

DRIP POINTS



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE NATIONAL INSULATOR ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 18 NUMBER 4 SUMMER 1990

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Region Vice President

NIA National in PORTLAND July 6-8

If you have items of interest to NIA members,
send them to: *DRIP POINTS* c/o Don Reinke
2513 Flintridge Pl., Ft Collins, CO 80521

● FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear NIA members and Friends,

It is almost inconceivable that my two year term as your President is about to end! I believe that in my final formal address to you it would be appropriate to review the last two years and see what has been accomplished. In a letter to members of the Board of Directors dated July 31, 1988 I outlined the following objectives for the ensuing two years:

1. To register our logo as a trademark for the purpose of protecting our interest in it.

Result: After obtaining documents from the Federal Government it was determined that we probably do not qualify for a trademark and even if we did register, the legal cost of fighting any infringement would be prohibitive.

2. To explore and implement some type of multi-year membership renewal process.

Result: Thanks to the efforts of Membership Director John deSouza, multi-year membership renewal became a reality during the current fiscal year.

3. To involve Regional Vice-Presidents in membership and show host recruitment.

Result: While not effectively measurable, the V.P.'s have made a strong effort to achieve both ends of this objective.

4. To develop a comprehensive manual for show hosts to assist in the planning and execution of shows at all levels.

Result: The NIA " Comprehensive Show Hosts Planning Handbook" was published in late 1989 and has already been distributed all over the country.

5. To continue the development and marketing of NIA products.

Result: Thanks to the tireless efforts of NIA Director of Product Marketing, Jackie Linscott, the sale of NIA products has assisted significantly with financing the activities of the NIA.

6. To complete the development of 10 year service pins.

Result: At the 1989 NIA National, qualifying members were presented with either 10 or 15 year service bars to wear under their name tags in appreciation for their years of dedicated support.

7. To complete the more expeditious computerization of membership records started by Kevin Lawless.

Result: Thanks again to John deSousa, our membership records are fully automated and many fine reports have been generated to reflect the NIA's membership status.

8. To continue the NIA's role in exposing fake and altered insulators to the membership. This will include publicity and insistence on compliance with labeling of such items.

Result: An article on fake and altered insulators with photos was submitted to twelve antique publications nationwide. Five of the papers published the article generating many inquiries about the hobby. At the Allentown National, enforcement of the labeling rule was implemented successfully.

9. To vigorously pursue other ethical violations to maintain the integrity which has set our hobby apart from most others.

Result: The NIA successfully negotiated a nearly total settlement of a \$3,000.00 indebtedness by one collector as well as many lesser settlements. The appointment of Ethics Committee Chairman Elton Gish resulted in the settlement of yet other disputes.

As I look at this list I must confess a feeling of satisfaction for our successes. I credit these to a super group of Board Members and Committee Chairpersons whose commitment to the hobby is beyond question. It is encouraging to know that many of these fine people will continue serving during the next administration to carry us to even greater heights in the new decade.

In closing I would like to thank each of you who have offered kind words of support and encouragement during the last two years. It has been a pleasure to serve the NIA and the hobby and has been an experience I will always remember fondly.

Sincerely,



● **FROM THE WESTERN REGION VICE-PRESIDENT**

The last three years have flown by, and a new vice president will soon take over. My thanks to all of you in the Western Region for keeping the hobby's expanding interest, integrity and growth as ever important goals to follow. It has been great to see so much interest shown by new collectors and "old" collectors bitten by the bug again. I have enjoyed the experience!

Right now, we are all gearing up for the June 30th to July 8th extravaganza. The Nor-Cal Insulator Club's show and sale in Auburn, CA is Saturday, June 30th, with set-up on Friday afternoon. Sunday, July 1st, the club will sponsor an excursion to the "Ridge Line" in the Sierras for members and show dealers with a free drawing for an E.C. & M. Co. insulator for participants.

Of course, we are all looking forward to the NIA convention in Portland on July 6, 7 and 8, 1990! I hope to see all of you this summer.

With Love, from "Mother Patocka"

● **FROM THE CENTRAL REGION VICE-PRESIDENT**

The 1990 Regional Show held in Port Arthur, Texas was a huge success. There was a good turnout, collectors came from as far as Alaska, New York and Florida.

