

## Creating a Non-Competitive Exhibit Category By Howard Kadohiro (Co-exhibit Chair for GRSCS)

Stamp collecting covers a wide range of interest. From collecting an example of every stamp issued, to stamps of a specific country; First Day, Event, FAM, and Ships Covers, etc.; and topicals such as Flowers, and Polar exploration, almost anything that interest people have a philatelic connection. Exhibiting should reflect these interests. Having only competitive exhibits may limit participation.

There are a lot of reasons why collectors exhibit. Competitive exhibits offer a venue to recognize advances in philatelic research and collecting in an organized and structured way. A system for judging exhibits was established to give awards. This system was designed to help judging and not necessarily to help create exhibits.

Not everyone wants to exhibit for awards. Creating a Non-competitive category will allow members to share their collecting interest in a less regimented format. Exhibits in this category can chronicle visits to DPO (Dead Post Offices) during a vacation or penguins on stamps.

The goal of creating this category is to encourage members to share (brag about?) their collections and interests in an exhibit format. Rules for this category are about the same as that of Competitive Exhibits. It would not be hard for an exhibitor in this category to transition to a competitive exhibitor.

Depending on how Covid-19 behaves, this category will start with this year's Greater Reno Stamp and Cover Show.

**Comments from Harvey Edwards:** So, what does a “non-competitive” exhibitor get when they exhibit? Well, they usually aren't taken as serious collectors and don't get feedback to make their exhibit better. Many, many times I've heard a non-competitive exhibitor approach the judges, usually at the critique, to ask about their exhibit. The answer is “It's non-competitive, we didn't look at it.” I received so many benefits, beyond going from a bronze to multiple national golds, by exhibiting and getting the judge's feedback. I learned that I needed a well-defined theme along with a beginning and end of the exhibit. I learned much more about the exhibit subject. I learned about the material I had and the material I didn't have but should have. My philatelic knowledge increased. Dealers started looking for rare or special material for me to help me improve my exhibit. Judges and viewers helped identify misinformation in my exhibits as well as questionable or misidentified items. And often when I exhibit people search me out at a show just to talk about the exhibit.

The GR&CS currently has two ways that it uses to encourage new exhibitors. The first is “My Favorite Things,” a club exhibit built from submitted one-page, non-competitive entries. The second is a “Novice Credit” of up to 4-frames free for an exhibitor who has never exhibited. That also qualifies them for special novice awards. (I don't recall anyone ever asking that their novice exhibit not be judged but it could happen. But they then wouldn't be eligible for the novice awards and, well, you can only be a novice once.)



**Susie & Dave Gehringer with their non-competitive exhibit of Leather Post Cards. It won the People's Choice Award at the GRSCS in 2016.**