

ALPCA, Inc.

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PRESS RELEASE

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## NEW MEXICO WINS AMERICA'S BEST LICENSE PLATE AWARD

National Contest Has Honored Top Plate Each Year Since 1970



The Automobile License Plate Collectors Association (ALPCA, Inc.) has voted that New Mexico has the best license plate in the United States this year. Last year, New Mexico introduced a beautiful turquoise Centennial plate to honor the 100th anniversary of statehood in 2012. Since 1970, ALPCA has recognized the state with the best license plate design of the year. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the award and the first win ever for New Mexico.

“We’re thrilled to announce that New Mexico has the nation’s best license plate design this year,” said ALPCA President Michael Liscio. “With so many states opting for elaborate graphics,” said Liscio, “it’s refreshing to see an appealing design with both historical significance and distinctive colors for vehicle identification.” In this year’s competition, there were 12 finalists. ALPCA members worldwide were asked to vote based on two judging criteria: the overall attractiveness of the license plate design and its legibility as a tool for public safety and law enforcement. “The Land of Enchantment has always had beautiful license plates. New Mexico’s new Centennial plate combines a rich but simple design that helps it stand out on the roadways as both a proud symbol of New Mexico’s heritage and an easily recognizable plate across the state and across the nation,” said Liscio.

“The New Mexico Centennial is an important opportunity for our state to shine in the Southwest and beyond,” said Governor Susana Martinez. “We look forward to sharing with the rest of the country the stories of our diverse cultures, the unique arts and lifeways of our people and the unparalleled natural beauty that makes our state unlike any other.”

New Mexico became our nation’s 47th star on the United States flag on January 6, 1912. Beginning this August and continuing throughout 2012, communities across New Mexico will commemorate 100 years of statehood, telling the stories of the past while envisioning the state’s next 100 years.

“We are honored to receive this much celebrated award from the ALPCA for a license plate that commemorates our historic Centennial and distinctively represents New Mexico,” said State Cultural Affairs Department Secretary Veronica Gonzales. “We have designed what is essentially a traveling billboard that will travel across the country and beyond.”

The New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division, in conjunction with other state offices, has a long history of national firsts when it comes to license plate design. The Zia sun symbol is the world’s oldest continuous promotional graphic used on a license plate, appearing every year since 1927.

After the New Mexico Centennial activities wrap up at the end of 2012, the phrase, “Centennial 1912-2012” will be dropped from the commemoration plate, and the turquoise license will continue to serve as one of two official state

More....

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plates along with a classic yellow plate that has existed in various forms since 1980. To date, more than 70,000 of the Centennial plates have been issued since their introduction by the New Mexico MVD in January 2010. The popular plate was designed by state Cultural Affairs Department artistic director David Rohr.

ALPCA's national vote also made a statement against the national trend towards cluttered license plate design. "While we strongly support using license plates for promotional and fundraising initiatives, their most important function is still law enforcement and public safety. We believe license plate design can be attractive and legible and we advocate uncluttered designs that be easily read and identified on a moving vehicle," explains ALPCA's Liscio. "New Mexico's Centennial plate is the only turquoise plate in the world today and the graphic design is simple but elegant," he said. Finishing as runner-up to New Mexico was Rhode Island's Plum Island Lighthouse optional plate. Maryland came in third.

Since 1970, ALPCA has sponsored the annual Best License Plate Award program. Pennsylvania won the first award in 1971. Founded in 1954, ALPCA is the world's oldest and largest non-profit organization devoted to researching, collecting, and promoting license plates. With over 3,000 members worldwide, ALPCA will host its 57th Annual Convention in Charleston, West Virginia from June 22-25, 2011. In 2013, ALPCA members and their families will come to Albuquerque for the organization's 59th annual convention.

A special awards ceremony is being planned in the coming weeks. ALPCA's President will travel to New Mexico to present State officials with award plaques. For more information, go to [www.alpc.org](http://www.alpc.org).

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If you would like more information or to schedule an interview with ALPCA, Inc. officials, please contact ALPCA President Michael Liscio at 203.543.1548 or program coordinator Gus Oliver at 918.671.4653.