

NABA #54 was epic!

We saw so many of you in Kalamazoo!



This embossed tin-over-cardboard sign, made in the U.S. by the historic Scioto Sign Company in Kenton, OH, was given free to all early registrants of the convention. It features the 54th Convention logo, starring the famed mascot of Detroit's Goebel Beer, Brewster the Goebel Rooster, who was introduced in 1951. Registered members also had the opportunity to purchase a T-shirt commemorating the event.



Our club-wide event this summer, held from July 22-26, exceeded even the record attendance set in Chicago in 2023 and St. Louis in 2024. NABA members converged from 34 states and two foreign countries (Canada and Denmark) in their quest for good times, comradery, and breweriana.

For the first time, the convention featured not one, but two special bus tours. NABA conventioners had the privilege of experiencing the generous hospitality of both Dave Lane on



Photo above: Matt Scherzinger (Cypress, TX) stands with one of two similar "Welcome" signs he generously designed, constructed and transported to Kalamazoo from his home near Houston.

Monday, July 21

Monday Hospitality and Home Tour



The first stop at a NABA convention is the Hospitality Suite for registration. There, members get their first chance to chat with the “Queen of Registration,” Board Member Darla Long (Alton, IL) who plays an integral role in the organization of our conventions.

Tuesday, July 22 and on Wednesday, July 23 enjoyed an unparalleled experience on a trip to Vicksburg, MI that was hosted by Chris Moore and his The Mill/Cone Top Brewery Museum staff. Both tours were highly unique and indelibly memorable.

The rest of the week was filled with seminars, a variety of special events, our annual celebratory banquet and Saturday trade show, and the NABA convention hallmark: robust room-to-room trading.

Heise Collection

This year’s addition of Monday programming was necessitated by how much there was to see and do with the overall convention. The early start accommodated an open house reception to enjoy the collection of Ed Heise, which features a large array of lighted signs that cast a warm glow on his displays—including his unique bar that is built from a repurposed wooden boat.



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Tuesday, July 22

Lane Collection Tour

Busloads of nearly 300 attendees descended on the estate of NABA member Dave Lane, whose two-story, 33,000 square foot collection building houses what is believed to be the most extensive private breweriana collection in existence as they roamed the incredible collection and the beautiful grounds.



A visit to Dave's collection is begun by viewing three large (but obviously not to scale) replicas of historic breweries that Dave had custom built by a German stone mason. At left is Milwaukee's Blatz brewery, the center is Theo. Hamm's of St. Paul, MN and at right is a model of Milwaukee's Schlitz brewery.



Scott Bristoll, one of the guides of the tour, gave his fellow NABA members a briefing before they entered the collection building.



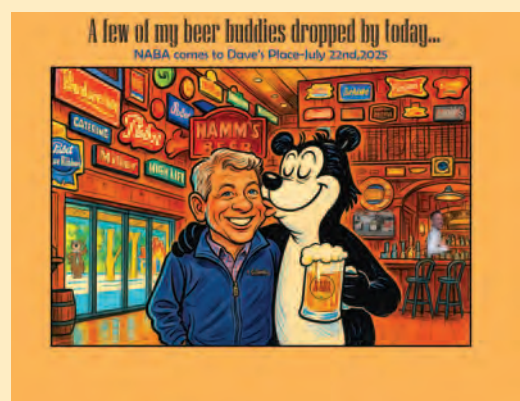
Dave generously treated his fellow NABA members to a sumptuous, catered lunch and refreshments.



Jared Sanchez (Oshkosh, WI) was presented with a new NABA award. The "Rising Star" was designed to recognize younger members of the club who have made a significant impact in a short time.

Jared is a member of NABA's Membership Committee and the founder of a highly successful, NABA-sponsored breweriana show, the "B'Gosh it's Good" show, held in the Spring and Fall in Oshkosh.

The award was presented at Tuesday's luncheon instead of at the Friday banquet, as Jared had to leave for a family engagement.



During a brief presentation at the luncheon, Dave Lane was presented with an enlarged print of this artwork, created by Barry Travis. It commemorates the NABA visit to his personal breweriana museum. The artwork depicts Dave in his barroom, getting some affection from his favorite beer character, the Hamm's Bear.

