



GREATER CHICAGO INSULATOR CLUB NEWSLETTER



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Is Everything Old, Rare, Antique, and Chipped on eBay?

On Tuesday, August 23, 2005 I decided to test a statement by Harry Rinker in his book, "How to Think Like a Collector." He argued that certain words were overused in describing antiques and collectables and said an easy way to test this argument was to type the key word into the eBay search engine. So I did.

I decided to test descriptive terms used to measure the supply of insulators first. The insulator category had 964 entries on this day. Out of these listings, 76 of them used the word "rare," 41 used the term "unique," 6 used the word "valuable," and only 4 described the insulator as "scarce." Only 1 item was listed as "desirable." Going to the other end of the continuum, only 6 listings used the term "common." I guess only expensive pieces are listed on eBay.

I then thought of some other terms to test. I thought I hit the jackpot when "antique" returned 81 hits but that number was dwarfed by the 175 hits from "old." "Collectable" was used only a disappointing 14 times.

What about condition terms? Listings for 489 items used some form of the word "chip," e.g., chipping, chips, chipped, or chip. I realized some of these descriptions could be indications that the insulator did not have chips so I searched for the frequency of the phrase "no chips" in descriptions and came up with 127. This led me to believe that 362 of the 489 listings

that used the word "chip" had insulators with chips. 169 listings used the word "mint." 52 listings used the abbreviation "VNM" for very near mint. 34 used the term "near mint."

I also tried some other condition terms. Dings showed up 20 times. "Flakes" could be found in 35 listings. "Crack" was used in 40 listings. "Scratch" scored 38 on my search.

257 listings used the term "Hemingray" and 105 used "Brookfield." 271 used the abbreviation "CD." Maybe there is hope for clear descriptions.

Racine Swap Meet

Saturday, September 10

11 a.m. - about 4 or whenever

434 Blaine Avenue

Racine, Wisconsin

This is Randy's milestone 5th year hosting this swap meet. Free food. Bring your own table. Please call Randy to let him know you are coming so he needs 262-633-0756.

The menu includes ketchup, mustard, another kind of mustard, onions, water, brats, hot dogs, chips, soda, and Famous Marge No-Bake Cookies.

Randy is looking for donations of broken purple insulators to put in his kiln to see if thermal reversal occurs. This is a project to help identify fake and altered insulators plus to answer the age old question of whether Whitall-Tatum CD 154s were originally purple when they left the factory.

When: August 28 (Sunday)

Where: Ross, OH

Description: The 10th Annual Tri-State Glass and Porcelain Insulator Show, Sunday 8 till 5 (indoor facilities available in case of rain) at 1476 Hine Rd., Ross, Ohio. Bring your own table to buy sell and trade. ALAN HOHNHORST (513) 892-370 or cell (513) 478-7086 or porcinscol33@yahoo.com

When: October 2 (Sunday)

Where: Auburn Hills, MI

Description: Huron Valley Bottle and Insulator show and sale 30th, Anniversary! 9-3p at the Holiday Inn Auburn Hills, MI great access to I-75, automatic doors for dealers loading, great lighting, hotel, food, nearby attractions. Make it a family eventful

weekend! Special hotel rates

<http://www.hisauburnhills.com> See <http://www.insulators.com/clubs/hvbic/> for downloadable contract and flyer. MIKE BRUNER 248-623-1446, abbott4girl@sbcglobal.net

When: September 29 - 1 (Thursday - Saturday) Where: Martinsburg, WV

Description: NIA Eastern Region Show and Convention hosted by the Chesapeake Bay Insulator Club. Holiday Inn, 301 Foxcroft Ave., Martinsburg. W. Va. Friday 9am - 4pm show followed by banquet, Saturday 9am - 1pm show. Information from JEFF HOLLIS, 56 Corning Way, Martinsburg, W. Va. 25401. 304-263-6140 or wvacampfire@cs.com.