There is a definite upsurge of interest in insulator collecting in the Central region. There are many new collectors. Let's all make it our goal to get these collectors in the NIA Don't depend on someone else, let's all get involved in promoting our hobby.

The 21st National Insulator show and Convention in Portland, Oregon is a must. Plan to attend and make this one of the best Nationals ever.

See you in Portland,
John Hall

- **FROM THE 2ND PAST PRESIDENT**

Hello members. It's been a while since I've taken the time to put pen in hand, but I have a few moments to share some thoughts.

Much has happened in our hobby over the past year or so and in my personal life as well. Our hobby has seen a new excitement that hopefully will last years. Take a look at the "crossroads" section of Crown Jewels. Carol might have to go to 81/2X11 format if the "want ads" keep growing. This is fantastic. Several years ago I would have only dreamed that such a revival would happen on our hobby. Lot's of "old timers" have renewed interest, but more importantly the "new blood" is responsible for our rapid growth. I've had the opportunity to serve the NIA, as a board member for 11 years and have really enjoyed doing my part for this great hobby. The NIA has matured in a positive way since my first position as information director in 1979. The hobby has matured too, and lots of interesting things have happened in the past year, such as great digging expeditions in Richmond, VA and Detroit, MI.

My personal involvement in collecting has changed direction a bit the last couple of years, when I finally realized that even though (as Jerry Turner says) "I want it all", I really can't afford to have it all. But I'm still involved in it all and I love collecting insulators (CD 162 H.G.-Hemingray is my specialty). I'm now in the process of new job responsibilities (management at the music store) and am now a home buyer - which is going to be a museum when I'm done. Please visit when around my area, I have a spare bedroom! I also finished the second edition of the "Complete Book of Lightning Rod Balls", co-authored with Rod Krupka. What a project that was! Speaking of Rod Krupka - much congratulations from all of us that are his friends - as he was married to Sandy Klee (whom most of you know) on April 7, 1990! Don't feel bad if you missed the wedding - we all found out after it was over. That's OK two can play that game. (hint)

In closing, I want to thank all the people in this hobby that supported me through my term as NIA President, and in general the membership. I look forward to many more years of service to the hobby, and I hope that my contributions and efforts will be a contributing factor in the long term advancement of the hobby.

See you all in Portland in July

Mike Bruner

• FROM THE 1ST PAST PRESIDENT

”How To Be A Dealer”

It’s simple! Buy a bunch of insulators, put a lot of price stickers on them, rent a sales table at the next show, listen to the grumbles from the crowd and then sell them all at a big profit!

Seriously, there is some science to ”selling” anything. The idea is to ”guess” as to what a particular insulator should and will sell for, and then buy it for an amount of money which, after you take out the cost of table space, advertising, gas and tolls, motel, meals, etc., you will have realized some profit. The advantage that some of us insulator dealers are finding is that we are a relatively captive audience; there are far more ”buyers” than there are ”sellers”. Why? Because, for whatever reason, there are not as many collectors willing to gamble on buying enough individual insulators or small collections of them to warrant reselling them at shows (anyone complaining about too few Crown Jewels ads better get new reading glasses, because there are more sales ads per issue in the past year than in ANY other year in CJ’s history!)

SO WHAT, YOU SAY? Well, sales table holders are an absolute necessity in order to hold a successful show, be it a National, Regional or a local show. Without sufficient sales table rent revenue, NO show promoter may begin to realize a profit, even with contributions from the NIA or local clubs, or admission charges. Further, there won’t be enough items for the attendees to buy, which will also hamper future planning by potential show hosts. Without those dealers to plan on for show revenues, a show host cannot justify the expense of holding a show in the first place.

In the past several weeks prior to my writing this correspondence, I have attended three shows: the Central Regional Show in Port Arthur, Texas, the Yankee Polecat Insulator Club Show in Enfield, Connecticut, and the Chesapeake Bay Insulator Club Show in Towson, Maryland. One show, the Yankee Polecat Show, was outstanding by every stretch of the imagination, except one: the show made no money (I’ll come back to that). The other two were, in varying stages, less than outstanding.

