

Greetings from the Midwest!

I wanted to share with everyone how pleased our MRBA steering committee and new board are with the success of our inaugural show! We had a total of 197 attendees, sold out rooms in more than one hotel, exhibited and/or judged 112 trays, and raised \$6215 from our silent auction. We received an abundance of positive feedback, and a good time was had by all.

As we plan for the future, the MRBA board wants to ensure we are providing the best possible show experience for our attendees. Your feedback this past fall is helpful in this effort. Here are some of the ways we are addressing the suggestions you've made:

Our registration forms will include a sign-up for our Thursday pre-show demonstration and Saturday workshop. This will better enable us to plan and accommodate attendees. Our VP Helen is working on implementing a system to project the demonstration on a screen and to utilize a speaker and microphone so that attendees can better see and hear the presenter. We also hope to have a larger room for the Saturday workshop, pending availability, or perhaps offer the workshop twice.

Tray check-in will be extended on Thursday evening so that we can have all trays counted, measured, and ready to go earlier on Friday morning. In addition to extending the judging hours, we are looking at other areas near the showroom with more space and good light for judging. We have also established limitations on tray entry for our dealers and MRBA board members.

When working out the hotel contract with the Parke Regency for 2019, we requested the maximum number of sleeping rooms available...and it is already fully booked! We do have a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn nearby, as we did this past year, and hope that everyone will get their reservations in early.

There were a handful of requests to extend our showroom hours. However, because our show postcard was produced prior to and distributed at the 2018 show with stated 2019 showroom hours, we will keep the hours as printed. If our 2019 show traffic indicates a need for extended hours, we will attempt to adopt a 2021 postcard design that would allow some editing flexibility for National Button Bulletin advertising. (Because the 2020 show will be held in Springfield, IL, there will be no 2020 MRBA show.)

Our goal as a team is to create meaningful and educational experiences for button collectors in our region. If you have any thoughts or suggestions you'd like to share, please contact your state's MRBA board representative. Their names are listed on the website contacts page.

I look forward to seeing everyone in October, 2019!

Barbara Weeks
MRBA President