#### A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

mazingly enough, I've managed to get through my first year as Information Director - and with only minor scrapes and bruises! I feel like I'm starting to get the process down, and thanks to the help and understanding of the many contributors to *Drip Points*, the publishing business is getting easier.

One of the things that has really helped is that so many of you make your contributions electronically. At first, I received many of the inputs on a computer disk, but recently, more and more of the documents come in over the INTERNET - an indication that the "information superhighway" is becoming evermore a reality. One item to note is that I have not been able to break the code for translating Wordperfect 6 for

Windows into something useful. Microsoft tells me they are working on the converter, but it's not done yet. So, to make my life easier, if you compose in WP 6, save the file as an earlier version (e.g., WP 5) and send it in this format I've had no problems with the multitude of other file types you send me.

This issue of *Drip Points* is packed with features, ladies and gentlemen - so read it from cover to cover. Perhaps the high point is the first information release of **insulator insurance** for NIA members. This is a breakthrough that has been in the works for a long time, and has finally come to fruition thanks to the tireless efforts of our President, Dwayne Anthony. Also in this issue, we bring you the official NIA position on fake and altered items in hopes that this problem can be laid to

 $(Continued\ from\ page\ 1)$ 

rest.

Ron Norton, Chair of the Nominations Committee asked me to remind all of the Central Region members to return their ballots for Vice President as soon as possible. They must be postmarked no later than June 10th.

Some young folks wrote in this month: See the Letters to the Editor below.

Finally, this is the last issue before the Houston National and we all look forward to seeing our old friends and making some new ones over the Fourth of July weekend. See you there!

**Tom Katonak** 

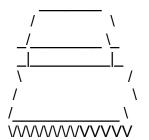
### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Subj: Insulators

Date: 94-03-28 08:02:10 est From: joem@pro-wbbs.cts.com

To: TomK164440

As you said, Spring has arrived and many people are heading to the ole tracks to search for jewels of the railroad pastime. I have already ventured out to the local tracks, and been rewarded with Hemingrays. My freinds and I are probably some of the youngest collectors in the buisness.(I am 13) We may not have the "threadless pilgrim hats" but we are satisfied by finding 42's. This past November I went to the local show. Itwas then that I realized the diversity in Insulator types. There are somany! Purple, green, amber, blue, white, red, ... the list goes on and on I just wanted to let my fellow collectors know that there are also youngpeople invived in collecting. Good luck insulator hunting!



--Joe Marianek (a devoted N.I.A member)

(Ed note: Bobby Younger's 13 page letter was edited due to space limitations, but a number of his illustrations are used throughout this issue)

Dear NIA,

When I last wrote, I think my insulator total was 300; now it's 549. I finally got a non-US insulator, a CD 154 Dominion-42 in very light honey amber for \$4.50. I also got a Whittall Tatum #14 baby signal in the same color at the same antique store. I've gotten so many new ones that I had to make a small pamphlet....I took a walk...to where there hadn't been any insulators for a long time, (but this time there was) a pole that was snapped in two and not connected to wires, with 8 crossarms loaded with insulators. No big deal---NOT!!! (After several trips by this area, a run-in with biting dogs, police reports to fill out) ... I asked a Santa Fe worker about the insulators. He said to go ahead and take them. The pole came from Burlingame KS and had been hit by a car.

I have a lot of hunting to do in my county, approximately 30 miles of RR track, lots of abandoned telephone lines and in-use telephone lines, plus antique shops. I'd like to start an insulator club in my area. It would be called the Santa Fe Trail Insulator Club, although I don't know where to start. I've started to put up flyers that say I'm looking for insulators, jars and lightning rod balls ... I got a few replies.

When are you going to have a show in Topeka? I can't go to anywhere else. How do you (collectors) do it? Every issue of Drip Points has new finds in it. Me finding a threadless in Kansas is like trying to find a needle in a haystack. (Is that possible?) If so, where should I look?

