



# The Curious Collector

by Len Augsburger, LSCC #1271

## 2026 FUN Show Report

The January FUN show is in the books, and everything you've read about it is correct.



(Continued on next page)

### SUNSHINE RARE COINS

David Sunshine  
Sunshinecoins.com

Specializing in  
Choice U.S. Type  
Bust and Seated Coins

ANA, LSCC, JRCS Member  
(203)339-2911  
davidbsunshine@yahoo.com



(Continued from previous page)

The foot traffic was unprecedented, and the aisles felt like a Starbucks at Grand Central Station during the commuter rush. I'm not a pro at the FUN show, as I've only been a few times, not enough to avoid confusion about the actual location of the show. I therefore mistakenly booked at the Hilton, which, on the map, appeared to be the closest hotel. And it is the closest hotel, if you are going to the south portion of the convention center. Unfortunately, the coin show was held in the north half of the hall. The problem isn't obvious until you grasp the enormity of the convention center, a behemoth roughly the size of the O'Hare and Heathrow airports combined. To make matters worse, the north and south halves of the building are not connected. You have to exit the building and walk to the next town to find the coin show. I wasn't the only one to make the mistake, and there was a long line of similarly confused coin hunters trudging through the Florida humidity (84 degrees in January), all wondering why they didn't just take an Uber to begin with.

Some years ago, while I was long distance running, I advertised a FUN show "Fun Run", with the objective of running around the entire convention center. In what universe that is actually "fun" I'm not sure, but running rewires your brain in unexpected, strange ways. Apparently all the other convention attendees agreed, as I was the only one that actually showed up to the event. In any case, my coach, who had live access to all my training data (GPS, running watches, heart rate monitors – every pursuit seems to have its own accessories) had to call up and ask me what the &\*\$ I was doing on an unplanned run that seemingly extended the entire length of the Florida peninsula. Mind you, I was training for a marathon and doing half-marathons at least once a week. I never thought athletic accomplishment would be a prerequisite to access the Orlando convention center, as usually a mustard-stained shirt demonstrates more than sufficient cred to gain entrance to a coin show.

Yes, I somehow eventually managed to find the coin show. A photo of the 'registration line' on Thursday on the previous page was much longer than the image shows. Thursday attendance was reportedly over 10,000, and I believe it. Did I wait in the registration line? That is a good question. I walked into the show with another collector who immediately decided that paying \$100 for an early bird pass (a much, much shorter line) was a better use of his time. And if I had his bank account, I would agree. I didn't pay the \$100, and I didn't wait in line. The story is best told over a beer. If only I had demonstrated so much creativity in actually finding the show!

(Continued on next page)

### **Reminder Notice for LSCC Members**

**If your membership ends in 2025,  
please remember to submit your dues renewal so you don't miss  
the next Spring issue of The Gobrecht Journal. And besides  
we all enjoy having you as a Club member. Thank You!**

(Continued from previous page)

In any case, I did not have a lot of time available to spend at the show and had a prepared list of people I wanted to meet regarding LSCC, Newman Portal, or other business. First stop is always the LSCC Club table, and I was excited to see Carl Feldman and his exhibit of Liberty Seated dollar exonomia. Carl has the sort of collection that can be built only with a long period of time and a matching amount of determination. We were doubly pleased to have Carl in person as we were unable to present his LSCC President's Award at the Oklahoma City ANA show in August.

On Friday, I attended the FUN Numismatic Ambassadors breakfast, which annually recognizes individual contributions to numismatics. This year, Carol Bastable, Donna Nunez, Mike Bean, Gerry Tebben, and yours truly were all so honored. Carol is well known as the love token expert, while Donna is a long-time employee of the ANA. Mike worked at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing as a plate printer, and Gerry notably maintained a Coin World column from 1983 to 2025, in addition to serving the CSNS and CONA groups in various capacities. The Numismatic Ambassador program was launched by Chet Krause in the 1970s and is now administered by the FUN organization. I was pleased to see ex-Krause Publications stalwarts Clifford Mishler and David Harper on hand.

