

RNA News

The official journal of the

Rochester Numismatic Association

September 2003

- What a summer! A picnic, RNA in Baltimore...and another picnic, too!
- Dave Gottfried's ANA Summer Seminar
- Caption Contest results...and more!

**Ricard, family
honored with
ANA's top
award**

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FROM THE EDITOR

Reaching the next generation of collectors

A few weeks ago, I found myself in line at my local bank, waiting patiently to deposit a check and half-listening to the conversation between the teller and the woman in front of me.

It went something like this:

"Are the new state quarters in yet?"

"Which ones are those?"

"I'm not sure. I think the new ones have a lighthouse on them. My son collects them and I like to get them for him."

You've probably heard similar conversations in your daily travels. And unlike the teller and her customer, you know the answers, I'll bet – or at least know where to find them.

After all, you're a **numismatist**. You not only know about the state quarters, but you'd recognize a Barber or Standing Liberty or even Bust quarter – and know how to grade them and what they're worth.

But you, too, had to start somewhere, didn't you?

Which brings me to my question this month: what do you do when *you* hear a conversation like that?

I had a few minutes to spare, so after depositing my check, I answered the woman's questions about the next state quarter (Missouri, which had just come out a few days earlier) and gave her some basic information about the state quarter program and about the RJNA, in hopes her son would begin attending meetings and learn a bit about our hobby.

With any luck, that's one more potential numismatist inspired to pursue our hobby. But as I drove away, I was thinking about all those other conversations between customers and tellers, without a friendly numismatist standing nearby.

The state quarter program – along with the Sacagawea dollar and, soon, the Lewis and Clark nickel program – are awakening an interest in coin collecting. So why aren't we tapping into it in the many ways in which we could?

Here's my modest proposal: a trifold brochure with basic information on the state quarter program (a list of the order in which states are being honored, how the quarters are distributed, and perhaps a few notes about proof sets and such) and, on the back, meeting schedules for the RNA and the RJNA.

Among our membership, we must certainly have customers of every bank and credit union in town. Why not reach out to their head offices and offer each branch a stack of these brochures, to be handy whenever customers ask about the coins?

Let me know what you think.



A new name, a new look: Notice something different about your RNA newsletter this month?

It's not just the cover photo of member #1, Charlie Ricard – though we promised him the cover after learning that he wasn't getting the full cover of *The Numismatist* traditionally accorded to Zerbe award winners.

It's a new look inside, and a new name on the outside. (Thanks to everyone who submitted names, and to Edie Coe and Nick Graver, who both suggested *RNA News* and thus share the honor that comes with having picked the winning name. I'll leave it up to the board to figure out a suitable prize!)

But whether it's just the unnamed club newsletter, the *RNA News* or even *The Bottom-Feeder Reader*, your club newsletter needs one thing: you.

Don't be shy. If there's something you'd like to see in these pages, send it in! I can fix spelling and grammar – but I can't fix eight blank pages if nobody submits material. You know what to do. Get typing!

Scott Fybush

The RNA's 31st Annual Coin Show and Sale

Saturday, November 1 – 10AM to 5 PM
Sunday, November 2 – 10 AM to 4 PM
RMSC Eisenhart Auditorium, 657 East Avenue

by William D. Coe
Coin Show Committee Chairman

You don't have to travel all the way to Baltimore or Portland or Pittsburgh to find out what a big coin show is like. In just a few weeks, you'll get to experience a bourse floor and exhibits right here in town, just one floor above our usual meeting room, as the RNA presents its 31st annual Coin Show and Sale, one of the largest annual shows in our region.

The Coin Show Committee hopes that every RNA member will take advantage of this opportunity to visit several coin and stamp dealers at one location.

It is a very efficient way to find just that right item you are looking for. You can actually hold and see each item to evaluate it without the need to send it back and forth in the mails. Likewise, if you have items to dispose of, the transaction can take place right there without complications.

