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CONTACT: Amanda Miller

E-mail: pr@money.org

Phone: (719) 482-9871

Frechette and Weinberg to be Honored at World's Fair of Money®

The American Numismatic Association (ANA) is honoring two numismatists who not only lead by example, but pave new avenues within the numismatic hobby. Recognized for their dedication, hard work, passion and contributions, these recipients will be acknowledged at the Chicago [World's Fair of Money®](#) (August 16-20) during the ANA Member & Awards Celebration and at the 131st Anniversary Awards Banquet.

The **Numismatist of the Year** award, first presented in 1995, was established to recognize individuals who have demonstrated long-term leadership in the field and service to the Association. Their accomplishments should have a significant impact on the numismatic community. The 2021 Numismatist of the Year is **Roderick "Rod" Frechette**.



Frechette is "all in" for numismatics and has been actively collecting since he was seven years old. He recalls his enjoyment for collecting starting when his fraternal grandfather gave him an 1868 Shield nickel during an Easter gathering at his grandparents' house. Later that day, he showed the piece to his maternal grandfather, who responded by pulling out a cigar box full of "weird" old coins that he had pulled from pocket change in the 1920s-'50s. He also had some odd-looking silver dimes, quarters, and half dollars from the 1800s. About a week later, Frechette's folks handed him a 1968 shiny new *Guide Book of United States Coins* (the "Red Book"). He was thrilled to discover that his nickel was a Fine-12 and worth more than five cents. Since then, his excitement for the hobby has only grown.

As an adult, he shares his passion for numismatics as a leader who is also committed to learning and educating himself. He has held every position associated with the Albuquerque Coin Club, including president (2011-13), and continues to serve in various capacities. He is the show bourse for the Albuquerque Coin Club's two annual coin shows and creates outstanding displays and presentations.

Frechette earned a bachelor's and master's degree in history and the classics and went on to study law, earning a juris doctorate from the Vermont Law School in 1988. He is a criminal-defense attorney with more than 30 years of experience and owns a law practice in New Mexico that bears his name.

Collecting has given Frechette a greater appreciation for the common heritage he shares with people from all over the world. He has assembled an extensive collection of ancient coinage from Greece, Egypt, biblical areas, Republican Rome, Carthage, and Parthia. His other areas of specialty include colonial Latin American coinage and European medieval coinage from A.D. 600-1500, with an emphasis on specimens from 1323 to 1353, around the time of the Black Death.

Frechette gives talks that educate and capture the imagination of listeners. He is known to take schoolchildren on "Magical History Tours" to get them excited about history and numismatics. During these presentations, he and other members of the Albuquerque Coin Club set up three- to four-dozen coin and paper-money displays and about a dozen on stamps. Dressed in historic costumes, they play the parts of famous figures as the students come through to learn about numismatics. He encourages young people to develop and embrace their "inner-nerd interest in history."

He has also appeared on television and presented a three-part series on Old Testament biblical coinage on Spectrum TV. He has made additional educational presentations to club and civic groups. He gave a talk in February 2021 on coins of the Black Death for the ANA's eLearning Academy and organized a "We are Hammered" ancient and medieval study group that summer.

A frequent presenter at coin shows, Frechette's displays reflect his wide-ranging interests. A few of his award-winning exhibits include "Colonial Mexico's Silver Coinage, 1542-1812" and "Notgeldmunzen: Nuremburg Tram Tokens, 1920-1924." Frechette is a life member (one of only four) of the Albuquerque Coin Club and a member of the International Coin Club of El Paso and the U.S. Mexican Numismatic Association.

Frechette, who also was recognized for his dedication to the hobby with a Glenn Smedley Memorial Award this year, says he is tremendously honored and shocked to receive the ANA's Numismatist of the Year award. He feels like he's "a child standing on the shoulders of giants." Numismatics has always been fun for him, but this honor reminds him of the responsibility he has to pay it forward. He has done a lot to further the hobby, but he is far from finished. "There is so much more for me to do, learn, and share."

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In honor of his extraordinary accomplishments in the field of numismatics, the ANA has bestowed its 2022 **Lifetime Achievement Award** on error-coin specialist **Fred Weinberg**. During his 50 years working as a full-time dealer, Weinberg has helped countless collectors determine whether their coin that looks "different" is a genuine mint error or a piece that was damaged after it left the coining facility and entered circulation.

In the early 1960s, Weinberg had a newspaper route in Los Angeles that ended up sparking his interest in numismatics. After collecting payment from customers, he would look through the change he had received for valuable coins and errors. One night, someone gave him an 1882 \$10 gold piece as payment, which inspired him to become an avid collector. He learned about the minting process and credits three of the "greats" in the error hobby – Mort Goodman, Arnie Margolis, and Syd Kass – with motivating and encouraging him to become further involved with coins.



As someone who is drawn to unusual things, Weinberg naturally gravitated towards errors and eventually turned his passion into a profession with a full-time dealer in 1972. In 1986 he was one of the original 31 Professional Coin Grading Service (PCGS) dealers appointed to assist the company in making markets in coins and descriptions. He also worked as an authenticator of major U.S. Mint errors.

An esteemed expert in the field, Weinberg has provided numismatic guidance to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and Federal Trade Commission (FTC), as well as many U.S. and European banks and insurance companies. He also has helped the U.S. Secret Service determine the authenticity of gold coins. During his career, he has made hundreds of trips to Europe and purchased more than \$300 million worth of U.S. gold coins from European banks, dealers, and estates. Weinberg has also worked on cases for the Los Angeles District Attorney's Office and other law enforcement agencies throughout the country.

In 1973 Weinberg & Company was the only professional coin dealer chosen by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) to examine and identify the many errors represented among the 2.5 million Carson City silver dollars held at the U.S. Bullion Depository at West Point, New York.

An annual contributor to *A Guide Book of United States Coins* (the "Red Book"), Weinberg has been featured on CNN, Discovery Channel, NPR Radio, and many TV news programs in various cities. He co-authored the 2010 text *100 Greatest U.S. Error Coins* and the third

and fourth Editions of *The Error Coin Encyclopedia*. He has also contributed his research on the minting process and major U.S. Mint error coins to other books and articles.

A longtime member of the American Numismatic Association, Weinberg also holds memberships in the Professional Numismatists Guild (PNG), National Coin & Bullion Association (NCBA), and the Numismatic Literary Guild. He has served the hobby in various leadership roles, including as past president of the PNG (1999-2001) and chairman of NCBA (2007-10).

Although retired since 2021, Weinberg plans to attend conventions to meet up with friends he has made over the years. He says he is grateful to the ANA for "this incredible acknowledgement of my 50-plus years as a full-time dealer/numismatist (and a dozen years before that as a collector)." He feels extremely lucky to have been able to turn his hobby into a decades-long profession, one in which he has "never experienced a moment of boredom or dismay."

The American Numismatic Association is a congressionally chartered, nonprofit educational organization dedicated to encouraging the study and collection of coins and related items. The ANA helps its nearly 28,000 members and the public discover and explore the world of money through its vast array of educational and outreach programs as well as its museum, library, publications, and conventions. For more information, call 719-632-2646 or visit [money.org](https://www.money.org).