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NABA members marveled as they roamed the two floors of the collection building, trying to take in all of the breweriana displayed on the walls, hanging from the ceiling, and throughout the 60 custom-built oak showcases.

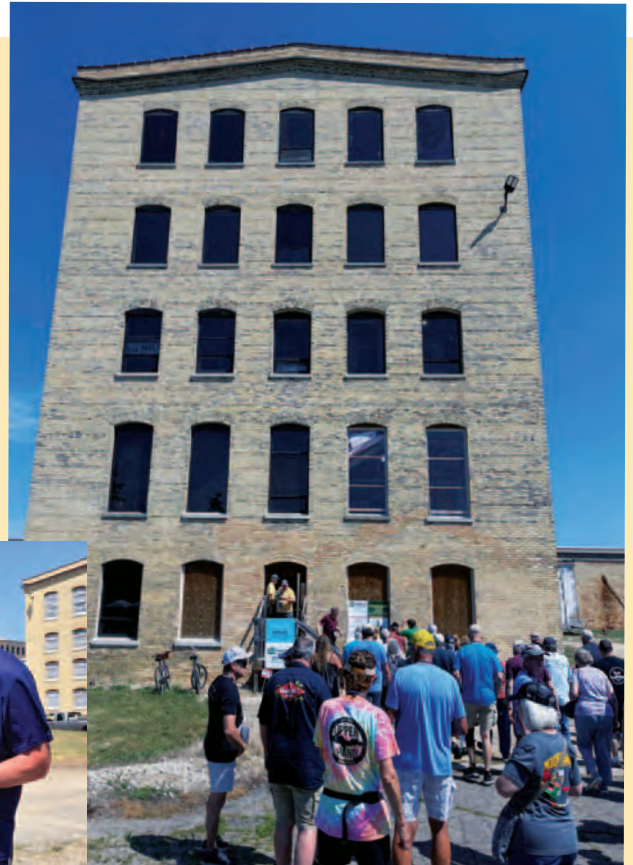




Wednesday, July 23

Visit to The Mill at Vicksburg

Nearly 400 NABA members boarded buses that took them to Vicksburg to see The Mill—the future home of the Cone Top Brewery Museum.



NABA members line up to begin their tour of The Mill.

Rick Basken (Algoma, WI) and Dave Unwin (Bellevue, WA) chat outside The Mill.

There were seven busloads of NABA members who took the 20-minute journey south from Kalamazoo to Vicksburg, to visit The Mill first and then journey on to downtown Vicksburg. Each busload was welcomed by their own tour guide.





The Mill has been undergoing its renewal from an industrial use site to a hospitality and entertainment center for several years. Exterior work included tuckpointing 3.2 million bricks, 80,000 of which had to be replaced by historically correct antique bricks.



The 420,000 square foot building played host to NABA members and gave them a peak into the future. About 40,000 square feet of The Mill will someday house the Cone Top Museum, with which NABA is closely partnered.



The first stop on the tour was the Visitor's Center, where NABA members received a brief orientation and background on the historical building's first life as a paper mill. They were given headsets to better hear their tour guide's narration. The visitors were then given a tour through the cavernous former industrial space.



The now bare wood shown above was once coated with eight layers of lead paint. The thick coating was painstakingly removed by blasting the wood with walnut shells, an environmentally safe method of lead paint removal.

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From Left: Matt Scherzinger, (Cypress, TX), Todd Brosch, and Frances Guerrero (Schulenberg, TX) were among the hundreds who enjoyed a sumptuous lunch, refreshments, and live entertainment by a blues band, courtesy of The Mill.



Don Roussin holds a beer can specially designed to commemorate the NABA visit to Vicksburg. These were giveaways to members on the tour.



Terry and Cindy Toth (Curtis, OH) pose with the larger-than-life Brewster the Goebel Rooster, the official convention mascot, which was created by the Cone Top team and posted outside The Mill.



Following lunch, NABA attendees headed for the buses and the short (less than a mile) drive to downtown Vicksburg. At left is one of the large free-standing signs created for the event. This one promotes Old Stove Brewing Co., which has three locations in Seattle and, like The Mill, is owned by Chris Moore.