Help Your Club

Since the show is a club project, it is expected that as many members as possible will participate in its presentation. Actually, you will find that it is a very rewarding experience. You will have the opportunity to rub elbows with the dealers and expand your knowledge in many numismatic areas. Also, it will give you a chance to work with and get to know the other members better.

At the September and October meetings, sheets will be sent around for the various activities for which we need help. Please sign up and be as generous with your time as you can. Several types of activity and many time frames are

available. Over the years, the RNA has thrived because of this type of fellowship.

Present a Display

You are encouraged to develop a display to enter in the Exhibit Contest. At stake is the prestigious Alphonse Kolb "Best of Show" award. It is a beautiful plaque that you can be proud to display.

Please see Gerry Muhl or John Zabel to arrange for the cases you will need. Also, check with them if you want some pointers on how to present your exhibit.

And be sure to visit the exhibit area on the stage to see what John's displaying from the club's own collection!



Ursula Loose helps a young collector at the 2001 Coin Show

RNA Goodies

And be sure to check at the front table for RNA items you might still need for your collection. The club will be selling the philatelic covers John Cali prepared for our 30th anniversary show last year, as well as the ubiquitous RNA coffee mugs and much more.

We'll also have

extra copies of the *RNA News* and information about the club – as well as a table for our friends from the Rochester Philatelic Association – to help newcomers to numismatics learn how to become more involved with "the Hobby of Kings."

The Coin Show and Sale is a great way to get new collectors involved in the hobby, so be sure to invite anyone who might be interested in coins and stamps to come, meet our dealers and members, and see what numismatics (and philatelics) is all about!

Don't Forget: BOARD MEETING Oct. 2 – see back page for details!

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A Week at ANA's Summer Seminar

Ahhhhhhh... it's good to be home! However, if one is going to go away, what better place to be than Colorado Springs to study numismatics for the week! I'm not going to mince words here: what a fantastic experience! Congratulations to the ANA for putting together an exciting mix of numismatic education and fun side trips for the coin collector.

If you've attended Summer Seminar in the past, you know what I'm talking about. If not, let me try to capture some of the experiences I had from June 28th to July 4th in Colorado Springs. I attended the "Basic U.S. Coin Grading" course taught by Michael Faraone with ANACS and Phil Hildenbrand with Premier Rare Coins, Inc. Both provided their experience in the area of grading coins and turned a room full of novices into a room full of better novices! It's clear to this budding numismatist that it's still going to take several years and thousands of coins to become a more accurate grader.

However, I still learned a great deal. We began the class looking at slides – about a hundred of them – of everything ranging from early coppers to \$20 gold. Then we moved on to grade groups of 20 coins, rotating the coins around the room and assigning our grade. After that, Mike and Phil would grade each example and we'd compare this to the service that had

slabbed the coins. Needless to say, in the beginning, I wasn't that good... perhaps getting 5 out of 20 correct. However, our teachers kept us at it... more coins, and faster grading time! My gosh – I was actually getting the handle of this! By the third day,

while I wasn't perfect, I was still getting about half right (plus or minus one point).

We concluded the session by breaking up into groups of four and creating our own grading service. My group formed WCG - We Can Grade – or Can't, depending on how we did! By the final exam, I was up to 15 out of 20, and considered my education a success.

In addition to the studying and class work, there was plenty of time spent enjoying Colorado Springs. One evening a large group of us went to Denver to Coors Field to watch the Rockies take on the Arizona Diamondbacks. What started as a terrible effort for a team that had lost several in a row,

ended with the Rockies coming back from four down and winning the game! Arenas like Coors Field make you realize what professional sports is all about. Now if only we could recreate some of that Major League feeling here – but that's another article for a different venue.