(Bobby's letter details several successful hunts and some very nice finds, but he says "85% of my collection is Hemingray. Most is modern." He also details the following well thought-out list:)

## **Bobby Younger's Insulator Hunting Kit**

- 1. Potato fork (Ol' Faithful)
- 2. Hand shovel
- 3. Heavy rope (for pulling down side mounts)
- 4. Small first aid kit
- 5. Wire cutters
- 6. Gloves
- 7. Pliers
- 8. Long handled cutting tool (to whack weeds)
- 9. Reference Books (optional)
- 10. Drinks (water, pop or juice)
- 11. Snacks
- 12. Boots (optional, for working in high or scratchy weeds)

Sincerely, **Bobby Younger,** age 16,

PS. Happy collecting.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE **PRESIDENT**

s I write this final message in the capacity of NIA president, it is difficult to conceive that my two year term will conclude at the 1994 National in Houston. There is definite truth in the old adage: "Time sure flies when you're having fun!"

As promised in the last issue of Drip Points, the long awaited full coverage insurance plan created especially for insulator collections is now available! This is a benefit offered exclusively to NIA members only. Keep in mind that this is an NIA sponsored program--all inquiries and policy requests must be made directly with the insurance company.

AFFORDABLE

**INSULATOR** 

A very low, competitive rate of \$5 per \$1,000 valuation for an annual policy makes the option of insuring your collection much more easily practical and

affordable. Don't assume your current homeowner's or renter's insurance company will cover your collection, unless you have secured such a provision in writing. A large number of companies recently surveyed offered very limited coverage or no coverage at all. After considerable research, your NIA Board found this carrier to offer an impressive plan with excellent loss coverage.

For further information and a policy application, please make direct contact with John P. Slade & Son Insurance Agency, Inc. at the address listed elsewhere in this issue of Drip Points. One note for Californians: At this writing, due to the recent major earthquake in Southern California, a temporary moratorium is in effect excluding earthquake coverage from new policies. Interestingly enough, this does not effect coverage for losses due to fire caused by earthquake! All other U.S. States and Canada are exempt from the moratorium. Inquire for updates.

After an extensive review of the current problem involving for the most part, lightning rod ball reproductions, the NIA Board of Directors--with the assistance of the various NIA Committee Chairpersons and valuable input from the General Membership--recently issued an official NIA position paper on fakes and reproductions. Much more NIA follow-up work will continue. This could include research directed toward documenting identifying all known and/or suspected

fake, altered, reproduced insulators. As always, we appreciate your continued input on this matter.

and it will be the snow where I will The NIA National and Regional Shows for this year are fast approaching. In fact, you may be already packing for the Houston National when you read this! All current predictions point to a strong showing of both buyers and dealers at all three shows. Don't read about all the fun after the fact...be a part of it!

> While at the National in Houston, be sure to make plans to attend the NIA General Business Meeting held on the evening of NIA Day (Friday). Included in the meeting will be the introduction of your new NIA President and Central V.P., and the announcement of the locations for the

> > (Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

1995 National and Regional shows.

Before I vacate my position I wish to thank two extraordinary and dedicated groups of individuals that have provided me with a great deal of support over the past two years.

The first group includes all of the NIA Board Members and Committee Chairpersons who respectfully served with me during my 1992-1994 term. I sincerely hope the membership will join me in acknowledging a job well done! They deserve a tremendous amount of appreciation from all of us for their intense focus on the positive advancement of our hobby.

The second group deserving equal appreciation consists of the **entire NIA Membership**...yes, each and every one of **YOU**! Your support through continued

NIA membership, and hosting and attending NIA sponsored shows has kept our organization in a solid and healthy state of advancement. In turn this has provided me with the priceless opportunity to better serve and promote the NIA and our hobby. As dedicated and supportive NIA members, I salute you all!

As I advance to the position of First Past President for the next two years, I vow to continue on as an active board member. My "line of communication" will always remain open for your thoughts and suggestions.

In this, my final closing, I want it known to all that it has been a genuine pleasure serving you as NIA President!

**Dwayne Anthony**, NIA #3619 President, 1992 - 1994

# FROM THE SECOND PAST PRESIDENT

It all started one Friday evening in Tacoma, Washington during the NIA National Convention in 1984. I met Kevin Lawless, then Executive Director of the NIA, and we hit it off pretty well. So well, in fact, that Kevin and I stayed up talking about the insulator hobby until well after 1 a.m. while my wife slept soundly in our state of the art Motel 6 suite. Kevin shared the importance of the NIA in maintaining the integrity of the hobby. I was impressed with him and with the mission of the NIA although I was never much of a "joiner" of associations.

