A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

hank goodness! Winter is finally over! I was nearly snowed out of a great insulator hunt in early May! Actually, we do have an advantage down here in the desert SW: If we go far enough south, we eventually run out of the snow!

Well, a new collecting season is upon us. By the time you read this, many of you will be making final plans for the Chicago National. I hope to see you there! By the way, the National is close to a sell-out in terms of available tables. So if you haven't secured yours, I wouldn't wait much longer! There's a bunch of local shows upcoming as well and these are recounted by the Regional VPs later in this issue. And speaking of shows, don't

forget the two NIA Regional shows in the early Fall. Both the Eastern and Western Regionals will be held the last weekend in September. These will both be premier events - held at a pleasant time of the year.

On a different subject, let me remind all of you that the *Drip Points* is the official publication of the National Insulator Association. The intent here is to use this formal mechanism to convey information about NIA activities and topics within a reasonable timeframe (i.e., quarterly) to the general membership so that everyone receives the same information at the same time. I know that many of you relay this information to the numerous clubs at their scheduled meetings. If you haven't been doing this, please take your copy of

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

the *DP* to the next club meeting and pass it around. If any of you have information of interest to the general membership, be sure to send it to me for distribution. This can be in the form of a letter, EMAIL, a phone call or an informal note. I'll work it into the next issue.

Along these lines, I publish most of the (few!) letters I receive. However, I don't publish multiple or reoccurring letters from the same person that contain the same theme. I figure if you've heard it once, you've heard it!

Well, that's it for my notes. Looking forward to seeing many of you this Summer and Fall!

Tom Katonak

A MESSAGE FROM THE **PRESIDENT**

pring is trying to make an appearance here in northeastern Ohio, and it will not be long until it's time to head west for the 1997 NIA National Convention. Rick, Bob and the members of the Greater Chicago Insulator Club are working hard so that no one will be disappointed. There's a lot to see and do in the Chicago area, so I hope that vou've made your reservations. ľm happy to announce that we have received bids for all three 1998 NIA shows, and I would like to personally thank the bidders for their concern and for their time and effort in making sure that collectors will have an NIA show in their region next year.

With the start of the peak season for shows, flea markets and antiquing, I'd like to remind everyone to trade and purchase wisely. I know that it sounds like a broken record that we're all getting tired of hearing, but there are many pieces out there in the marketplace that are "questionable" as to their authenticity, so be knowledgeable and vigilant. Several members have expressed concern about an influx at recent shows of a number of different threaded American Canadian CD's with. suspicious glass colorations. The number of new lightning rod balls offered in being the marketplace is also increasing. If you're not =

MOST REPUTABLE DEALERS ARE ... HONEST AS THE FUTURE OF THEIR **BUSINESS DEPENDS UPON THESE QUALITIES**

and

sure about the "history" of a piece, ask the dealer offering the piece, and/or seek the opinions of other collectors and dealers. If you're still skeptical about making a purchase, then refrain from doing so.

Most reputable dealers are open and honest, as the future of their business depends upon these qualities. We trust that they are acting honestly and in good faith in their dealings. Dealers at the annual NIA conventions are required to be NIA members, and thus abide by NIA

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

show regulations and by NIA standards of conduct and ethics. They contractually agree to this, and their table reservations are accepted in good faith. Their integrity and reputation are at stake, so have trust in them.

Within the next few weeks, the Hobby Protection Act of 1973 will be up for review by the Federal Trade Commission. Originally enacted to protect political memorabilia and numismatic items with respect to unmarked imitations entering the marketplace, collectors and hobbyists want to let Congress know that there are other items that need to be protected, also. Although the due date for written public comments was May 27th, it still

would not hurt to send a note or an E-mail with your comments to your favorite member of Congress.

Wishing you all good health and prosperity in your "hunt" for those crown jewels of the wire. Have fun, and absorb and nurture the positive aspects of our hobby, as there are many to be found!

Rick Baldwin, NIA # 336 President

...DRIP NOTES

- If you know someone who hasn't paid their dues yet, tell them to send a check to Joe Beres pronto! They need this to get into NIA day at the National.
- MOVING?? Please send your new address to Joe Beres: Don't risk missing your copy of the *Drip Points*!
- Do you have experience in producing videos? If so, we can use you on our Promotion and Education Committee. Call David Wiecek for details..
- NIA-sponsored insulator insurance is available for your collection. It's a great way to protect your collection from fire and theft (See the ad on the inside cover of this issue.)
- Central Regioners: You're running out of time to cast your vote for Central Vice President. Vote now!