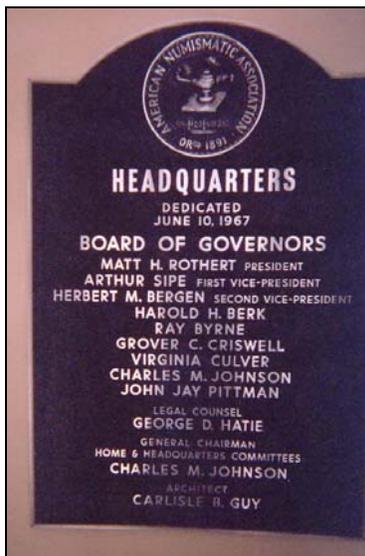
I was able to spend some time at ANA



Top: ANA's headquarters welcomes attendees; Bottom: Dave with grading seminar instructors Michael Faraone and Phil Hildebrand

Headquarters, doing research in their library – on the ANA conventions in Rochester held in 1912, 1917 and 1928. I was also able to walk through the Harry Bass, Jr. collection of gold and patterns. What an amazing exhibit! Included in the exhibit was a complete collection of \$3 gold Indians in unbelievable conditions. I've never seen anything like it, and I may never again. There was also an exhibit in the lower level of the museum dedicated to Colorado numismatics.

Near the end of the week, the ANA held a charity auction to support future junior members attending the seminar. Prices were undoubtedly records for every item – with many pieces selling multiple times and being donated to the juniors. That auction raised \$16,000 with another \$4000 raised at the end of seminar banquet. While the whole experience was of great value to the



Signs of the RNA everywhere: John Jay Pittman's name on the HQ plaque

many senior members in attendance, I was extremely impressed by the junior members. I am of the opinion that the RNA should seriously consider coming up with financial assistance to send some of our juniors on this trip. It's a wonderful way to get young people excited about numismatics, not to mention a way to expand their knowledge and make lifelong friends.

Finally, I would again like to thank Richard Nachbar for making this experience possible. I had often considered going to summer seminar, but had never thought of it as a real possibility. Now, having gone, I am extremely enthusiastic about one day going to Colorado Springs again to

further expand my numismatic knowledge.

David Gottfried

How can you reach Rochester area coin collectors each month???

Have your ad published in all 11 monthly issues of the RNA News.

Rates:

**Full page—\$220/year (or, \$20 per issue)
 Half-page— \$110/year (or, \$10 per issue)
 Quarter page—\$55/year (or, \$5 per issue)
 (other options available)**

For more information, contact RNA News editor Scott Fybush at 442-5411 or at rnanews@fybush.com.

RNA  News

The official journal of the Rochester Numismatic Association

Club's #1 Member Wins ANA's #1 Honor

By Scott Fybush

Few local coin clubs anywhere in the country can boast even a single member who's won the Farran Zerbe Memorial Award, the highest honor the American Numismatic Association can bestow on a member. After the ANA's 121st anniversary convention in Baltimore this summer, the Rochester Numismatic Association can boast two.

In addition to the legendary John Jay Pittman, who won the Zerbe award in 1981, the club now claims Charles J. Ricard as a Zerbe winner.

Family honors

In Charlie's case, though, he shares the award with an equally accomplished family that boasts a numismatic pedigree predating the RNA's 1912 founding.

This year's Zerbe award also honored Charlie's great-grandfather John C. Lighthouse and his uncle Charles N. Ricard for their contributions to the hobby.

John C. Lighthouse (1844-1909) was a Rochester businessman who invented the U.S. Mail pouch, ran a successful leather goods business and even invented a steel-banded tire long before the world knew it needed one.

Long before there was an RNA, Lighthouse held monthly coin meetings in his Rochester home and assembled a collection of more than 20,000 U.S. coins. Among the numismatic careers he launched was that of RNA pioneer George "Papa" Bauer, who served as best man at the wedding of Lighthouse's son.

Lighthouse's grandson, Napoleon Charles Ricard (he'd later reverse the order of his names), began collecting coins at the age of 9 and continued until his death in 1978 at age 83. His specialty was Canadian coins, and his collection included the most complete set of Canadian tokens ever assembled and the finest 1921 Canadian half dollar known.

