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DELAWARE 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 Delaware the state with the best license plate in the United States this year. Delaware recently issued the world's first license plate that honors the history of license plates itself. The elegant but simple award winning design commemorates the centennial of motor vehicle registrations in the First State. Since 1970, ALPCA has recognized the state with the best license plate design of the year. In the nearly 40 years of the program, this is the first time that Delaware has won the award.

"We're thrilled to announce that Delaware has the nation's best license plate design this year," said ALPCA President Jeff Francis. "With so many states opting for elaborate graphics," said Mr. Francis, "it's refreshing to see a distinctive design that is still easy to read by law enforcement." In this year's competition, there were six finalists: Alaska, Delaware, Minnesota, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Wyoming. ALPCA members nationwide 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 fact that Delaware's winning design also honored 100 years of license plates in their state was an added bonus for our voting members," said Tim Stentiford, ALPCA Best Plate program coordinator.

"The State of Delaware is proud to receive this national honor for our unique Centennial Plate license plate," said Mike Williams, Public Relations Manager at the Delaware Department of Transportation. "What America may not know is that Delawareans have had a long love affair with license plates, particularly low number plates," said Williams. The idea of the gold-and-black Centennial Plate was approved last year. Delaware motorists have the option of buying this special commemorative plate that celebrates the first license plates issued by the state in 1909. Since the Centennial Plate was introduced last fall, thousands of Delaware motorists have bought them. The Centennial Plate has several other firsts: it's the first embossed plate with raised letters and numbers in Delaware since 1941. It's the first optional license plate in the world where the validation sticker colors were designed to match the colors of the plate itself.

ALPCA's national vote also made a statement against the national trend towards digitally-designed flat license plates. "While we know digital technology may be more cost effective for producing license plates today," said ALPCA's Stentiford, "our members clearly favor the tradition of raised numbers and letters on the plate for easier vehicle identification and better law enforcement."

Since 1970, ALPCA has sponsored the annual Best License Plate Award program. Founded in 1954, ALPCA is the world's oldest and largest non-profit organization devoted to researching, collecting, and promoting license plates. With over 3000 members worldwide, ALPCA will host its 55th Annual Convention in Erie, Pennsylvania from June 24-27, 2009. For more information, go to www.alpca.org.