- Have you checked out the latest stuff on the Web? Tune in to "http://

FROM THE EASTERN REGION

here will be a 1998 National in the Eastern Region! I can't tell you much more than that at this time, except that it will not be in Marlboro, MA again! © You will hear the full details at the 1997 National in Chicago July 25 - 27.

A number of clubs put on good shows in the Eastern region this spring. They were generally well attended and "upbeat".

I am more and more convinced that many potential collectors are finding out about the insulator hobby from the INTERNET. If your library doesn't have any books on

INCLUDE EMAIL CONTACTS ON ALL YOUR NEWSSLETTERS AND SHOW FLYERS. insulators, and the book store certainly doesn't, how is a new or potential collector supposed to get started? Easy. They

all know about the INTERNET, and they search for insulators and find our Web pages! I encourage everyone who has access to the INTERNET to help promote the hobby in cyberspace. Include E-mail contacts on all your newsletters and show flyers and list some of the INTERNET Web sites or your local club's Web page at www.insulators.com.

You know the Web is filled with useful information when several of the insulator magazines and club newsletters are using material from the Web and reprinting it (with permission) in their publications. Isn't that a refreshing change!

I get a lot of E-mail from new, potential, or curious collectors. I want to quickly relay a couple of messages I have received. In the last several weeks, two civil war historians and diggers have found CD 128 "CSA" insulators and were wondering... Are these relics of the

Confederate States of America? I'm sure they are disappointed with my answer, but when you think about it for a moment, how else would they research what "CSA" on a glass insulator meant?

Another collector who I corresponded with wrote:

"I just wanted to thank you for the information you gave me a few months ago about getting started back in the insulator hobby. I went to my first little insulator show in Beaumont, TX. To my surprise, I met Mr. "Woody" Woodward and he told me about their local club in Houston. (Lone Star Insulator Club) joined and went to my first meeting. didn't know quite what to expect when I attended. (I thought I'd meet a bunch of hard core collectors that really didn't want to deal with a beginner.) I was very pleasantly surprised how friendly and helpful everyone was. I even purchased an insulator. I'm excited to attend the next meeting we have."

To me, that's a pretty positive statement about the future of our hobby!!

Don't have a PC yet? A recent nationwide survey says that a PC is becoming a "must-have" item, just like the telephone and the car. When will you be getting yours?

See you at the National!

Bill Meier, NIA #4322 Eastern Region Vice President

FROM THE CENTRAL REGION

n my last report I mentioned several shows and get-togethers that were going on this Spring. I would like to report on a few of them.

First of all, the Metroplex show lived up to its expectations again and everyone had a good time and several interesting pieces showed up. This show was a little too far for me to go to, but I sure wish I could have been there.

The Collectors Jubilee show in Wheaton, Illinois was great. There were approximately 68 sales tables full of lightning rod equipment and insulators. The weather on Friday was great too. It was around 70 degrees and sunny. I'm looking forward to seeing next year's show.

The Alma, Kansas insulator show was well attended also. A number of veteran collectors from the plains attended this show and I hope the show continues to have success.

Unfortunately, I could not make the Northwestern Insulator Club's show in Bloomington, Minnesota, but I heard it was a great success. Dealers from several states away drove to the show and set up as well as some local dealers. There was a great walk through and a local radio station mentioned the show. This ultimately led to locating the very rare Kenosha Hook insulator for one of the club members. I must give credit to the club members for really promoting the show. I will definitely attend next year.

Dennis Stewart's open house in Cincinnati, Ohio was also well received. A number of local collectors and some new collectors showed up and everyone

went home with box- loads of insulators.

Only one more show before the National for us Midwesterner's. Alan Stastny's hog roast and swap meet will be held on June 6 & 7 at Alan's house. I have attended every one of these and must say that it is a refreshing and relaxing show.

At this time, the National is nearly sold out

with about only five tables left. By the time you read this, I expect to have all 162 sales tables sold. This is shaping up

THIS IS SHAPING UP TO BE THE BIGGEST NATIONAL EVER!

to be the biggest National ever so make your reservations now! I hope to see many of you there.

After I relax from the National, I have two more shows to attend. The first one is the Telephone Collectors International (TCI) show in Erlanger, Kentucky. There will be approximately eight insulator dealers there. This is a first time show in conjunction with the TCI people. I think that it will be well attended by both the people from Dennis Stewart's get together and telephone collectors. The last show for me is the London, Ohio "mini-national". I am looking forward to this show and have already made my reservations.

I'm also looking forward to the warmer weather when I can get out and walk some old lines and visit antique shops and flea markets. It's just around the corner!