Our hero

Charles J. Ricard was born in 1930, and by 1938 he was already a coin collector, getting launched into the hobby when his uncle gave him an 1880

Morgan dollar to comfort him after getting his hand crushed in a car door.

Less than a decade later, Charlie was already a regular at RNA meetings, even though he was too young to join the "senior" club. In 1947, he became an officer of the newly-formed Rochester Junior Numismatic Association; on March 2, 1948, when he had finally turned 18, he was voted a member of the RNA. More than fifty years later, that longevity has landed him membership number "1" in our club.

Charlie became the RNA's youngest president, age 29, in 1959-1960, a distinction he'd hold until Doug Musinger took the office in 1996. His interest in Napoleonic medals inspired club sculptor Alphonse Kolb to create a unique variety of his presidential medal: a hand-tooled variety that eliminated Charlie's suit and tie and crowned him with a laurel wreath, painstakingly crafted by Kolb in solid gold and inlaid on the medal.

A lifetime of service

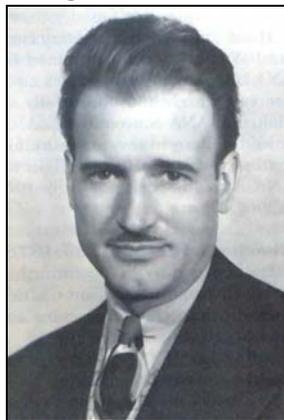
In addition to his service to the RNA, Charlie boasts a proud record of accomplishment elsewhere in the numismatic world. In 1965, he served on the U.S. Assay Commission; the next year, he was finance chairman of the ANA's 75th anniversary celebration.

Moving from Rochester to Chicago to pursue a career in bank auditing, Charlie would eventually serve as president of the Chicago Coin Club, becoming the only person to lead both of the clubs that claim "oldest local coin club in America" honors. (While an earlier incarnation of the Chicago club predates the RNA's 1912 founding, the current Chicago club has been meeting regularly only since 1919!) Charlie has also served as president of the North Shore Coin Club, the Token and Medal Society and the *Societe Americaine pour l'Etude de la Numismatique Francaise*.

In addition to this year's Zerbe award, Charlie has been honored with the ANA's Glenn Smedley Award, Medal of Merit, Lifetime Achievement Award, Presidential Award, Heath Literary Award and Burton Saxton Memorial Exhibit Award.



J.C. Lighthouse



Charles N. Ricard

Now retired from the First Chicago Corporation Trust Audit Unit, where he served as assistant vice president until 1995, Charlie and his wife Ruth live in the Chicago suburb of Northbrook, though they return to Rochester every year for the RNA's annual banquet.

Napoleonic medals

As most RNA members well know, Charlie's collecting specialty is the medals of Napoleon, a subject on which he has frequently spoken to our club and other groups.

Charlie sold most of his U.S. and foreign coins at auction, but he continues to hold his prized Napoleonic collection, inspired in part by his uncle's unusual name.

Now that he's celebrated 100 years of family membership in the ANA (his great-grandfather joined in 1903 as member 479), Charlie's getting ready for another centennial just a few years away: the 100th anniversary of



A young Charlie Ricard (third from left) with fellow RNA members John Jay Pittman, George J. "Papa" Bauer and Charles W. Foster after winning ANA honors for National Coin Week 1953.

the RNA in 2012. We can't wait to welcome Charlie to our celebrations in nine years – and to see him back in Rochester next spring so we can properly honor him for the honor he brings to himself, his family and our club with the Zerbe award!

(Some information and photos courtesy of Charlie Ricard and of the ANA)

The 1913 Liberty Nickels and the RNA: Did We Have Them First?



YNs admire all five 1913 nickels at ANA in Baltimore

the Rochester Numismatic Association held in the old Rochester Museum in Edgerton Park and there laid out five (yes, all five) of these rare coins to the amazement of the RNA members! Subsequently, he showed the specimens to the 1920 ANA conventioners. The article indicates that all five coins were struck in proof, although, at least some, have been mishandled since. The article goes on to reveal some of the facts leading up to the existence of these famous nickels. Unfortunately, I was not among those who enjoyed seeing these fabulous legends in American numismatics."