Two years later, Kevin ran for NIA President and I agreed to serve as Information Director. After a two year tour of duty as ID, I replaced Kevin (replace is an inadequate word, it was more like I tried to fill his rather large shoes!) president. That meant another six year commitment to the NIA as the president fills three 2-year terms, first as president, then as first past president, and second past president. Contrary to the views of some that this is too much time on the Board of Directors, it provides a degree of transition and flow that would be lost if the experience of former presidents was merely discarded upon completion of their terms.

attend my final meeting as a member of the Board in my capacity of second past president. **As I** reflect on the last eight years of active participation on the NIA Board and in the insulator hobby I have reached several conclusions I believe are worthy of mention.

- 1. The people I have met and worked with in the hobby are some of my dearest friends and finest people I ever had or will have the occasion to know.
- 2. The experiences of sharing the hobby, whether by cross-country trip, buying/selling collections, talking on the phone, research, writing stories, telling stories, listening to stories, making up stories (just kidding), collaborating with others on projects, writing letters, helping new collectors, etc., etc., are the fondest of my entire life.
- 3. After engaging the hobby to the point of addiction (20-30 hours per week for many years) I have now been able to put it into perspective and balance with the rest of my life, namely my God and my wife (they are not the same, in case some were wondering!) Despite the reduction of my collection from a peak of 9,500+ pieces to now just under 1,300, I can honestly say I am now enjoying the hobby as much as ever.
- 4. The NIA is a viable and essential body for maintaining the hobby despite all recent political rhetoric to the contrary. I challenge the detractors to spend eight years serving the hobby on the Board and then check their perceptions against the realities. It is easy to bash something in which one has no investment of time, energy, or sweat. I feel that unless you've walked in the shoes of a Board member, one is unqualified to evaluate the quality

of the journey.

As we look forward to a new president and changes in the Board of Directors we should reflect on and modify President Kennedy's speech by thinking more about what we can do for our hobby than what it can do for us. Let's support those who have chosen to speak by their actions and sacrifices. In my experience there have been many such heroes who have gone unnoticed outside of the internal workings of the NIA, without whom we would have no hobby worth sharing.

For those who have supported and shared the hobby with me the last eight exciting and rewarding years, from the bottom of my heart, THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES!

#### Mike Guthrie

# FROM THE EASTERN REGION VICE - PRESIDENT

or you folks who haven't had to experience the misery of the snow & garbage of this winter, you cannot imagine the relief of looking at green out the window. Even more importantly, the shows have started and you don't have to worry about getting stranded in a snowstorm on the way there or back. The St. Petersburg FL Bottle show continues to be a rapidly improving show for insulator collectors and is one you should think about getting to. The Chesapeake Bay Insulator Club (Baltimore) held their show the first weekend in March. This was a fun show with not a lot of dealers, but plenty of good stuff for all. Attendance was good all day and those of us who set up there were rewarded. Although the exact circumstances of the deal are not known, a gorgeous 735.6 Big Blue with a bunch of milk and a couple of big goobers sort of ambled in and was quickly liberated. The bottle show the next day produced a couple of nice pieces, but nothing to write home about. The Yankee Polecat Show was held on March 27 and was the usual show stopper. The crowd was heavy all day and a large number of pieces changed hands. The cheapy tables thinned out fast, but there were some choice pieces that changed hands also. Some of these were a CD 316 Brookfield, a 110.6 with some skirt repair, a 701.1 egg (a walk in), an Elliott Hat, a VNM 151 NATCO in good peacock, a 701.6 Confederate egg, a 110.5 New Eng Tel (straight embossing) and a 109 Chicago pony. One of the real sleepers may have been a CD 287 No. 135 with very faint Locke embossing. Say what?

Upcoming shows in the Eastern region that may not be history by the time you read this are the CDIC show in Gang Mills NY on May 22 and the Eastern Regional in Kulpsville, PA on Sept. 24 & 25. The Regional will again be held on the same weekend as the Renninger's extravaganza, so get there early & hit both. Of course there is the National in Houston (not eastern region, but a must).