Future development plans for The Mill call for it to house a branch of Old Stove Brewing, which will make an ideal accompaniment to the Cone Top Brewery Museum.



The Neon Hall was enjoyed by the Schmidt family (Lansdale, PA) Jeremie, Gwen, Jamie, Desmond, and Christian. The Schmidt's neon from the Jacob Schmidt Brewing Co., St. Paul, MN, behind them made the perfect backdrop for this photo.

Visitors were mesmerized as they entered the huge gallery that currently hosts "The Great Big Neon Hall" exhibit. This showcased some of The Cone Top Museum's extensive collection of outdoor and indoor neon lighted signs dating from the 1930s through the early 1960s, when neon was in its heyday.

The large 1930s-era Duquesne Beer sign, shown above, was formerly in the Chip Echnoz Collection.

A short film was presented that focused on the work of "Neon Mike" Lacroix of Grand Rapids, MI, a master artisan who has restored many of the neon signs acquired by the Cone Top Museum.

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Visit to The Cone Top Museum in Downtown Vicksburg



A custom-made, neon-on-porcelain sign, hangs from iron brackets at the current home of the museum.



NABA members entering the front door of the main museum buildings downtown (left and center) were greeted by this large interior wall mural (right) near the entrance. These buildings comprise the current home of the museum, which will become "NABA's Front Door."

Several of the 19th Century era buildings in Downtown Vicksburg have been beautifully restored and are temporarily housing the Cone Top Museum before its future construction at The Mill.

There are five buildings in downtown Vicksburg that featured breweriana exhibits for NABA members to enjoy. These three, contiguous buildings on Main Street, which date from the 1870s, were fully restored and newly reopened to the public for the first time at the NABA convention.





Visitors listened to their tour guides who discussed, among many things, the three Pre-Prohibition period bars (one is in the foreground) that were carefully restored and acquired by the museum to be used as part of various immersive exhibits.



A crowd of NABA visitors fills up the balcony at one of the historic buildings in downtown Vicksburg that currently house the Cone Top Museum. The ornate, wrought iron balcony is new—it was recently re-created to the exact design of the original from the 1870s. The new balcony is supported by sturdy mahogany brackets. The earlier balcony was removed sometime in the early 1900s.



As the afternoon drew to a close, Cone Top staffers Rebecca Luong, VP of Design and Development, and Thomas Urlick directed the seven busloads of NABA members to their departures back to Kalamazoo.

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Artifacts originally from the Stroh Brewery Co. were on display, including some historic photos of the brewery in the 1930s (above), as well as original artwork that was transformed into large outdoor billboards (left).



Mark Oleske (Hardystown, NJ) studies some examples of David's restoration work on metal, porcelain and glass.

NABA member, master sign artist, and restoration expert David Butler discusses examples of his artwork with Steve Fisher (Weatherford, TX). David has moved his Butler's Gold studio from Indiana to the Cone Top Museum's current quarters on Main Street in Vicksburg. One of his objectives in this new endeavor is to train apprentice sign makers in his time-honored craft.



Brothers Stew Dinger (Zeeland, MI) and John Dinger (Holland, MI) confer in the Minnesota gallery, where enlargements excerpted from NABA member Doug Hoverson's seminal book, "Land of Amber Waters: The History of Brewing in Minnesota" are displayed on wall murals.



Cone Top's Tom Hardy leads a guided tour of the Minnesota-themed breweriana gallery space as Theo Michalik (Frederick, MD) looks on.



The Northern Lights exhibit presents outdoor-themed breweriana (hunting, fishing, and camping scenes) in an experiential setting that looks and feels like a Northwoods cabin. This exhibit was presented at the last two NABA conventions by being set up in hotel suites but will find a permanent installation in the Cone Top Museum.



Ron Thomas (Kenosha, WI) enjoyed a classic fishing scene on a sign promoting Miller High Life Beer.



One of the buildings in downtown Vicksburg re-created the look and atmosphere of a Pre-Prohibition era tavern in Michigan. It proved an ideal showcase to exhibit a large selection of period-appropriate Michigan breweriana in the Cone Top Museum's collection.



