

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Spring is almost here - a fact many of you in the midwest and eastern US. sections are quite happy about I'm quite sure. Actually, this has been a winter of unpleasant dimensions for many of our fellow collectors as typified by the terrible loss of some fine glass in the Los Angeles earthquake in January. This was the kind of event we all dread because everyone in the hobby suffers when important pieces are damaged or destroyed. With better weather on the way, we all look forward to the upcoming outdoor swapmeets, the shows - and the wonderful treks along old railroad tracks and telegraph right-of-ways, looking for the relics of the bygone years.

Lots of important news, this issue. First, affordable insulator insurance for NIA members is almost here. This will do a lot to take care of the worries about earthquakes, fires and the like; now, at least the loss of a collection can be compensated. See Dwayne Anthony's following note for more details.

Next, remember that we have an important election coming up this spring. We have to pick a new President, and a new Vice President for the Central Region. Ron Norton has the details in his article.

We've had an amazing response on
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to current NIA members--another advantage to those maintaining a current NIA membership status. Minor details are

presently being ironed out in preparation for the debut of this plan that will appear in the summer issue of *Drip Points*. It is highly possible the plan will be

“As a member of the NIA, you will soon have the option of a customized insurance plan designed specifically for insulator collectors”

available before then. If you're anxious for coverage, please feel free to contact me anytime for updated information.

Most of you are probably aware of the lightning rod ball reproduction issue that has built up steam the past few months. (Please refer to Dick Bowman's Eastern V.P. report in this issue of *Drip Points*.) Your NIA Board of Directors and Committee Chairpersons are currently studying various methods for controlling this problem and any such future problems that might arise involving fake or reproduced insulators. One solution is already perfectly clear: Be responsible for educating yourself and your fellow collectors, especially those new to our hobby. When unsure about the authenticity of an item, ask plenty of questions. Make it known you do not approve of any actions by any dealers/collectors that are in direct conflict with the NIA Code of Ethics. Don't expect the next guy to put the finger on a fraudulent act. The responsibility to keep our hobby clean is just as much yours!

Nominations are now being accepted for the 1994 NIA Lifetime Membership Award. A new application form is now available and must be completed before submitting your nominee's name(s).

Because of the prestigiousness of this award, some degree of homework is required to present the proper qualifications of the nominee. Please contact me for a copy of the NIA Lifetime Membership Nomination form. Deadline for submissions is May 1, 1994.

It appears things are shaping up well for the upcoming NIA National and Regional Shows. Be sure to make plans to attend one, or better yet, all of three shows if possible. There is sure to be a great selection of insulators offered and the displays are always earth-shattering. (OOPS--shouldn't use such adjectives around here!) Don't forget about your local shows. They need your support too!

I have received several inquiries from members involving questions concerning NIA by-laws, ethics, and guideline matters. It is apparent many of you did not request your copy of the revised (2-92) NIA Membership Handbook, released and offered on a request basis almost two years ago. This is a very valuable tool for each member to have in their possession. Drop a letter or postcard to the Membership Director, Joe Beres, for your free copy today!

As the coming spring months generate the usual increase in show activity and backyard gatherings, a sincere wish to all for the capture of that special insulator ranking highly on your want list!

Best to all,

Dwayne Anthony, NIA #3619
President, 1992-1994

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

(INSERT EXECUTIVE DIR REPORT HERE)

FROM THE EASTERN REGION VICE PRESIDENT

It's somewhat hard to write about what went on in the region during the late fall & early winter after being pretty-much homebound during that period, but the insulation from the hobby was not that complete. I was not able to make the Capitol District show in Albany, but the word was that there was a good turnout of dealers and merchandise, but not such a good turnout of attendees. The London Ohio show, which I did attend and in the Central Region, was excellent, but attendance was somewhat down from 1992. Jeff Atwood reported that the CFIC show in Sarasota, FL was also a bit plagued by lower than expected attendance although those who were there had a good time. These folks who promote the shows work hard and for really no reward except the satisfaction of a job well done and having served the hobby, so they really deserve the support of those in the hobby. Please make it a point to attend and, if possible, take along a new collector or a potential collector.