The Central Regional Show, in all honesty, was a disappointment. After a fine Central Regional (Pearland, TX in 1987) and a wonderful National (Houston, 1988), I expected a show with

at least some of the support of those prior events. There was none. NO ONE from the Central Region, outside of local Texans, Louisianans and Carol McDougald were in attendance. Support from the Southeast was very disappointing and, despite the presence of several long distance collectors like Jim Bergman from Alaska, President Mike and Treasurer Ross from California, and myself, the overall effect was a show with a sparsity of insulator sales displays and sparse walk-through, despite ample publicity by the hosts, the supporting clubs and the NIA. I was more than pleased with my overall sales, given the circumstances, and will attend will attend other Texas shows, so it didn't hurt me at all, but if the NIA is only given one bid for Regional Show and there are no dealers to support that show, how far away will hobby be from NO REGIONAL THIS YEAR again, as we had several times in the 1970's and early 80's.

The Maryland show was a pleasant surprise, since it is only the CBIC's second show (and year in existence). Snow certainly hampered things, but the walk-through was adequate and sales were brisk at more tables than just mine! The problem - you guessed it - sales tables! There were only 14 tables manned, despite room for quite a few more. I don't know the financial particulars for the club, but I can't believe that the show can prosper with only 14 tables rented! I would like to see more shows in the Middle Atlantic region, since it is obviously growing with new collectors. Now it's time to cultivate new dealers!

As we enter the 1990's, show hosts will be facing more expensive halls to rent, higher advertising costs, insurance and seemingly insurmountable odds to continue to establish cost-effective shows for you, the hobby populace, to attend. Admission fees are inevitable and will probably be charged at more and more shows, even local ones, as expenses continue to rise. At the same time as our hobby has grown in size, however, our SHOWS have NOT! The National shows of the 1970's and early 1980's usually held 80-100 sales tables. Our Nationals are still stuck in that size range and our regionals, for whatever reason, haven't approached a National in stature in over a decade, except for those Regionals which were more bottles than insulators! The net result is the same: without adequate sales, there will not be enough dealers, without enough dealers, there will be not be enough shows, and our hobby will no longer enjoy the prosperity and strength of the last five years.

ANY collector can "sell" insulators at a show. By putting one's

resources (namely, brains, ingenuity, marketing skills, a little work and a little gambling luck) to work, you can be a successful insulator dealer. You don't have to sell \$5,000 insulators to be successful, either. Some smaller collections are always available if you do your homework and you would be surprised at the number of bargains you may find on your fellow dealers' tables, if only you'd look for them! Sooner than you think, you can cover some expenses or the cost of some better pieces for your own collection (only they were too expensive for your budget!)

Give some thought to supporting a few of you local and regional shows - the show hosts and your fellow collectors will appreciate you for it!

Good collecting and SEE YOU IN PORTLAND!
Kevin Lawless NIA #1679

• **FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

In a little over a month from now, the location for the 1991 Central Region National Insulator Show will be announced. Two excellent national proposals were again received from this region, indicating strong and growing interest in the hobby. Several people worked very hard on these proposals and the insulator fraternity owes much to the energy and enthusiasm of these collectors.

You still have time to contact me with any proposals for the 1991 Eastern and Western Regional Shows. It is always nice to be able to announce the regional location at the General Meeting, even if a firm date has not been established.

I am sure everyone enjoys reading the short articles in the "Discoveries" section of Drip Points. Over the decades, there have been so many interesting and unusual finds of insulators that all of us would like to hear more about them. Not just the exotic finds, but that neat piece in your collection that was spotted in a ditch, or the line of yellow amber whatever you found years ago. So much of our hobbies history and insulator sources remains a mystery to but a few lucky collectors. Please share your knowledge and experiences with the rest of us. When you sit down to write it, you will likely find the good memories just come pouring out.

See you in Portland.
Eric Halpin NIA #2768

● **FROM THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE**

Howdy to all of you! Emanating from the beautiful golden spike country is this very timely communique about the NIA officer positions NOW OPEN. Following this are no fancy campaign bites or blitzes, just three candid candidate letters of introduction for two positions: NIA President and Western Region Vice-President. **Please read these letters!**

Also, please keep in mind that there is only one candidate for the office of NIA President: Eric Halpin. There has been ample time and notice to solicit other candidates, so to keep NIA expenditures down, NO BALLOTS will be issued to vote for President. Please join me in welcoming Eric and thanking him for his dedication and enthusiasm for serving The Hobby in our most important position!