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Open doors leading to hotel rooms filled with breweriana to buy, sell, and trade have been a hallmark of NABA conventions for decades. This is where both great finds and great friends are made.

All Week

Room-to-Room Trading



Oregonians Jeff Specht (Scapoose) and Pete Magnuson (Oregon City) enjoy room trading.

A pair of Miners met for the first time at the convention. New member Andy Miner (Grand Rapids, MI) met up with Stevan Miner (Winnebago, MN) of NABA's Membership Committee. Although they have a common last name and love for breweriana, they are otherwise not related.

Troye Shanks (Madison, WI) entertained his room guests with both breweriana and live music.



John Bain is known for his impressive lighted sign knowledge, as well as his "The Back Bar" lighted sign exhibits at many shows. He once again brought some illuminated beauties to the convention for sale.

Mark and Sheryl Kasella (Mendota Heights, MN) are new NABA members and attended their first convention (far left).

Michigan (and Ohio) people know how to party during room trades. From left: Jim Ray (Northville, MI), Jimmy Hickok (Hazel Park, MI), Heather Grebeck (Fowlerville, MI), Joye Keller (Maumee, OH), Jamie Grebeck, Debbie Vincentini, Carl Vincentini, (Howell, MI) Jonathyn Mowat (Kenoskee), and Bruce Bosch (Wyoming, MI).



John and Jane Mueller (Saint Peters, MO) on the hunt during room-to-room.



John Feinen (Oswego, IL) was back in action at the NABA convention.



Rick Kottemann (St. Louis, MO) sets up his room as his wife, Donna, looks on.



Mike Hajicek (Mound, MN) always has lots of good stuff to offer.

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Thursday, July 24

Brewmaster's Dinner

Always a convention favorite, this year's dinner once again featured a variety of beer styles and delicious dishes that were expertly paired by Master Brewer Trevor Klimek of One Well Brewing Company in Kalamazoo.



This year's dinner had the largest crowd ever – with 118 participants.



The four-course meal had outstanding beers for the pairing.



Master Brewer Trevor Klimek gave an extremely energetic and engaging presentation on how and why the food and beer pairings were selected.

Thursday, July 24

Seminars

The popular Thursday morning seminars are intentionally varied to address aspects of local brewery and brewing histories as well as the care and maintenance of breweriana collections. As is typical, this year's slate of seminars was very well attended.



Kevin Foley and Keith Patterson gave an engaging talk about the rich history of brewing in nearby Grand Rapids, MI and discussed their upcoming documentary film on the subject.



Rick Basken is one of NABA's foremost experts on back bar statues and writes the "Chalk Talk" column for this magazine. Assisted by Barry Travis, Rick presented "Chalk Talk Live," which covered various aspects—including tips and tricks—of chalk statue preservation and restoration.



By popular demand, Bob O'Connell returned to continue sharing valuable insights on insuring breweriana collections. Bob first presented at the Chicago convention two years ago.

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Thursday, July 24

First Timer's Reception

For more than 45 NABA members and their guests, the Kalamazoo convention was their first. These "first timers" were invited to a reception to welcome and thank them for attending. They also had an opportunity to meet and hear from the NABA Board members.



Bill Leach (Pepper Pike, OH) celebrated his birthday while at the convention and new NABA member Betsy Aller (Kalamazoo, MI) didn't have to travel far to her first convention. Rusty Long (Alton, IL), NABA's Social Media Director, stand behind.



NABA's past president John Ferguson (Indianapolis, IN) and Board Member Matt Olszewski (Syracuse, NY) helped host the First Timer's Reception.



NABA President Ken Quaas joins Helen Haydock, "The First Lady of NABA," who is an inspiration to the "First Timers," as she has attended 53 NABA conventions.



A crowd gathered for the reception to honor convention rookies who were hosted by the NABA Board of Directors.

Friday, July 25

Bloody Mary Bar

The Cornhusker Chapter generously hosted a fully-stocked, build-your-own Bloody Mary bar in their suite. This was a welcome addition to the convention that was enjoyed by many attendees.