The spring brings a good array of shows starting with the Chesapeake Bay Insulator Club show the first Saturday in March. You can double up on this weekend as the Baltimore Bottle Club holds their show on the next day nearby. The Yankee Polecat show on March 27 is always a zinger of a show - a must, and on April 24 the Rochester (NY) Bottle show will usually have a good supply of insulators available.

I can't speak to the subject of new finds, but am personally aware of a CD 726 in somewhere between medium sca and cranberry having surfaced and also a CD 316 Brookfield, no slouch of a piece, showed its face.

On the heavier side, you all have probably

read Jack Snyder's letter in the November *Crown Jewels* and the very fine response by Dwayne Anthony in the January issue concerning reproduction/phony items on sales tables at shows. This is felt to be a serious matter by many of us and showed itself in spades at the London show. Admittedly, a majority of these are lightning items, but they are

"[Phony items are] felt to be a serious matter by many of us.."

being put on tables at **our** shows. We have had some problems and still do with suspect insulators and the problem likely needs addressing further. I have written to and talked to Dwayne Anthony about the NIA role in this and am aware of at least one other board member expressing strong feelings in the same manner. It is my current intention to actively support an enhanced NIA and show host role in this matter as a means of preventing what I feel are further abuses. This is not an easy issue to address in a manner that can be realistically and fairly implemented and those of us who would push in this direction need concrete support and encouragement from the membership. PLEASE; if you feel (or don't feel) that this issue deserves work and action by the NIA let me know, either by phone, letter or in person. If you favor further efforts, we need some ideas on how far we should go and how we could realistically implement whatever we do. The real answer probably lies somewhere between having someone with a Gestapo emblem roaming the show hall and passive griping. Honestly, if there is no response, perhaps there is no energy out there and we should go on to bigger and better things. I happen to think not, but without support, I may pull in my horns. As always, good collecting and hope to see you at the shows.

Dick Bowman; NIA #597
Eastern Region Vice President

FROM THE CENTRAL REGION VICE PRESIDENT

It's hard to believe that my term as Central Region Vice-President will conclude at the 25th NIA National Show in Houston, July, 1994. The time has really flown by and I have very much enjoyed serving the

"...it looks like the 1994 NATIONAL is going to be a sellout!"

hobby in this capacity. But now I look forward to spending more time on insulator research.

Nominations are now being accepted for this position, and from what I understand, a couple of very qualified NIA members have already expressed their interest. Since there is no limit to the number of nominees (and I don't recall that it was ever a problem!), if you would be willing to share some of your time and talent, please let NIA Nominations Chairman Ron Norton know as soon as possible. His address is at the back of this issue. He will need a brief letter from you expressing your willingness to serve and a description of your background in the hobby. Qualification letters from each of the candidates we have so far are included in this issue of Drip Points. The current plan is to mail separate ballots to all NIA members in the Central Region, and election returns will be announced at the Houston National in July. As a member of the NIA Board, you will not only gain close friendships, but will grow in your knowledge and appreciation of our great hobby. You will also be able to contribute your enthusiasm, offer fresh ideas, and suggest alternate solutions to any problems that may arise. Give it a try - you won't regret it!

Unfortunately, the subject of unmarked Lightning Rod Ball reproductions has again become a major issue. It never seems to go away completely, it just abates from time to time. These repro's

are now appearing in alarming numbers at bottle and insulator shows, and the problem isn't so much that they are being offered for sale, as that they are parading as genuine articles and commanding some pretty healthy prices! And whoever is grinding these things out is laughing all the way to the bank! However, it's nearly impossible to keep these questionable items away from shows, because LRB's are a popular collectible in themselves and a "second hobby" to many insulator collectors. Thus they are often incorporated into a dealer's sales stock. The genuine articles are welcome, they're beautiful, and a lot of happy deals have been made. But if they are repro's or have been altered in any way, and the buyer is unaware, then the dealer needs to do more than just tell him about it - each piece in question should be permanently marked as "reproduction" or "altered". Then if the purchase goes through, that identifying mark protects everyone concerned, especially the unsuspecting new collector or the second (or third, etc.) purchaser down the line. Even though we wish all the altered insulators and LRB repro's would go away and never appear at shows again, we have to realize that it's "okay" to buy them, as long as nobody is being fooled and these particular items are identified in such a way that the mark cannot be erased. One dealer, when he sees an altered insulator being offered for sale, has been known to get out his engraver and go after it, just to remove any doubt.