So, yes, we'll give Baltimore its due as the place where all five coins were reunited after nearly six decades apart – but unless someone comes up with convincing evidence otherwise, it appears that the RNA may be the *only* local coin club ever to have hosted all five of these fabulous rarities.

Scenes From Crabcake City

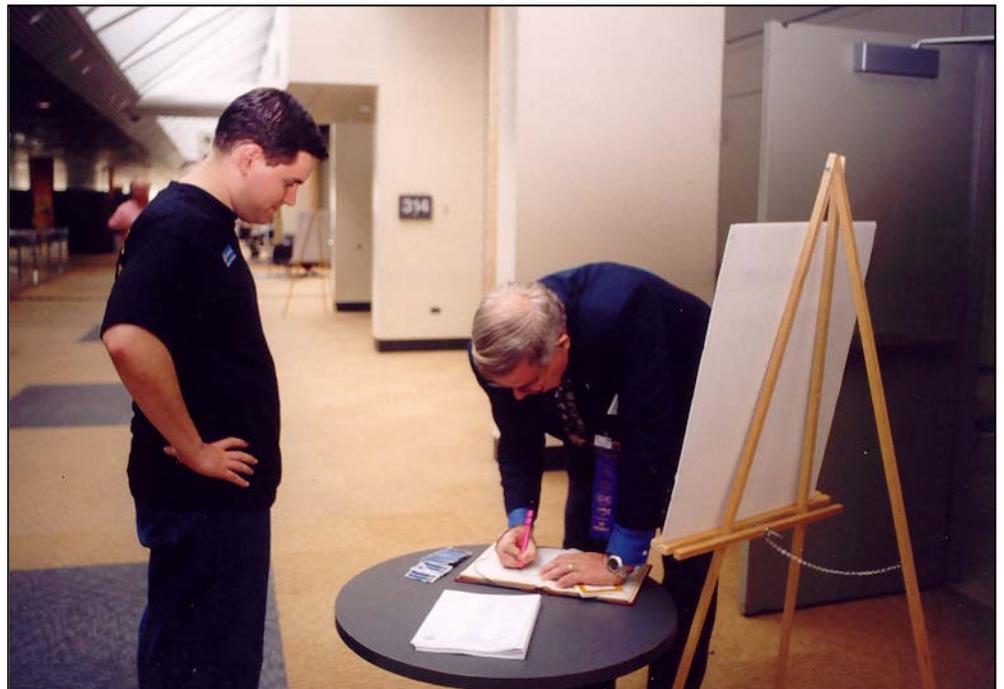
It was hot and muggy outside – but inside the Baltimore Convention Center, it was a cool collection of coins, notes, tokens and medals at the ANA’s 112th annual convention., aka “World’s Fair of Money,” July 30-August 3. More than a dozen RNA members made the drive down I-83 or hopped an AirTran flight to be part of the experience, and most of them showed up Friday afternoon for an RNA meeting held in conjunction with the ANA. Here’s some of what we saw...



Face value, 5 cents; numismatic value, priceless: Tim Corio, Darlene Corio, Jason Childers, Scott Fybush and Dave Gottfried pose with the famous 1913 nickels, including the Walton specimen long thought to be a copy but authenticated during the show as the long-missing fifth coin.

(Photo: Security Guard)

Meeting time: Newly-elected ANA president Gary Lewis signs in for RNA meeting #1911, held upstairs at the Baltimore Convention Center on Friday afternoon, as newly-elected RNA president Dave Gottfried tells him how wonderful Rochester would be for the ANA’s 2012 convention. Outgoing president (and new ANA board member) John Wilson also spoke to the club at the meeting.



While waiting for the meeting to get started, Doug Musinger shows Wayne Scheible the coins he's just bought, and Dan White looks on.