Heath Henery (Norfolk, NE) and NABA Board of Directors member Bill Baburek (Omaha, NE) helped the Bloody Mary bar.



Dave Unwin (Bellevue, WA) and Tom Palka (Berwyn, IL) construct their drinks.



Tom Palka displays the finished product, ready for enjoyment.



At left, Judy Terwilliger (Lu Verne, IA) and Mike Mullaly (Mendota Heights, MN) begin to build their Bloodies while Missy Bullock and Dave "Big Bird" Bullock (Winnebago, MN) at right, await the assembly line.

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Friday, July 25

Craft Beer Tasting

The local craft beer tasting event has become a NABA tradition and serves as a pre-banquet cocktail party.



NABA Board Member Chris Watt, along with his twin sons, Connor and Carson, have become the official greeters at the event, and importantly, distribute the tasting glasses!



These two-sided, 5 oz. commemorative taster glasses were given free to NABA members. The cost was generously underwritten by the Cone Top Brewery Museum.



Doug Groth (Fairfield, OH) has a two-fisted approach to the tasting. Doug is president of the Queen City Chapter and a 20-year NABA member.



Jim Kaiser (Washington, MI), celebrating his 30th year as NABA's treasurer.



Cheers to Joe Older (Maitland, FL) who traveled from Florida to attend the convention.



Hundreds of attendees converged near the ballroom for the annual craft beer sampling.



Jersey Shore Boys: Rick Van Liew (Iselin, NJ.), Ken Trembl (Green Bay, WI), Mark Oleske (Hardystown, NJ), Jeff Murbach (Williamsville, NY), Bill Sears (Holmdel, NJ), Joe Radman (Colts Neck, NJ), and Mark Lembeck (Arvada, CO).



Cincinnati's Queen City chapter (mostly) wore their colors to the event. From Left: Doug Groth, Rife Denlinger, Jenny Groth, Tom Waller, Jeff Schlager, Steve Kirschner, Beer Dave Gausepohl, Deb Schmech, Gary Schmech, Michael Collins, and Carey Williams.



Ric Lofye (Mukwanago, WI), Gary Welch (Clinton, IL) and Jonathon Mowatt (Kenosha, MI) toast a successful convention.



Don Kaiser and Lori Kaiser (South Bend, IN) enjoying the party.



Longtime and loyal NABA members Ray Geyer (40 years, Great Falls, MT) and Roger Owen (35 years, Louisville, KY) enjoyed a laugh and a brew together.



Michigan ladies united in their appreciation for the craft beer tasting. From left: Kelly Busse (Midland), Vickie Zynda (Sterling Heights), Betsy Aller (Kalamazoo), and Mary Clinton (Petoskey).



The massive group of Michiganders who attended the convention gathered for a photo op.

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Friday, July 25

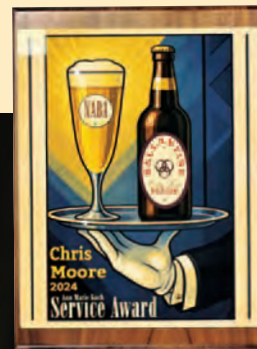
Annual Presentation Banquet



Nearly 400 people attended the Presentation Banquet, a highlight of the convention that is included as part of the registration fee.



Clayton Emery of NABA's membership Committee led the local Michigan team that helped put together the convention. His extensive efforts were essential toward making the convention a success. Clayton was celebrated with this plaque, where he is shown receiving a kiss from Miss Frothingslosh, once the mascot of the Pittsburgh Brewing Company's Olde Frothingslosh Beer—a favorite brand in his collection.



In 2024, Chris Moore received the first Ann Marie Kotch Service Award, named for the late Ann Marie, who gave her time and talents to benefit NABA. This is meant to be an annual award, created to recognize a NABA member whose efforts have greatly benefitted our club. The award was so new last year, that a plaque had not yet been created, so the plaque, designed by Barry Travis to reflect the warmth and elegance of its namesake Ann Marie, was presented to Chris this year.



Our annual Presentation Banquet brought the 54th “NABA family reunion” together to enjoy a meal and fellowship and hear news about the club.