I, and the other three show hosts for the 25th NIA National Show in Houston next July, are determined to do all we can to prevent the display or sale of altered insulators and LRB reproductions if they are unmarked. The NIA General Show Floor Rules, which deal with such deceptions, will be visibly posted throughout the sales area. There will also be several knowledgeable insulator and

(Continued on page 8)

(FINANCIAL REPORT GOES HERE)

...DRIP NOTES

- Talk to your insulator friends about this *DRIP POINTS* Issue. If they didn't receive it, their membership has lapsed!
- Ballots will only be mailed to active (PAID) members.
- Make sure you see the article GLASS: Capturing the Dance of Light, in *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1993.
- Deadlines for 1995 NIA Show Bids:
 - Eastern National - April 1, 1994
 - Central and Western Regionals - June 1, 1994

...CANDIDATES FOR THE CENTRAL REGION VICE-PRESIDENT

Jimmy Burns

To all members of the Central Region of the NIA

I, Jimmy Burns, am running to represent you as your Central Vice President of the NIA. I live in Conroe Texas with my wife Vickey and two sons, James and Christopher. I have been collecting insulators for twenty-five of my thirty-eight years. I am active in the *Lone Star Insulator Club* having served as President, Vice President, currently Chairman of the N.R. Woodward Award. I also will serve as a co-host during the 1994 "Silver in Houston" National. I am a collector of color porcelain insulators and enthusiastically go to shows and enjoy talking to collectors.

But in all candor, I wanted to express my dissatisfaction with the direction that the NIA has meandered during the last few years. I see my candidacy as a positive opportunity to express my views on how the NIA can be improved. I promise if elected that I will listen to you, many of whom have expressed some of the same dissatisfaction with the NIA. These are a few of my specific views:

1. The NIA should strive first to insure it will represent the grass roots collector before being concerned with entrepreneur issues.
2. The NIA, as it has been in the past, should remain a family organization.
3. Efforts should be made not only to recruit new members, but also to retain new members and bring inactive members into active status.



Rick Baldwin

My name is Rick Baldwin, I reside in Brunswick, Ohio, and I'm seeking your support for the position of Central Region Vice-resident. I am a charter member of the NIA and have been active in the insulator collecting hobby since 1972. Presently, I'm serving in my third term as the NIA's *Show standards Committee Chairman*, which has given me an opportunity to develop working relationships with the NIA officers. My wife, Berny, and I are both active members of the *Ohio Bottle Club*, and I was the president of the *Western New York Insulator Club* for several years in the 1970's.

Along with my desire and willingness to actively carry out the duties of a regional vice-president with respect to working closely with the Board and promoting our hobby, I foresee the opportunity to personally add some new enthusiasm and ideas to our organization in order to pursue its goals, to rekindle its growth, and to make the NIA more beneficial to and more respected by its members!

Geographically, I'm in a good position to attend several major shows annually to promote our hobby, and to pursue one of my major objectives...that being to serve as an effective liaison between the NIA's administrative body and the members and collectors within the Central Region, and to respond to their concerns.

Insulator collecting is a **hobby**, and each of us have our own special reasons why we pursue a hobby, why we join an organization, and why we wish to contribute to an organization's growth.