Bob Stahr, NIA #4186 Central Region Vice President

FROM THE WESTERN REGION

'm sure most folks are getting ready for the National show next month, but if you can't make that show - and live around the Rocky Mountain region, here is an alternative show you might want to attend instead: The Triple Ridge Insulator Club is having its annual get-together at an all-new location this You may have seen the vear. advertisement in the May issue of Crown Jewels. It will be held June 27-28, 1997 and should feature a good variety of Colorado insulators. bottles. and This show differs from memorabilia. several of the past shows as we are holding it in a new location - and not in conjunction with the Antique Bottle Collectors Club of Colorado. Nothing against the ABCC - some of their members will probably even be in attendance or setting up for our show but we believe we've found a much better location for the show. It will be at the Holiday Inn, ideally located at I-25 and The atmosphere and 120th avenue.

accessibility is much better here than the Denver Stockyards where the show is usually held! Collectors from Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Kansas,

Nebraska, Texas, and Missouri have traditionally attended this show and there's always alot of fun going on.

PLANS HAVE FIRMED UP

REGIONAL IN ALBUQUERQUE!

FOR THE WESTERN

One last "event plug" here is for the catered BBQ at Jeff and Theresa Powers' new home. It's less than 10 minutes from the hotel and will start Saturday after the show closes. The TRC will have Denver's famous Luther's cater the meal, so expect some tremendously good food. Be sure to contact either Jeff Powers at 303-457-4193 or Ray Curiel at 303-773-6190 for

additional details on this show.

In other news, several collectors from the Colorado area tried to make it to the Alma, Kansas, show back in April - but never got the chance to even leave Denver. The weather was so bad that I-70 was closed in many areas in eastern Colorado, and in Kansas the roads were snow-packed and there was little or no visibility. What reports I do have state that it was a nice show with several walkin's, including one man that had a box of amber and cobalt CD 162 signals! Some were damaged, but apparently they all sold quickly.

I'm sure it's been stated many times, but be sure to support your local area shows. I know everybody cannot attend a National or Regional all of the time, but these smaller shows depend on you for their continued existence! That's about all for this issue. As always, if you have something to talk about, let me know! Until then, have a nice summer!

Wait! Late breaking news! Enchantment Insulator Club President Tom Katonak just told me that they have <u>finally</u> secured a larger place for

the Western Regional Show the last weekend in September. The National Guard Armory in the northeast part of Albuquerque is providing nine-thousand square feet of space for the show! This means that they are no longer restricted to the 50 tables they had at last year's show; in fact, they can now have a "unlimited" number of tables! AND, the show will now be a full event: Friday evening setup (26 September) and show

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

days on Saturday and Sunday (27/28 September). This show will be the tenth anniversary for the this gala affair. For those of you who would like to take a fantastic vacation to the Desert Southwest, this is the right time of the year. The great New Mexico State Fair happens for the three weeks preceding the show and the world famous International Hot Air Balloon Fiesta starts the

week after the show. And September weather down in New Mexico tends to be...perfect! So don't miss this event! Get it on your calendars now! Write, call or EMAIL Tom for a show packet and watch the *Crown Jewels* and *Rainbow Riders* for detailed information.

Matt Poage, NIA #3757
Western Region Vice President

FROM THE NOMINATIONS CHAIR

he ballots to elect the Central Region Vice President were mailed the first week in May to the NIA Central Region members in good standing. Jimmy Burns from Texas and Bob Stahr from Indiana were the official candidates placed on the ballots. Even though you have until July 11, 1997 to return your

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE! VOTE

ballots, please return them now while the election is fresh on your mind.

Be sure to participate in the NIA business meeting at the National in Chicago. I will be announcing the results of the election at the meeting. See you in Chicago!

Dudley Ellis, NIA #5085 **Nominations Chairman**

FROM THE SHOW STANDARDS COMMITTEE

he National is almost here! This show, which may break all records for being the largest National ever, will have the honor of hosting the debut of the new format for the NIA

NEW AWARDS TO

-category awards. The new format should prove DEBUT AT CHICAGO! to be a pleasant surprise for anyone with an award-

winning display, but especially those who display often since it offers distinction from one year to the next. between different people, and between any one person's different displays. fact, it will provide the winner and anyone who views that person's award memories guaranteed for the life of the material it is printed on. Yes, I am being evasive.

Maybe you'll decide to take the plunge now and enter that display you've talked about entering some day.