More plaudits to the Dixie Jewels Insulator Club. Guys like Keith Roloson & Jim Overstreet seem to really making things tick. Accolades to Joanne Overstreet for being a good sort and letting the club adopt the premises as an unofficial clubhouse.

Insulator collecting, although a ton of fun, seems to be injurious to your health. Most of you are aware that Kevin Lawless

has had his share of problems this winter, but appears to be on the mend and approaching a shadow of his former self. Say hello to "pucker pants" Lawless in Houston and wish him well. Doug Williams is recovering from a back operation which apparently went quite well. Hope to see you in Houston also, Dougie.

I have had a lot of response, both written and verbal concerning the subject of fakes & reproductions and the need for some NIA position and plan of action on such. ALL replies were pro such action and in general deplored the idea of any deception through fakes & repros in the hobby. Obviously, ideas on exactly how this should be managed varied quite a bit. Without stealing thunder from Dwayne Anthony, I feel safe in saying that something stronger and in writing will be forthcoming imminently. This whole subject is not always crystal clear with each issue, complaint or whatever so what transpires each time will undoubtedly require good judgement, diplomacy and considerations of not only what seems right, but what seems fair at the time. Progress will be made, but it will require the also dood intentions. understanding & cooperation of all of us to make it work well.

See you in Houston; BE THERE and good collecting.

**Dick Bowman**; NIA #597 Eastern Region Vice-President 

## FROM THE CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT

he Insulator collecting hobby is alive and well in the NIA Central Region! I'm proud to say that we now have six active insulator clubs, with some involved in sponsoring major NIA and local annual shows or and/or meets. exchanging newsletters with other clubs around the country. I firmly believe that the strength of clubs reflect the health of the hobby. Our membership lists include collectors within our own area as well as support members from states other than our own. As a result, we are all learning better ways to serve this wonderful hobby of ours. (Clubs in the Western and Eastern Regions continue to set a good example for us.) Thanks and congratulations go out to the members of these clubs in the Central Region for all their hard work and dedication:

Greater Chicago Insulator Club, Northern

Illinois & Indiana, Wisconsin

Huron Valley Bottle & Insulator Club,

Michigan

O.K. Insulator Club. Oklahoma

Missouri Insulator club, Kansas, Iowa &

Missouri

National Trail Insulator Club, Ohio

Lone Star Insulator Club, Texas

The time may come when we shall have to call ourselves the International Insulator Association! Correspondence and trading with insulator collectors in other lands has been picking up at a fast rate, and foreign travel has taken on a new significance, now that so many interesting pieces have been brought back from "over there", "down there" or "down under". At the 1994 Houston Silver Anniversary National Show in July, don't be surprised to see collectors Warren and Faye Foster from Australia and Marco Schmitz-LeHanne of

Germany roaming the aisles! That's right, they're flying over for the National! Is that great news or what?

SEE THE
WILDFLOWER
QUILT ON THE INSIDE
COVER

The Lone Star Insulator
Club is sponsoring this special NIA
National and we extend an invitation to all
insulator collectors everywhere, hoping

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

you can be with us to celebrate 25 consecutive years of National Insulator Shows. We have many surprises in store for you, but we're so proud of our queensize Texas Wildflower (raffle) quilt that I'd like to show you a picture of it right now. Will you be the lucky winner? Keep up with what's going on by reading the National Show updates in Crown Jewels and Rainbow Riders' magazines. We

look forward to seeing you in Houston the weekend of July 1-3!

Happy Collection!

Marilyn Albers, NIA #541 Central Region VP 1992-1994

## FROM THE WESTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

ummertime! When most folks get vacations, and can go camping, fishing, swimming and travel to great insulator shows!!

As soon as June finishes bustin' out all over, the NIA National Show will begin! July 1 - 3, in Houston, Texas. Now I know that lots of you think that those *Texicans* are awful liars, but I can swear to you that when they put on a show, they really do it right. Those of you that went to the NIA National in Houston in 1988 can remember what a great show it was, and the 1994 National looks like it's going to be even better! I urge all of you to attend if you can - and take advantage of that Texas hospitality.

