



Deb Donado, a New Holland advertising production specialist, displays her collection of Corn Classic and Commodity Classic trade show posters. She has a mint copy of every poster in the series.

Whimsical Posters Spark One-Of-A-Kind Collection

NEW HOLLAND (Lancaster Co.) — The walls of New Holland's external communications department are dotted with the bold, colorful posters the department designs and produces to promote New Holland's line of agricultural and construction equipment. But in the office of Deb Donado, an advertising production specialist in the department, there is a collection of posters of a totally different nature. In these posters, cartoon corn and soybean characters fly down ski slopes, sunbathe on the beach, and ride in a sports car.

The series of whimsical posters, produced for the National Corn Growers' Association and the American Soybean Association to advertise the groups' annual Commodity Classic convention and trade show, has been printed courtesy of New Holland for the past decade. Donado has been the printing coordinator for each one. Only 500 of these posters are printed annually, and she has a mint edition of each one hanging in her office. Only Donado, the National Corn Growers' Association, and one or two of their state associations has the complete set.

"I started displaying them in my office because they are really different from the product posters we print," said Donado. "When I hung up the first one, little did I know that I would be starting a collection! I didn't plan it. It just kind of grew."

Donado has been a collector since age 8. She says she still has her childhood stamp collection as well as a group of antique and unusual postcards, and an extensive collection of boxer mugs, figurines and T-shirts, reflecting her love of her three boxer dogs.

The poster series that Donado has collected was originally designed by an advertising agency to promote the National Corn Growers' Association's Corn Classic trade show. The show is held in a different city each year, and the theme of the poster mirrors the unique characteristics of the site.

The first poster in the series, produced in 1990 to advertise the event in Phoenix, Arizona, is one of Donado's favorites. It shows a field of happy corn characters with huge, white cowboy hats and sunglasses. Later posters show the corn characters "jazzing it up" in Kansas City, Missouri, sunbathing in Orlando, Florida, dressed as caballeros in San Antonio, Texas, skiing in Denver, Colorado, and belting out a tune in Nashville, Tennessee, at the "Grand Old Corn Classic."

In 1996, a soybean figure was added when the National Corn Growers' Association and American Soybean Association combined their individual trade shows to create the Commodity Classic show. In 1998, more than 3,700 people attended the show.

"We are trying to make this the premiere event for corn and soybean growers," said Peggy Findley, of the National Corn Growers' Association. "We use the show to provide the growers with the latest information, knowledge and tools to increase the profit of their operation."

The poster for the first

Commodity Classic show, held in Phoenix that year, heralded the organizations' united effort with the headline: "How the West was One."

This year, New Holland handled not only the printing, but also the actual graphic design of the poster. The poster, which advertised the 1999 Commodity Classic show in Albuquerque, New Mexico, shows the corn and soybean characters merrily zipping along the region's famous Route 66 in a convertible. Other notable Albuquerque landmarks, including mountains, a hot air balloon, and cable car, appear in the background. The design of the poster is the graphic theme for the entire show, and is also featured on postcards, magazine ads, T-shirts and other items used to promote the event.

"New Holland plays a very active role, not just as an exhibitor in the trade show, -- but also in promoting the convention," says Laura Deters, of the American Soybean Association. "Every year, they've worked on the promotion and sponsored the show's media reception and media room. Other companies help sponsor the Commodity Classic, too, but what New Holland has done on a year-to-year basis is really unique."

The 1999 Commodity Classic Show began February 18 to 20 at the Albuquerque Convention Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



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