The office of Western Region Vice-President is a *pony* of another color, however. Two extremely fine candidates, Dwayne Anthony and Steve Watkins, are transmitting their *signal* of availability herein. They both *R* very *Good* candidates for this Extremely Critical and Major (*EC&M*) position. (Ugh! - ed.)

Please read Steve's and Dwayne's letters and emboss your ballots as soon as you western members receive them and telegraph (or mail) them back to me ASAP! Till then, keep pickin', collectin', and dreamin' of jewels and we'll see you in Portland!

Duane Davenport

● **LETTERS FROM CANDIDATES FOR NIA OFFICE**

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(Eric Halpin for President)

Fellow NIA Members,

My name is Eric Halpin, NIA #2768, and I am soliciting your support for the position of NIA President from 1990-1992.

I have been actively involved in the insulator hobby for about 13 years as a collector and researcher of Canadian telegraph insulators. I enjoy writing fiction and non-fiction articles for *Crown Jewels* and try to display some of my insulators at Nationals and Regionals whenever possible.

It has been my pleasure to serve the NIA as Executive Director for the past four years. The insulator hobby continues to provide me with so much enjoyment, not only for the insulators but also for the many fine people that I meet and correspond with, that I wish to continue to help the organization in any way I can.

I believe that the NIA, presently, is very well run and is financially sound. This means that the NIA can continue to provide **real** support for future show hosts. My mandate is to continue to ensure that all insulator collectors can enjoy good insulator shows for years to come.

Sincerely,
Eric Halpin

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(Dwayne Anthony for Western Region Vice-President)

Greetings Fellow NIA Members,

My name is Dwayne Anthony. I reside in San Bernardino, CA, and would very much like to serve you as your next Western Region Vice-President. I am currently President of the Central & Southern Counties Insulator Club, and the San Bernardino Co. Historical Bottle and Collectible Club.

I have been an NIA member since 1986 and an avid supporter of its goals and principles. This position would present me with the opportunity to do more for you, the NIA, and new collectors. If elected as your representative, I will, for the course of my term: attend all future National and Western Regional shows and General Membership Meetings; contact new subscribers of *Crown Jewels* within the Region and supply them with NIA information and membership forms; and most importantly, keep an open line to you , the membership.

I have found great joy in the collecting of insulators and have made many new and truly good friends. With your vote, I will be given the opportunity to contribute more to the hobby and the people who have done so much to make insulator collecting such a pleasurable experience for me. I would appreciate your support.

Dwayne Anthony

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(Steve Watkins for Western Region Vice-President)

For those of you who hate to read voters pamphlets, like me, lets make it simple: Vote for Steve Watkins Western - Region-Vice President.

If you don't mind reading - Here goes. I have been collecting Insulators for longer than 20 years. I have seen many changes over the years. There were times of plenty, when people were stripping insulators and selling them in bulk. Now, there are still finds, but one has to look hard, and insulators are becoming more and more scarce.

I have been to 10 Nationals, and enjoy the company of so many friends. I will look to continue the hobby with a sense of friendship. I would like to see more time spent on putting together detailed reports on various CD numbers. There are many specialists out there, including me and my beehives. Detailing color and other variations would be useful.

Putting on this year's National, has been a great experience. The NIA handbook of show data was most useful. More of this information is always needed. The NIA has come a long way in 21 years. I certainly would like to see this continue. I will do all I can if elected to promote insulator collecting.

Again - vote for Steve Watkins - Western Region V.P.

Hope to see most of you in Portland this year!

Thanks,
Steve

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• FROM THE TREASURER: N.I.A. FINANCIAL REPORT,
JAN 1 - MAR 31 1990

BEGINNING BALANCE: (1-1-90) \$ 4,266.37

REVENUES: \$ 2,401.06

Dues	2302.00
Stationary	40.00
Interest	59.06

EXPENDITURES: \$ -1459.01

Postage	335.96
Drip Points	88.00
Awards	796.34
Misc	2.22

BALANCE: (3-31-90) \$ 5,208.42

Respectfully Submitted,
Ross Huth, Treasurer

