



Editorial [*again!*]

The Vast Abyss Of The Inland Empire!

If you were to check the hobby demographics against a map of the United States (such as the one on the RMS web site), you would notice a striking feature. There's basically *nothing*, hobby-wise, in the great interior of the country!

If you were to put a dot for each regional club on said map, you'd see that all the dots (with one exception) are along the *edges*! Only Rocky Mountain Matchcover Club is in the interior.

If you were to put a similar mark on said map where both the annual AMCAL and RMS conventions are held, you'd see that they're almost always on the edge of the continent, rather than in the interior. AMCAL, of course, is always in California, so it's always on the edge. But even with the RMS conventions, which are held in different locations each year, only five of the 65 conventions have been in an interior state. Those notable exceptions were:

-Des Moines, IA (1961)	-Las Vegas, NV (1969)	-Des Moines, IA (1973)	-St. Louis, MO (1984)	-St. Louis, MO (2007)
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Even those conventions held in Canada have *all* been...on the edge of Canada! [*Although, in Canada's case, it should be noted, they have a good excuse...All they have in their interior is polar bears!*] *We*, on the other hand, have people...*collectors*...motherhood and apple pie! But, I'm getting ahead of myself, here.

What about the hobby's swapfests and other special get-togethers? Where are they being held? Um.....[*guess*].....Yes, that's right! On the edges! Long Beach Swapfest-> California! Sierra-Diablo Swapfest-> California! Southern Swapfest-> Florida! UES-> Maryland! Trans Canada Swapfest-> Niagara Falls area! Keystone-Lehigh Valley Swapfest-> Pennsylvania!

Demographically, as of this writing, 13% of known collectors are located in the interior states [*not counting collectors overseas and in Hawaii; Canadian collectors counted as being in the 'edge' areas*]. And, that's the argument for having everything in the fringe states—that's where 87% of the collectors are located. So, I suppose you could say that those collectors in the interior are just a victim of geographical circumstances. That doesn't change the resulting fact that those collectors are still, more or less, the stepchildren of the hobby. Whatever's happening, it's never near them

On the other hand, activity locations have a lot to do with making the activity available to the largest number of people, and, it could be argued, those collectors in the interior had to know the general disadvantages and advantages of living in the interior when they first decided to live...in the interior.

One equalizer, and of growing importance, though, is the internet. With the internet, those lonesome collectors in places like Nevada, Oklahoma, Kansas, and Utah, don't feel so left out anymore. They can literally bring the hobby right to themselves whenever they want and for a negligible cost—certainly far, far cheaper than telephones and fax machines. Still, I wonder what it would be like to have a convention in, say, Goodland, Kansas.