Jimmy Burns (cont')

4. The position of Second Vice President should be eliminated because you have a person elected as president and serving on the board for six years.
5. Term limitations of all Chairpersons limiting service in one position to no more than three years.
6. Either make imaginary committees real with real members or retitle current chairperson status to "director".
7. Most important of all, my view is that the membership should be surveyed to determine the direction that the membership wishes to take.

this is a general outline of my views. If elected, the issues I will concentrate on in the Quarterly Drip Points Report will not be the "slow pay, no pay" issues or the evils of misfiring postage to Canada or Greater Mongolia, but positive reports on the state of the hobby in the Central Region. Furthermore, I promise the fight for the integrity of local clubs and local shows within the Central Region without encroachment or forced sanctioning by the NIA. Most of all, I pledge to serve you in our region. when you cast a vote for me, you vote for a highly determined individual who will be dedicated to improve our great hobby.

Best in collecting,

Jimmy Burns

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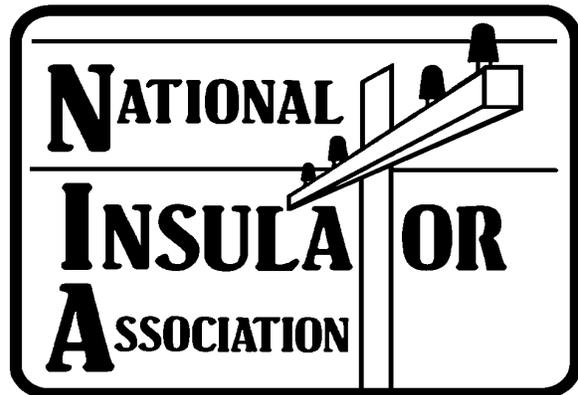
Rick Baldwin (cont')

the **people** who make a hobby what it is, and we all have to put some effort into maintaining its stature so that we can all share in the enjoyment.

The NIA was established for the people, and it offers a way to bring people together. Thus, the NIA must address the concerns of collectors and local clubs as the hobby goes through its ups and downs. With your support, I will do my best as your Central Region Vice-President to ensure that the NIA "keeps the hobby in the people, and the people in the hobby!"

Sincerely,

Rick Baldwin, NIA #336



USE THE FORM IN THE BACK
OF THIS ISSUE TO ORDER
NIA LOGO ITEMS!

FROM THE SHOW STANDARDS COMMITTEE

From my perspective, 1993 was an outstanding year for insulator shows and for the promotion of our hobby by individuals who took the time and made the effort to share their knowledge and collections with others in the form of both competitive and non-competitive displays. I really believe that this quality exposure contributed significantly to the high number of new NIA memberships during the past calendar year! The quantity and the overall quality of displays at the Nationals and at the annual regional shows have been steadily increasing over the past few years, and more interest is being shown at the local show level also.

During 1993, a record number of eleven NIA-provided blue ribbons were requested by show hosts of "local" insulator and/or antique bottle shows. At these shows, insulator displayers have an opportunity to capture the interest of, and promote our hobby to, a large number of attendees who have previously had limited exposure to, or little interest in, insulator collecting. Obviously, this could result in some new leads or contacts for the displayer. Sure, there are many antique collectors and dealers who feel that insulators don't deserve to be at the same level of, nor compete against, quality glass bottles or other antiquities, but a little education could enlighten them with respect to the importance of our "crown jewels" in the growth of our technological society and nation!

If you're planning on hosting a show in the upcoming future, don't forget the resources which the NIA can make available to you for guidance and planning. Of particular interest to "novice"

show hosts would be a terrific show advertising and promotion packet which Kevin Lawless and the Promotion and Education Committee has recently assembled. It contains very pertinent information and guidance on pre-show advertising, who to contact, sample promotion letters and formats, etc. This packet is free-for-the-asking from either Kevin or me. In order to use this material most effectively, request it early in your show planning stage! Many show hosts request a display award ribbon just a few weeks or a month before the show date, and this would be insufficient time for effective utilization of Kevin's packet.

The word is out that some great new displays are being planned for the 25th National Show and convention in Houston, so get your camera ready and prepare for a good time!

Rick Baldwin, NIA #336
Show Standards Committee

...classical New Mexico insulator collector...



1993-1994 NATIONAL INSULATOR ASSOCIATION

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