

Greetings from the Midwest!

I wanted to share with everyone how pleased our show organizers are with the fantastic turnout at our second Midwest Regional Button Association show! There was constant buzz in the showroom, great turnout for our workshops and programs, and general good vibes throughout the event. We received an overwhelming amount of positive feedback, and I want to thank our hard-working board members, volunteers, and presenters for their efforts in creating a memorable and fun-filled weekend.

Our MRBA board takes its work very seriously, and we strive to ensure that show attendees have a positive and educational experience throughout the show. During the year, we have multiple conference calls to discuss plans, divide up responsibilities, and make decisions related to the business of our young organization. By way of example, I wanted to share with you a few of the many decisions we made over the past year.

- We agreed to host the National Button Society's 2022 show in Middleton (Madison), WI; because it is in the Midwest, we decided not to have a MRBA show the same year.
- A contract was signed for our new hotel, the Holiday Inn Bloomington-Normal (formerly Radisson Hotel & Conference Center), which has a larger room block available to accommodate all of our attendees.
- We created additional educational opportunities in the showroom by adding a table for 'pop-up' button talks, designed to be 5-10 minute hands-on activities.
- We voted to donate \$1000 to the NBS color fund, which goes toward the cost of publishing color pages in the national bulletin.
- We revised entry rules for competitors to ensure judging can be completed on time, limiting entries to five trays per competitor with only three trays from MRBA dealers and board members.
- Our theme of 'Rivers and Roads' was chosen for our 2021 show and we hired Rich Lunseth of Indiana to design our promotional postcard.
- Three MRBA sponsored awards were chosen for the 2021 awards list, with an addition of novice awards to encourage our newer members to compete.

This is just a small snapshot of the actions we take, but hopefully it shows a glimpse of what we discuss and how we operate. Our goal is to promote the hobby of button collecting within our region, while supporting the state and national organizations of which we are a part. We value your feedback, and would encourage you to contact your state's MRBA board representative with any suggestions. Their names are listed on the website contacts page.

Finally, I would like to encourage you to visit the 2019 Archives section of our website and find Inga Ladd's china workshop presentation slides. It includes wonderful color images and an interactive flow chart to assist in identifying china body styles, along with a downloadable worksheet. If you missed her workshop, or attended and would like a refresher, you will find it to be well thought-out and informative.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the 2020 national show in Springfield, Illinois!

Barbara Weeks
MRBA Board President