One month later, on August 6 & 7, the Western Regional Show will be held in Auburn, California. Good stuff has been showing up lately and hopefully, some nice pieces will make their appearance at Auburn. If you want to get a sales table, call Pat Patocka at (916) 663-3681. It's gonna be a great show!

The following month on September 17 is the show in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The Enchantment Insulator Club will hold it's annual bash again. Better check with Tom Katonak at (505) 898-5592 for more information.

Just one other reminder: In 1996, the NIA National Show comes back out to the West!

NEED YOUR PROPOSALS FOR THE NEXT NATIONAL BY JANUARY

Proposals for that show should be submitted by January 1 of 1995 which is not that far away! Do any of you have some ideas about hosting the 1996 National? Give me a call if you would like to discuss your ideas!

#### **Grant Salzman**

Western Regional Vice-President

## FROM THE PROMOTION AND EDUCATION DIRECTOR

(Space Saved for Lawless Input)

(Space Saved For Ross Huth Financial Report)

### ...DRIP NOTES

- Don't forget to make your hotel reservations for the National if you haven't done so already!
- Attention Central Region: Ballots for your Vice President have to be postmarked by the 10th of June: Send back to Ron Norton.
  - See the Insulator Insurance Flyer in this issue!
- If you want to order personalized NIA logo stuff and pick it up at the National, call Jill Meier **immediately**!

## FROM THE PRODUCT MARKETING CHAIRMAN

t has been a hectic but productive first year for me as Product Marketing Chairman. Our new, improved T-shirts and mugs are selling well both through the mail and at I wore my T-shirt to a local shows. antique show for a little free advertising! The process for engraving name badges and bars is now in place. Expect a couple of weeks turn-around for these, as it's the busy season for the engraver as well as for insulator collectors. want your badge for the National, place your order now! Call me! I'll do my best to have it by the National, but no guarantees. We're driving down, so the last minute is earlier than it would be otherwise. Also, let me know if you'd like me to hold your badge until the show, and, for any order, please include your phone number in case of any questions. Our logo items will be available for sale at the National. Buy them there, and save me time and yourself money!

Another quick word before I sign off. I'd like to thank my unofficial "Product Marketing Committee" for all their help. Mγ husband Bill prepared computerized artwork that was used for the screen-printing of the T-shirts and mugs, saving the NIA the time and money of having others do inferior work! He has also been a general consultant whenever I needed help. Al and Ginny Way give us space on their sales tables at local shows and sell our products, even when we aren't there to help! This is a fine contribution, as Bill and I rarely have a table of our own. Look for Al and Ginny's table at a show near you!

That's all for now. I hope you all enjoy the summer, and find lots of neat stuff for your collections. See you at the National!

Jill

# FROM THE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

A few quick notes,

If anyone has not received their years of service bars in the past, but feel they are due one, please drop me a line or give me a call.

I am enclosing a renewal form for the use of passing it along to anyone who would like to join the NIA. Thanks goes out to all you members who have paid this year and also the members who have responded to my postcard mailing reminder.

One final note, If you have not noticed, in the bottom left corner of you 1994 membership card are you years of service in the NIA. If you feel this number is in error, please let me know.

Joe J. Beres #563 Membership Director

### 1994 NATIONAL INSULATOR ASSOCIATION MEMBER STATUS

AS OF 5-1-1994

TOTAL NIA NUMBERS USED	5536
NIA NUMBERS NOT ASSIGNED	23
NIA NUMBERS DOUBLE ISSUED	56

	ACTIVE	INACTIVE
 MEMBERS	947	4589
CHARTER	124	762
LIFETIME	32	7(DEC.)
JUNIOR	10	9
CLUBS	3	8
NON U.S. MEMBERS	33	21
21 YEAR MEMBERS	68	0
20 YEAR MEMBERS	28	2
19 YEAR MEMBERS	17	7
18 YEAR MEMBERS	21	8
17 YEAR MEMBERS	25	13
16 YEAR MEMBERS	25	12
15 YEAR MEMBERS	26	9
14 YEAR MEMBERS	22	17
13 YEAR MEMBERS	17	29
12 YEAR MEMBERS	38	32
11 YEAR MEMBERS	33	44
10 YEAR MEMBERS	33	55
9 YEAR MEMBERS	39	69
8 YEAR MEMBERS	28	76
7 YEAR MEMBERS	50	137
6 YEAR MEMBERS	37	141
5 YEAR MEMBERS	62	224
4 YEAR MEMBERS	73 67	322
3 YEAR MEMBERS	67 118	456 885
2 YEAR MEMBERS	_	
1 YEAR MEMBERS	120 MISC.	1968
DECEASED MEMBERS	<u> </u>	75
DOGS		3

