Deputy Executive Director Ken Martin and Chicago Philatelic Society President Larry Kobelt in a brief ceremony on November 18 at CHICAGOPEX 2007. At age 40, Oleksiuk is believed to be the youngest winner of this honor in its seventeen-year history.

The citation from the three-member Kehr Award Selection Committee celebrates Oleksiuk's success in meeting all of the established criteria of the Kehr Award:

"Andrew has been an active member of the Chicago Philatelic Society for at least eight years and has served in various roles, including working at the CHICAGOPEX Youth Booth. Most importantly, he is the force behind an original program designed to introduce youth to our hobby through his Stamps for Kids program in Chicago.

"Initially the program provided stamps through school and library programs. In 2004, he got permission from the office of the Mayor of Chicago to distribute stamp packets at Taste of Chicago, a huge lakefront event held each July, attended by thousands and thousands of families. He personally assembled packets and distributed them himself that first year. In 2005, he recruited family and friends to distribute 250,000 stamps in two days."

The effort continues to grow. Currently a member of the Chicago Philatelic Society Board of Directors, Oleksiuk deserves much of the credit for the accomplishment of the CPS in donating more than 1,000,000 stamps to Chicago children.

An accomplished computer technician and artist, Andrew Oleksiuk has been an active member of the philatelic community for over a decade and a fine artist for over twenty years. His body of work ranges from video and performance art and small press publishing to writing for role-playing games, and 3D and interactive art. In his new media practice, he draws connections between art, technology, and the humanities. He uses postal history and philately subjects as commentary on network communications and media. Andrew has exhibited internationally and has won juried awards for his work.

Oleksiuk has a postal history exhibit on permanent loan at the Ukrainian National Museum in Chicago. He will be guest lecturer at the Collectors Club of Chicago in July 2008.

In addition to his work as a computer technician for the Interactive Arts and Media department at Columbia College Chicago, Andrew volunteers as a board member of the Chicago Philatelic Society. Andrew also serves as volunteer secretary and immediate past president of the Illinois Postal History Society.

As this year's Kehr Award winner, Oleksiuk joins a distinguished group of committed philatelic volunteers who have promoted the hobby for beginners and youth. Former recipients are James Ashby, Phyllis Ashwood, Dorothy Blaney, Joan Bleakley, MaryAnn Bowman, Nancy Clark, Cheryl Edgcomb, Jane King Fohn, Ken Lucas, Joseph Luft, Herman Neugass, Bill Olcheski, Steven Rod, Joseph Schoen, Ranyta Sullivan, Karen Weigt, and Robert Welt.

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Nominations for future Kehr Award recipients may be made by sending a letter describing how an individual meets the award criteria to APS Kehr Award, 100 Match Factory Place, Bellefonte, PA 16823. Complete details of the Kehr Award also are available in the "Almanac" section of the APS website: www.stamps.org