

New Digs at Kane County

By Steve Butler



OCTOBER 26, 2008: The Antique and Collectible Toy & Doll World Show, which has several aliases (Chicago Show, ATW Show and Kane Co. Show) not only retained but improved on its position as one of the premier toys shows in the country. Contributing to this achievement were the new and improved facilities, vendor increases, excellent attendance and quality merchandise. We'll consider those factors in that order.

New and Improved Facilities
It its 35th year about two-thirds of

the show moved into new quarters. The huge new building is too large to photograph well, especially in the early morning light. The structure consists of two large halls each capable of holding 250 or so tables while retaining ample aisle space. These halls each have two overhead doors and numerous walk-in doors to facilitate vendors and attendees alike. Note the photos of one of the new halls, before and after set-up and that those are new tables pictured. The halls are joined by a large central area that housed food vendors, numerous tables for

rest or lunch breaks and a number of colorful displays informing the public of upcoming auctions and items available for collectors. It's difficult to imagine a better facility for shows. Most vendors and collectors probably overlooked the less than obvious improvements to the former main hall that now houses the doll show area in vastly improved conditions. Even the dirt/gravel parking area between buildings is taking on a mall type look with paved spaces, walkways, lights and plantings.



Vendor Increases

Bucking the trends observed at recent shows, the number of vendors had actually increased for this October edition at Kane Co. Can't be sure whether this reflected a trend change or enthusiasm for the new facilities. Whatever the cause, promoters were unable to accommodate new vendor requests for space beginning about two weeks before the show. Given the experience gained with this first-time use of the new facilities, they'll probably be able to add spaces for their next event.

Excellent Attendance

An estimated 500 persons were in line when the show opened. These are real people actually observed and photographed en masse. The photo provided shows the line about 15 minutes before opening. Avoiding the blustery winds, many were still in their cars while other cars were arriving at a rate of 10 increasing to 15 cars per minute. I don't know the total attendance, but arrivals didn't seem to taper off significantly for over an hour.



Quality Merchandise

As always there were excellent toys and dolls available including some terrific "finds." (Finds being defined as an item of significant interest and/or scarcity preferably at an exceptional price.) Buyers seem attracted to the higher quality and/or better condition toys and





to photographed. His expression eliminates the need for the well-deserved and glowing adjectives and adverbs describing this great show.

dolls, passing by the more common items, especially those in average condition at formerly typical or even increased prices. This situation has been noted at many recent shows leaving some sellers almost euphoric and others grouching.

However, there was no doubt that buyers were buying the “right stuff.”

Actually, this writer spent exactly 15 minutes walking the unfortunately named (possibly a poor recollection) Swine and Dairy buildings at about noon to do nothing but count the number of instances where money was changing hands. The number was 12. Factor that out Given that one person can only observe a limited area at one time and given the expansive total show area, how many sales were made per hour? This writer had previously noted that the food at the Kane Co. show was equal or superior to that at any other. The hot breakfasts in the mornings (bacon eggs and toast) and the varied sandwich menu both augmented with fresh donuts, pies and cakes were all reasonably priced and difficult to forget. Writing at about 6 a.m. and before breakfast doesn't help. Without further elaboration on that matter, I'll simply close the report with reference to a photo of an unidentified passerby who seemed wanting

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