The breakfast unfortunately overlapped with the start of the LSCC meeting, for which I was a bit late. My timing was impeccable, however, as the group portrait was taken at the exact moment I entered the room. The educational presentation was given by Craig Eberhart, who made a leap of faith in entrusting John Frost with the slide deck. John Frost, in turn, blindly accepted my submission of candid photographs. The ensuing hijinks, for the sake of propriety, have been omitted from the meeting video, which is posted on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4IUq-Sjo668>. Craig's remarks on transitional New Orleans coinage; however, are completely represented in the video, and are well worth viewing. Many thanks to John and Craig for putting this meeting together.

Following the LSCC meeting, Stephen Petty & I held a "whist match" at Doug Winter's table. The concept of numismatic whist is simple – you get a point for having a coin, and an additional point if you have the nicer coin. Stephen & I collect New Orleans eagles, of which we both have PCGS/CAC sets. Stephen's set is complete while mine is missing three of the 37 pieces. As most of Stephen's coins are graded higher than mine, Doug threw me a bone by slightly modifying the rules so that an original piece of a lower grade might possibly be rated "nicer" than a higher-graded piece. Doug also awarded several "bonus" points for exceptionally noteworthy examples. I did not win, and I did not expect to, but the real value of the exercise was getting Doug's in-hand evaluations of all the coins. Yes, we did capture this on video, which will be released in due course. Everyone that watches will learn a few things about judging surfaces, luster, and originality as it relates to U.S. gold coins.

I'd love to coordinate a similar event for Liberty Seated coinage, and, if you have any interest in entering your set into such a competition, let's make it happen. The set registries have done some wonderful things for numismatics, but at the end of the day they are strictly numeric and take a lot of nuance out of the equation. There is no substitute for doing such things with actual coins in hand under the trained eyes of an expert observer.

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

My FUN convention wrapped up with a meeting with Tom Uram who works with the ANA on planned giving. Tom is an ex-ANA president, and a career finance professional, and it is the sum of volunteer efforts such as this that makes the organization. If any of the readers are of a mind to support the ANA, I'm happy to connect you with Tom.

Following the show, dealers David Kahn, Gerry Fortin, John Brush, Laura Sperber, Shannon Rajkitkul, and no doubt many others, all issued tremendously positive reports. The consensus is that that the accelerating precious metals market is activating latent interest in rare coins. This has been the pattern in the past and is again operative. I expect well-attended shows in Savannah (the upcoming ANA winter convention) and for the Whitman March Baltimore event as well.

(END)

---

**OPINIONS & ANALYSIS as Silver reaches \$118.45 an ounce on January 29, 2026, but plunges by -\$30 to \$85.15 the next day...?**

**From the Editor:** Curious about it, so let us know how others feel? With precious metal **Silver** now at over \$118+/oz., an all-time high, is this the time to sell any silver coins whose bullion value exceeds their numismatic value for common dates and all grade ranges?

We are now certainly in uncharted territory! Is this a big bubble that will soon burst, or is this going to be the new bid/sell price range for precious metal dealers for the foreseeable future?

**What? ..a -\$30 Burst in the Bubble in one day?**

I'm not referring to junk silver here, but for many 20th century collectible coins, they are now actually worth more than their numismatic value based on all Grey Sheet pricing of only a couple months ago.

**Anonymous Response #1:** As to your "sell or hold" question; for us collectors with gray hair, this is probably a good time to simplify our holdings. Thinning the herd of silver odds and ends that aren't part of our core collection... Stuff we don't need to burden our heirs with eventually liquidating. If you're worried about selling only to see silver go even higher, then consider selling a portion of it, and then selling the rest if it does advance further. The trap is trying to sell stuff at "the top" vs selling at a very good price. My two cents...

**Don't blink or you be left in the dust, "silver dust" that is... lol**

**What are your thoughts? Let us know by emailing your opinion to the editor at:**  
[e-gobrecht@msn.com](mailto:e-gobrecht@msn.com)

(END)