

September 2007

Planning Your Hobby Calendar

By Mike Prero

Well, this summer's coming to a close, and we're just about to head into Fall and Winter. All of the conventions are finished, and so are all of the swapfests, with the exception of one. So, as far as major get-togethers are concerned, the hobby begins its annual winding down, geared, no doubt, to the annual on fall of bad weather. But, now is a good time to spread everything out on the ol' desk, kitchen table, or coffee table and do some planning for the coming year. 'Unforeseen circumstances' are always looming over everyone's well laid out plans and schedules, but being organized always pays off. So let's take a look at what you, as a collector, have available in the way of hobby events.

First, it's September, and we *are* winding down, but it ain't over 'til the fat lady sings..and she ain't singin' yet! Coming up next month, we have a double serving of great events:

INTERNATIONAL MATCH SAFE ASSOCIATION: October 5-7, 2007. Sheraton City Center, 17 & Race Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19103. FMI: IMSA POB 791, Malaga, NJ or George Sparacio at mrvestal@aol.com

KEYSTONE/LEHIGH WEEKEND 2007: October 31-November 4, 2007. Holiday Inn, Morgantown, PA. Displays, grab tables, actions, dealers, costume parade, trivia contest, indoor pool, raffle, free banquet dinner for registered attendees for Fri-Sat night stay. FMI: Shirley Sayers, 1290 Corporation St., Beaver, PA 15009, shirley2@verizon.net

Then, in December, almost all of the clubs are having their annual Christmas parties, which are fun-filled events with dining and socializing and good cheer, all set against a background of...matchcover collecting! They're simply too numerous to list here, but just check your local bulletin for what the clubs near you are planning to serve up. Going to be traveling in December? See if your schedule and destination pair up with a nearby club's activities. You know, you certainly don't even have to be a member of that club to participate. Any club around the country would be delighted to have you attend. But, it takes planning...and don't forget, because Christmas party events normally involve reservations at a restaurant, etc., that you'll need to contact that club ahead of time and let them know that you're planning to be there. You can always find the necessary club contact information on the RMS web site (<http://www.matchcover.org>). Just go to the CLUBS page.

The Christmas parties are the last hoorah of the calendar year, so now let's take a look at the annual hobby events that you can plan on taking place in upcoming year:

March:

Southern Swapfest: Various locations within Florida. Typical activities: two big auctions, shoebox trading, table hopping, room hopping, local tours, displays. Details always at <http://home.earthlink.net/~gayliano13/>

April:

Sierra-Diablo Spring Swapfest: Always around Easter, and always in Roseville, CA (15 mi. north of Sacramento). Typical activities: Saturday-all day, one-on-one trading sessions, freebie table, refreshments; Sunday-big auction, refreshments. Details always at <http://www.matchcover.org/sierra/swapfest.html>

Trans Canada Swapfest: In the Niagara Falls area. Typical activities: freebie tables, auction, displays, room hopping, local tour. Check Trans Canada's web site for more details: <http://www.matchesTCMC.com>

May:

AMCAL: Always last week in May, always in Fresno, CA. Typical activities: freebie tables, room hopping, shucking contest, poolside bar-b-q, four big auctions, displays, games, AMCAL Players, regional/specialty club meetings, golf tournament, awards banquet. Everything you need to know is conveniently listed at AMCAL Central on our own web site: <http://www.matchcover.org/sierra>

June:

United Eastern Swapfest: Usually in Hagerstown, MD. Typical activities: trading, dealers tables, displays, auction, awards banquet.

August:

RMS Convention: Always in early-mid August; locations vary around the country. (Next year's convention will be at The Inn at Hunt's Landing Best Western at Matamoras, PA) Typical activities: freebie tables, room hopping, 4-5 auctions (the biggest in the hobby), displays, local tours, dealers tables, regional/specialty club meetings, awards banquet. Latest details at Convention Central, on the RMS web site: <http://www.matchcover.org>

October:

Long Beach Swapfest: always in the Los Angeles area. Typical activities: cigar box trading, Connecticut auctions, Bingo, ice cream social, local tour, trading, auction

Keystone-Lehigh Valley Swapfest: Always in PA. Typical activities: Freebie tables, bingo, trivia contest, costume party, room hopping, auctions, dealers tables, displays, awards banquet.

On top of all this, there are always those great 'one-time' events that pop up from time to time during the year—this club's 25th anniversary party, that club's intermittent swapfest, a sprinkling of Halloween parties, and so forth. Plus, you may well be interested in the occasional peripheral hobby activities that proliferate around the country during the year—ephemera conventions, casino shows, and such—but you'll have to catch those as they're announced. And tying everything together, of course, are the workhorses of the hobby—local club meetings, occurring across the country during every month of the year. Support those clubs...they're *your* support base.