It is guite a disappointment that Ron and I will not be able to make it to Illinois this year. We do recommend that each of you go to as many shows as your time and money will permit, especially National shows! I think I can guarantee that you would have a good time, see many friendly faces, AND most likely see some insulators that you don't have at home. So far, it looks as if Ginny will be able to represent the Show Standards Committee. Please do give her your feedback on the new award format.

Patti Norton. NIA #5151 **Show Standards Committee**

A NOTE FROM THE PROMOTION AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

t is hard to believe that nearly two years ago at the 1995 National in Massachusetts that Karen and I volunteered to begin work on a video to promote the hobby of insulator collecting. Over those two years we put a lot of thought and work into the project and faced many challenges along the way. Our original goal was to have the video ready by the 1996 National. Steve Bobb, the NIA president at that time was impressed with our enthusiasm but also thought it to be an ambitious goal. We figured a year was more than enough time to complete the project. Well, we were wrong. Although we nearly completed the script, we do not have the video equipment nor the expertise necessary to produce the video. Those

with the necessary experience have been hard to come by in our geographic region. We would like to make our position available to any person or club who would be willing and able to see this project through to completion.

To all, enjoy the National in Chicago.

David R. Wiecek, NIA #3225 Karen M. Wiecek. NIA #4672 **Promotion and Education Committee**



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

RICK BALDWIN, NIA #336, PRESIDENT 1931 THORPE CIRCLE, BRUNSWICK, OH 44212 (330) 225-3576

RICK SOLLER, NIA # 2958, **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** 34273 HOMESTEAD ROAD, GURNEE, IL 60031-4206 (708) 855-9136 EMAIL: com574@clc.cc.il.us

BILL MEIER, NIA #4322, EASTERN REGION VP 103 CANTERBURY COURT, CARLISLE, MA 01741-1860 (508) 369-0208

EMAIL: meier@ultranet.com

BOB STAHR, NIA #4186, CENTRAL REGION VP 11728 LEONARDO DRIVE, SAINT JOHN, IN 46373-9448 (219) 365-4171

EMAIL: stahrrb@axp.calumet.purdue.edu

MATT POAGE, NIA #3757, WESTERN REGION VP 9044 VANCE STREET, #310, WESTMINSTER, CO 80021 (303) 456-8230 EMAIL: wfgpoage@aol.com

MIKE GUTHRIE, NIA #3297, TREASURER 1209 W. MENLO, FRESNO, CA 93711-1477 (209) 435-6127 EMAIL: mgg17@cvip.fresno.com

TOM KATONAK, NIA #3567, INFORMATION DIRECTOR 1024 CAMINO de LUCIA, CORRALES, NM 87048 (505) 898-5592 EMAIL: tomk164440@aol.com

JOE BERES, NIA #563, **MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR** 1315 OLD MILL PATH, BROADVIEW HEIGHTS, OH 44147 (216) 526-3478 EMAIL: jjjb@aol.com

STEPHEN BOBB, NIA #827, FIRST PAST PRESIDENT 610 NORTHAMPTON ROAD, NORRISTOWN, PA 19403 (610) 539-6533

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1996-1997 NATIONAL INSULATOR ASSOCIATION

COMMITTEE CHAIRPEOPLE

JILL MEIER, NIA #4323, **PRODUCT MARKETING** 103 CANTERBURY COURT, CARLISLE, MA 01741-1860 (508) 369-0208

EMAIL: jillm@ultranet.com

PATTI NORTON, NIA #5151, **SHOW STANDARDS** 234 N. 5TH STREET, PORT HUENEME, CA 93041-3004 (805) 488-7445

EMAIL: rrtp@ix.netcom.com

DUDLEY ELLIS, NIA #5085, **NOMINATIONS**131 PLANTATION WAY, STOCKBRIDGE, GA 30281
(770) 957-9928
EMAIL: pony102@aol.com

ELTON GISH, NIA #41, **ETHICS**PO BOX 1317, BUNA, TX 77612
(409) 994-5662
EMAIL: gishen@sat.net

JIM GARRITY, NIA #44, **HISTORIAN** RR #1, BOX 173, PAXINOS, PA 17860-9745 (717) 672-9326 EMAIL: jgarrity@aol.com

JOHN McDOUGALD, NIA #689, **BY-LAWS** 5N941 RAVINE DR., ST. CHARLES, IL 60175 (630) 513-1544 EMAIL: cpamcd@aol.com

DAVID WIECEK, NIA #3225, **PROMOTION & EDUCATION** KAREN WIECEK, NIA #4672 63 REINMAN ROAD, WARREN, NJ 07059-5736 (908) 754-0909 EMAIL: dwiecek@lucent.com