The featured speaker for the meeting was none other than Farran Zerbe honoree Charlie Ricard (see article, page 4).

Charlie brought some slides of his extensive collection of Napoleonic medals and shared his expertise with the club.

Here, Tim Corio (with Darlene hiding behind him) and Mark Holmes look on as Charlie speaks.

Outside the convention hall, Frank Van Zandt poses with Charlie.

Other RNA members who were spotted in Baltimore included Ira Stein, Polly and Tom Roberts and Gehring Pittman.



Picnic – Then Picnic Again!



“Yup, I’m sure,” said Dave Gottfried when we checked with him to make sure we had the dates right for the summer newsletter. “The picnic is July 27th.” Fortunately, you don’t have to imagine the look on Dave’s face when he wheeled up to a group of puzzled RNA’ers wondering why a different group had “our” lodge booked that Sunday morning. We’ve thoughtfully captured Dave’s confusion on film – as well as the impromptu tree-shaded picnic that followed, and the “Son of Picnic” potluck gathering back at the park on August 10th, the date Dave *had* booked for our annual picnic. Good thing we all enjoy each other’s company...

Food’s on! At left, Darlene Corio, Tom Adams, Curt Eddy and Alice Eddy sample the yummy barbecue from Beale Street in its unusual “al fresco” presentation.



Below, Jim Sanders and John Cooper share a couple of cold ones; behind them, Edie Coe promises she’ll get the dates right when *she* becomes president – and Dave’s dad wonders where he went wrong raising that boy.

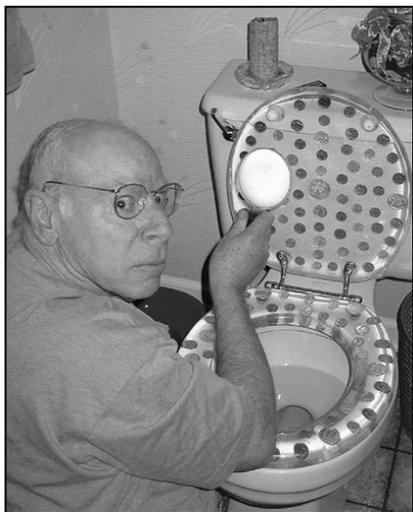


Above: Gerry Muhl’s cake for “Son of Picnic”

The Odd Page

News and Notes From All Over

Caption Time: In the July-August newsletter, we announced the first-ever *RNA News* Photo Caption Contest, presenting this lovely image of Ira Stein proudly examining his latest and greatest eBay find. In good RNA tradition, many of you lowered yourselves suitably to the occasion,



producing a sheaf of entries that ranged from the mildly scatological to the utterly unprintable in a family newsletter.

Among the entries received in time for the deadline, and in no particular order:

- *"Is this an antique pay toilet?"*
- *"The grading on these coins really stinks!"*
- *"I knew Ira was flush, but this is ridiculous!"*
- *"That's great brown toning on that coin."*
- *"That's what I call a Seated Liberty"*
- *"I didn't know they had watermarks on coins, too!"*
- *"I'll get to the bottom of this, or my name isn't Sherlock Holmes!"*
- *"This is the last time I order a proof set from the Royal Canadian Mint!"*
- *"This isn't what I expected when I sent my coins off to be slabbed!"*
- *"I grade this toilet seat XF-40. Yes, it has been cleaned rather harshly, and there are a couple of rim dings, but there's still luster around the edges and it's toning back nicely."*
- *"The Bottom Fisher"*

plus a few more that were just truly unprintable.

But the winner, hands (or other appendages) down, came from way up north and Andy Star:

- *"I think I see definitive evidence that bottom feeders have been at work here!"*

Andy will receive his prize, such as it is, at the September 4 RNA meeting.



Checking in from all over: Past president Spence Radnich and wife Gayle have dropped their membership – but it's

hard to argue with them. As Spence said in his e-mail, "Gayle and I are in Kenya for the foreseeable future." We wish them all the best in their African adventure and hope to see them back in town someday.