## An NIA Position on Fakes and Reproductions

(Issued April 1994)

It has become apparent from a multitude of letters, articles, conversations at shows and telephone calls, that there is a great deal of concern over the increasing number of fake, reproduction, or altered lightning rod balls, insulators, and related items that are appearing at shows. It is also apparent that there are strong negative feelings about such items and that the membership of the NIA, rightly so, wants the NIA to take action on this problem.

Fakes, reproductions and altered items have been on the scene for years. There are many collectors who choose to purchase these often attractive items. We are not criticizing those who choose to acquire such items as this is a free country, but our concern is how such items are represented or misrepresented. The NIA Board of Directors feels that merely having a tag, paper sticker, or removable label identifying an item as not original shows good intent by the seller, but is not enough. Our concern lies with those who choose not to identify these items, or the "secondary" market where a purchaser has the option of removing the tag or label and allowing these items to be purchased without full knowledge of what they really are. It is highly discouraging to any collector, especially new ones, to pay money for an item only to find out later they have been "duped". It is our intent to provide a worry free environment for buyers by requesting sellers to abide by a few simple rules involving good ethical values.

With the above in mind, the NIA Board of Directors has amended Paragraph #3 of the NIA General Show Floor Rules to read:

3. Fakes, alterations, reproductions, and/or highly questionable insulators or related items may only be brought onto the show premises if they are PERMANENTLY MARKED or embossed so as to indicate their lack of authenticity. It shall be the show host's responsibility to strictly enforce this rule and the decision of the show host shall be final.

As points of further clarification or explanation the Board offers the following:

- It is not intended that items in question have to literally be marked "fake" or the equivalent. A permanent marking with the date of manufacture, initials of an individual, or even a name may be sufficient. The goal is that whatever marking is used will cause the prospective purchaser to easily recognize that an item is a reproduction or fake, or cause them to question its authenticity.
- 2. We are asking that hosts of NIA sanctioned shows (and hopefully all insulator shows whether sanctioned or not) note the rules on repro or fake items in their contracts in addition to attaching a copy of the NIA General Show Floor Rules.
- 3. We are asking that show hosts monitor the tables during the set-up and conduct of

the show and take appropriate action if improperly marked and/or questionable items appear on tables. It is understood that the show host will have full support of the NIA for enforcement of the standards set forth. Any NIA Board member(s) who may be in attendance at an NIA sanctioned show will provide active assistance should a show host require such in resolving any violation of the NIA standards.

- 4. NIA sanctioned shows are by definition National and Regional shows but can also be defined as any show where the NIA ribbon is to be awarded for exhibits.
- 5. In addition, we are asking that all NIA members (and hopefully non-members) observe the rules on repro or fake items not only at shows, but at **all times** when dealing with their fellow collectors, including mail order transactions.

In conclusion, the NIA Board of Directors feels that this change in the show rules and subsequent explanations is a forward step and addresses the issue squarely. It is not realistic to expect that 100% of the problems in this area will be solved by change, but with any rule, it takes the understanding, cooperation, and patience of all the NIA members to make this work. If you are a dealer, just don't bring improperly marked repros into a show. It will only make things more difficult. If you are not a dealer and notice questionable items not properly marked, take it upon yourself to point this out to the dealer on the spot. Nearly all will respect your opinion and respond in a positive manner.

Note: The NIA is continuing to research possible ways to assist collectors and show hosts in determining the authenticity or non authenticity of suspected fake, altered and reproduced insulators. Look for future updates.

(National Flyer goes here)

### 1993-1994 NATIONAL INSULATOR ASSOCIATION

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