

Member Suggestions for the 2026 Midwest Regional Button Association Show

At each MRBA show, every attendee at the breakfast is asked to complete an evaluation of the show and to include suggestions for improvements. The following are suggestions that will be incorporated into planning for the next MRBA show in autumn of 2026. (The MRBA show isn't held during years when a MRBA member state hosts the NBS National Show.)

Education Station programming Several members commented on timing and location of the Education Station pop-up programs. We'll move the Education Station to the back of the showroom where competition tray racks are located. This change should eliminate some traffic and noise issues near the front of the showroom. We'll work diligently to have three to four high-interest topics in 2026, and either repeat two of the four programs on Saturday morning or add two new topics. We'll also post information on the MRBA website explaining the purpose of the education station and why it's formatted the way it is.

Fund-raising auction Rather than completely eliminating our silent format, we'll post volunteers near potentially contentious lots. If an item appears to be drawing heavy last-minute silent bidding, we'll alter the silent format to live bidding on any such item.

Earlier online event information and registration/better show publicity We'll work diligently to begin posting the 2026 show information on the website early in 2026. We'll also use the website to keep everybody aware of MRBA's activities between now and the 2026 show. The MRBA representative from each member state will make sure MRBA information reaches the state's members via postings on state Facebook pages, state websites, and state bulletins.

Signage for dealer tables We'll produce dealer signage for each future show.

Larger print on attendee name tags You'll see that at the 2026 show.

Microphone in the showroom The cost of audio-visual services at conference hotels skyrocketed after the pandemic and we found ourselves having to cut a few corners. But a mic in the showroom would definitely have been helpful, so when we work on the 2026 hotel contract, we'll get a mic back into the showroom.

List of entrant names at the tray racks We've produced that list at past shows and we'll make sure it's provided and posted at the racks in 2026.

More guest rooms blocked for MRBA attendees When working out our 2026 contract with the hotel, we'll request the maximum number of sleeping rooms available. To ensure that you get a block room at the show hotel, please make your reservations early. You can always cancel closer to the show if it turns out you're unable to attend.

Better plastic cutlery at breakfast When working out the 2026 contract with the hotel, we'll look at the possibility of having metal cutlery at each meal.

Optional box lunches available on Saturday We'll get pricing for Saturday box lunches for the 2026 show.

Coffee in the showroom We'll look into providing a coffee station in the hallway outside the showroom. Consistent with most button shows, we can't allow coffee or other drinks in the showroom. Several dealers can tell you sad stories about poke trays showered with hot coffee or button cards soaked with a soft drink.

More interesting awards In addition to the theme-related awards written by the MRBA board, each MRBA member state submits an award to the list. If you have an award you'd like your state to submit, please contact your state's MRBA representative, whose name is on the contact page of the MRBA website.

Activities to fill unscheduled time The MRBA board wants to ensure we provide the best possible experiences for show attendees. If you have thoughts or suggestions you'd like to share, please contact your state's MRBA representative, whose name is on the contact page of the MRBA website.

In addition to the above improvements, there were three suggestions that can't be implemented, and the board wants to explain the circumstances:

Allow pick-up of competition trays earlier on Saturday Because our showroom is advertised as open for public viewing, we can't allow tray pick-up until the posted closing time. If you need to leave before the show closes, you might consider asking a friend to check out your trays and bring them home to you, as is frequently done by competitors at state shows and the National show.

Hotel bathroom is challenging We understand the concern. Without moving the show to a different hotel, we unfortunately have no control over the bathroom facilities.

Add more showroom hours We want to provide a wonderful show that includes a variety of activities for attendees. Between meals, educational activities, judging hours, and showroom hours, the show schedule is bursting at the seams. Our dealers need set-up/clean-up time each day, several dealers need restocking time, and all dealers need tear-down-&-pack time at the end of the show. Consistent with most show contracts, our hotel contract requires MRBA to be completely out of the showroom space by mid-afternoon on Saturday so that the hotel can prep the room for an incoming group.

Thank you for your time and care in reviewing this document. Again, MRBA welcomes your input, so please reach out to your MRBA state representative or any of the board officers.

We look forward to another great MRBA show in 2026!