

Arizona License Plate Society

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Name: Steven "16 Lizards" Benson
Birth Year: 1969
ALPCA #: 6694
Residence: Gilbert, Arizona
Occupation: License Plates! (Sales, not manufacturing)



How did you start collecting plates? Was there someone who was your mentor?

I was walking home from school in Woodland Hills, CA in early 1981 shortly after moving from New York – a state that even then, no longer issued validation stickers – when I stumbled upon a 1963 base California plate in the gutter. I was intrigued by the colorful sticker stack and proceeded to take it home and peel down each year to see the different colors of each sticker. So began my interest in license plates! Unfortunately, I have no idea what became of that plate.

How did you hear about the Arizona Regional?

There's an Arizona regional???? What is it???

What plates do you collect and which are your favorites? Where do you get most of your plates?

I've changed my collecting interests a few times over the years. I'm currently working on CA and AZ runs plus NWT Bears, YT, and WY partials. Any other unusual plate or type I find intriguing will find its way into my collection. My real passion is AAA plates (I have about 100) and other first issue bases plus any triple-triples (444-PPP, etc.). Do you have any for sale or trade? As a big bulk dealer, I find some of these cool configurations in bulk. Also buy from eBay, meets, or anyplace else that plates lurk. My greatest find in a bulk lot was a New York Empire State base BBB-4444! The odds of finding a configurations like that is about 1 in 500,000 (varies by state and exact letter sequence issuance).

Do you have tips for newer members on the best places to acquire plates?

There is only one source of course – my license plate inventory!! ☺ Seriously, some of my better finds have been at swap meets and flea markets, antique stores, online auctions, but most of all – license plate meets! The joy alone of going to a meet and the camaraderie is well worth the experience. You'll always find something at a meet on someone's table you will want. Sometimes at a super great price, but always with a friendly smile! I hear there is something called an Arizona Regional with several meets per year. Stop by and have great food, fun, and license plates!

How often do you make it to Arizona License Plate Society events?

I try to make them all!

Which plate in your collection has the best story?

There are many! It's hard to choose one and a story to go with it. I think I've already used too much verbiage for this page already.

How many plates are in your collection? What types? What do you wish you had more of?

I have probably about 600-700. A small collection compared to some, but I have specific collecting interests. I need more AAA's!

Do you display your plates?

As many as I can fit are on my walls.

What other non-license plate hobbies do you have?

I can fill a page with just this question! Collecting insulators, highway signs, newspapers, phone books (yes, really!), AAA maps and tourbooks, coins, slot tokens and table chips, the now nearly defunct casino coin cups and misc bric-a-brac. Probably my favorite bric-a-brac item is my working GE monitor top refrigerator.