Meanwhile, member Mitch Sanders checked in after Bill Coe noticed his byline on a new monthly feature called "Getting Started" in the ANA's *Numismatist*.

"I remember the many pleasant evenings attending the club's meetings and interacting with its members. I have moved away from the Rochester area, working at the University of Notre Dame -- which as you might imagine precludes my attendance at club meetings. I do visit Rochester occasionally, though, so I may be able to attend in the future. In any case I would like to continue my membership in the R.N.A., and I will send payment to the Treasurer in the near future," Mitch writes.



Good and Welfare: Our best wishes go out to several club members recovering from illness and surgeries. Philip Dintruff suffered a massive stroke in July, and we understand he's in stable condition but has not recovered movement on one side of his body. Our prayers are with Philip and his parents, Ralph and Jane Dintruff.

John Cooper had two stents implanted in his arteries in late August; at last check, he was back at work and regaining his energy.

And our condolences to longtime RNA members Louis Gaudino, Samuel and Grace Gaudino and Joseph and Theresa Gaudino on the death of Louis' wife, Teresa, on June 30. Funeral services were held July 5; donations in her memory can be made to Camp Good Days & Special Times, 1332 Pittsford-Mendon Road, Mendon, NY 14506 or to Muscular Dystrophy Assoc., 3136 S. Winton Road, Rochester, NY 14623.

Our condolences also to David Gottfried on the death of his grandmother earlier this summer.



On a happier note: The e-mail also brought a note from ANA president Gary Lewis. Writes Lewis: "I very much appreciated the opportunity to address the Rochester Numismatic Association meeting at the recent ANA Convention in Baltimore. It sounds like you have a great club and I am looking forward to seeing some of your members in Pittsburgh." That sounds like a challenge to us – just how many members can we get to the Steel City next summer?

The Odd Page is written by Scott Fybush, who wishes he could disclaim all responsibility for its contents.

The Calendar September

- **Thursday September 4 – 8 PM – First Regular Meeting of 2003-2004:** No speaker tonight, just “What I did on my Summer Vacation,” our annual opportunity for those who made it to the ANA convention to share their stories of the bourse floor with those who weren’t able to make the trip. And if you did something else over the summer – say, took a North Atlantic cruise or accidentally caused the club to have two picnics – this is your chance to share those stories, too. And note the new day for our meeting – if you wait until the second Tuesday of the month, you’ll find a closed museum!
- **Thursday September 18 – 8 PM – Jim Sanders** speaks, and he says his topic will be something having to do with “The U.S. and World War II.” Can Jim possibly top last year’s bottom-feeding extravaganza? Did a war-torn nation have to do without sticky fruit labels for the duration? You’ll never know unless you show up to hear what Jim is talking about!
- **Friday September 19 – 7:30 PM – Rochester Junior Numismatic Association:** The junior club, for collectors aged 17 and younger, kicks off its program year. No doubt “Stump The Advisor” will be involved. For more information, contact Steve Lanzafame at 288-1932 or unpub@aol.com.
- **Thursday October 2 – 5 PM – BOARD MEETING, Empire Brewing Company, State & Platt Sts.:** All are welcome. Please RSVP to Dave Gottfried, 263-3658 or davidg@rballiance.com by September 30.
- **Saturday-Sunday November 1-2 – 31st Annual Coin Show and Sale:** Volunteers needed! See Bill Coe – or just wait for him to find you. He will. (And you won’t regret doing it.)

Regular RNA meetings are held on the first and third Thursdays of every month except July and August at the Eisenhart Auditorium of the Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Avenue. Enter through the Eisenhart or Gannett School doors and follow the signs downstairs to our lower-level meeting room. All are welcome! Call Dave Gottfried at 263-3658 if you need a ride or directions.

The Calendar welcomes meeting notices from other area clubs. Send them to rnanews@fybush.com or PO Box 10056, Rochester NY 14610.

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