NABA President Ken Quaas presented an overview on the club’s tremendous membership growth and future plans. Reports also were given by Treasurer Jim Kaiser on financials, Vice President

and Convention Chair Mike Michalik on future conventions, and Chris Moore, who thanked NABA members for their visit to Vicksburg and discussed future plans for The Mill.

Members who have passed away recently were honored and remembered. Finally, a variety of special awards were given for service to NABA and the breweriana collecting hobby.

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The 2025 Ann Marie Kotch Service Award was very appropriately given to NABA’s Creative Director, Barry Travis, (who did not previously know he was creating the artwork for an award that would be given to him).

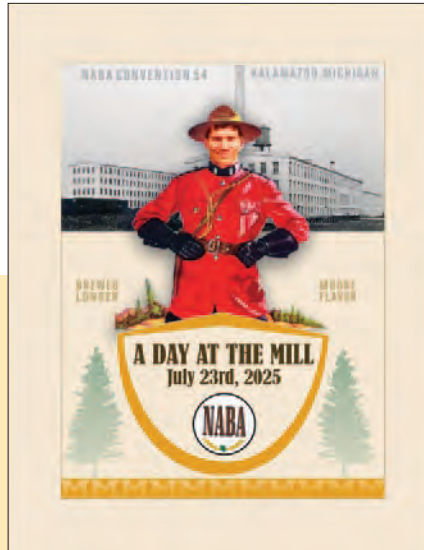
Barry’s creative genius and firepower has positively driven all facets of NABA’s branding, design, and marketing efforts.

Ken Quaas enjoyed the privilege of announcing that Mike Michalik was being given the Herbert A. Haydock Founder’s Award, which is NABA’s lifetime achievement and highest award. Please see NABA News section on page 6 for more on this story.



To celebrate the visit by NABA members to Vicksburg, Barry Travis created a poster entitled “A Day at The Mill.”

The poster used similar graphics to the ones designed for the Convention’s commemorative beer can, described below.



Chris Moore was thanked for his generous hospitality in providing the Wednesday bus tour and luncheon. The tour included a visit to The Mill and the restored 1800s buildings in downtown Vicksburg, which currently serve as the home of the Cone Top Brewery Museum.



The official beer can of NABA's 54th convention honored our host for the Vicksburg tour, Chris Moore. The can's labeling featured “Brewrys Beer” with the classic Brewrys Canadian Mountie mascot—but with Chris's face superimposed.

The choice to parody Brewrys was because it is one of Chris's favorite nostalgic brands to collect. Brewrys was brewed domestically in South Bend, IN until 1972, and was the “local” beer when Chris was growing up in Vicksburg, MI, 65 miles away.



A new award in 2025 was created in honor of one of NABA's founders, the "First Lady of NABA," Helen Haydock. It is naturally called "The Helen Haydock First Lady Award," and commemorates Helen's unmatched 54 years of generosity of time, talent and treasure to benefit NABA. As such, it is designed to be given, on an occasional basis, to the woman who has made "outstanding contributions to our hobby and club."



The inaugural award was bestowed on the very deserving NABA Board Member, Darla Long. A 10-year Board Member, Darla has played an integral role in the dramatic membership increase of the club in her role as chapter liaison as well as in the success of our increasingly growing conventions, overseeing logistics (and cheerfulness) as the registration director.

After Party

The post-banquet after party was co-sponsored for the fourth year in a row by the Jersey Shore Chapter, this time in partnership with the local Michigan Chapter. Attendees were invited to dress as their favorite characters from historic beer advertising.



Larry Moore and Amy Moore (Girard, OH) toast with the Duquesne "Prince of Pilsners," aka Mike Michalik at the after party.



Jeff Jones (Brighton, IL) enjoys an adult beverage with the superhero from The Simpsons TV show, "Duffman," a.k.a. Al Aprea (Chatham, NJ).

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Saturday, July 26

Trade Show

The Saturday Trade Show concluded a fantastic convention week. There, NABA members set up to have one last chance to buy, sell and trade from one another as well as to offer their breweriana to the public, who were admitted free. The show was heavily publicized locally (including on TV and radio) and there were about 200 walk-ins.



Two stalwarts of our club and hobby get ready for the show. NABA's Executive Secretary John Stanley (Durham, NC) and Recording Secretary Dave Alsgaard (Midland MI) are two officers on the NABA Board who make sure both the club and conventions run smoothly.



Ray Barber (Erie, PA) and NABA Board Member Scott Brown (Phoenix, MD) chat over trays.



Don Hardy (Westmont, IL) brought a wall of outstanding cans for sale.



The trade show featured 200 tables stretched across the two large hotel ballrooms.

NABA Board
Member Charlie
Staats (Seguin, TX)
brought great
brewery artifacts
from Texas and
other parts to
offer for sale.



Helen Haydock
(Wisconsin Falls,
WI) chats with
John Friedmann
(Chicago, IL) who
was part of
the convention
volunteer team.



Jeff Bonk
(Syracuse, NY)
checks out
the tables of
merchandise.



NABA Board
Member
Matt Olszewski
(Syracuse, NY)
chats with
Les Jones at the
sign-in table.



Tom Waggoner
(Shawnee, KS)
checks out a
phone photo by
Don Van Hook
(Phoenix, AZ).



Dennis "Bud"
Schultz (Herbster,
WI) mans his table.



Jeff Simarski
(Milwaukee, WI)
and Paul Cervenka
(Plano, IL) of
NABA's Membership
Committee are set
up to sell.



Michele and Bill
Chernenko once
again played a
significant volunteer
role in the conven-
tion. Among other
things, Bill organized
all of the logistics for
the trade show.

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NABA's Convention Canine

NABA's conventions have gone to the dogs. One dog in particular has become a treasured mascot at breweriana shows. Jeff "Yuengling Guy" and Memee Schneider are regulars at NABA events, as is their beautiful and affable dog, Smoky. When Smoky walks into the convention's hospitality room, NABA dog lovers immediately exclaim his name and give the friendly pup a quick pat.

Jeff spent his career in the United States Navy, retiring as a lieutenant commander. He also is disabled with PTSD and Smoky, a Pomsky (Pomeranian and Husky mix), is his beloved, specially trained service dog.

Smoky is almost seven years old and is named after the Smoky Mountains where he was born and where the Schneider's retirement home is located. Jeff notes that "Smoky has been to every breweriana event Memee and I have attended. That includes NABA and BCCA conventions, Spring Thaw, Blue & Gray, and the Reading, Horlacher, and Greater Delaware Valley Chapter shows, among others." Like his parents, Smoky is a valued member of our club and hobby.



Smoky and the Handsome Waiter have become good friends.



Memee, Smoky, and Jeff Schneider are joined by the Handsome Waiter at NABA events.



The "First Lady" of NABA, Helen Haydock, is greeted by the "First Puppy."



Nothing but puppy love between NABA's Creative Director, Barry Travis, (St. Paul, MN) and Smoky.



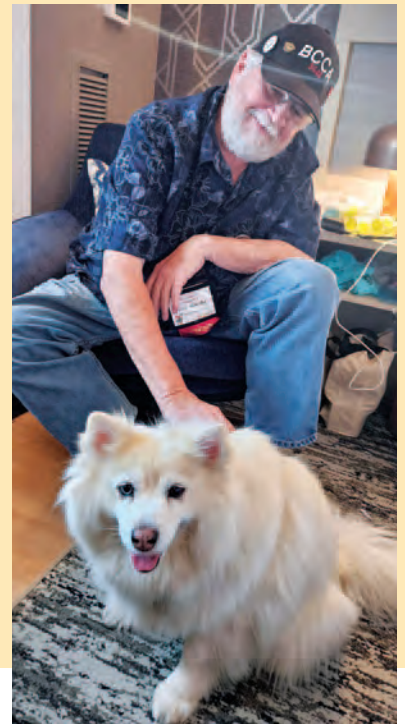
Chris Moore gave Smoky a personalized tour of his amazing project: The Mill at Vicksburg.



Sign restoration specialist David Butler is greeted in his new shop at the Cone Top Museum in Vicksburg.



Father and son John and Jim DeVolder (Ontario, NY) made fast friends with Smoky.



Smoky enjoys a visit with Don Hardy (Westmont, IL) during room-to-room trading.