

Important tips for first-time convention attendees

Annual Meeting: During the convention this is a chance for all the members of GLOW to attend and participate in the annual meeting. The Board of Directors chairs the meeting and welcomes people to comment publicly. Financial, future GLOW planning and direction are discussed so please take the opportunity to witness and join in the meeting. This is your organization and the annual meeting is your chance to speak out

Auction: A professionally run auction of items submitted by GLOW members. This event is always packed and fast paced. Hundreds of lots of pre-1966 holiday items go on sale. You will find an auction card in your registration packet and you can pay for your items both during and immediately after the auction. Credit card machines are usually available, cash and checks also accepted. Part of the proceeds help with the GLOW budget.

Chriskindlesmarkt: This is modeled after a European Christmas Market with booths selling mostly handmade holiday items. Many GLOW members create and craft the most beautiful and unique articles for you to purchase, it is always a big hit so don't miss out. Because the items are new, they don't meet our GLOW by-laws, consequently the market is usually held the Wednesday morning before the convention officially starts on Wednesday evening.

Dinner Charts: In the lobby near the registration table you will see several large charts. These are used for people to sign up for tables for dinner and/or lunch. You can check out who's sitting where, sit with old friends or make new ones. Pick a table with a blank space and sign your name. Don't forget to mark down on a slip of paper the numbers of the tables for each meal! You don't have to sit at the same number each meal so get to know people and have fun.

Hospitality Room: This is the social nerve center of the convention. Homemade and donated cookies, bars, candy and GALLONS of fresh coffee are served free each day of convention. Stop in, grab a treat, find a seat at any table and get to know each other.

Lectures: Here is where you will gain some serious knowledge on Christmas. An afternoon series of one hour lectures with visual presentations that focus in depth on specific topics. The vast knowledge and information that GLOW members share with each other is truly amazing. Even if you are unsure of a topic, come and listen and learn

Educational Talks: These are a more casually presented and shorter series than the lectures. Most are only 10-15 minutes and instead of a slideshow or PowerPoint presentation, the speaker often has actual examples on display. Afterwards, the speakers are available for questions and closer viewing of their items.

Roundtables: This event is a fast informative way to learn new things about a wide range of Christmas areas. 10-15 tables are set up in a large meeting room; each table is focused

on a different topic and hosted by a GLOW expert. They are there to tell a little about their area and answer questions. You can move freely from table to table as you want, no time limits, in no order. Visit one or two tables or visit seven. Past Roundtable discussions have included; Dresdens- Fake or Genuine, Proper Storage for Antique Christmas, Building a Putz, Cookie Painting, Early Figural Light bulbs and many more.

Museum Room: This is one of the highlights of any convention. GLOW members bring the very best of their collections to share with all of you in the museum room. Case after case of exquisite Christmas collectables and antiques will have you running for your camera and oohing and aahing. Standing locked glass cases are filled with rare treasures and the unusual. You'll find yourself visiting the museum room more than once because there is so much to take in!

Specialty Show Rooms: Sometimes there are separate rooms outside the main museum room. Often conventions have larger displays of items that warrant a room to highlight the collection; crèche from around the world, thousands of holiday hankies, tree contests have all been shown in specialty rooms at past conventions.

Newcomer AKA First timer: These are affectionate terms used to let folks know who is attending their first convention. Your name badge will have a special mark or color so people can spot you and say hello. GLOW conventioners go out of their way to help First Timers and make sure they have a good time. It's easy to meet new people at convention; any conversation about Christmas will get you started.

First Timers Orientation Speech: If you are attending your first GLOW convention, don't miss the Orientation speech, it covers all areas of the convention, fills you in on the schedule and offers tips for enjoying the convention to its up most. You will also realize you are not the only person who is there for the first time, we typically have anywhere from 30-75 new attendees!

Workshops: Most conventions will offer GLOW members a chance to learn a new skill at a workshop. GLOW members volunteer to teach a class on a whole range of projects and ideas. A small fee covers the material cost and you end the workshop with a completed decoration or depending on your speed at least a good head start to finish at home. Past workshops have included: Moravian Stars, goose feather trees, cotton batting Santas and hand painted pottery ornaments.

Convention Sales Room vs. Room Sales vs. Group Sales Room: There are three different opportunities to shop at convention. The Convention Sales Room is a large ballroom type area with dozens of dealers located in that one spot. The Convention Sales Room is usually scheduled to be open for a set time period on one day of the convention. Items in this room are limited to pre-1966. Room sales are individual sellers operating out of their hotel rooms. Most are open every night of convention and limited hours during the day. Room sales have wider latitude for time period. The Group Sales Room is a separate area set aside for members and their guests who are not staying at the

convention hotel but would like an area to set up. Times the Group Sales Room is open will be posted on the door. All three will offer you many choices of holiday decorations so be sure and shop both.

Room Hopping: Fellow GLOW members set up their hotel rooms with Christmas and holiday items for sale. Then all you have to do is roam the hallways of the hotel and look for open doors; walk right in and take a look at what is being offered for sale. It's very casual, lots of selection, lots of fun. Many use this as an opportunity to socialize with other GLOW members. Don't forget to wear your nametag; you need it to show you are registered for the convention.

Raffle: Each year dozens of GLOW members generously donate new and vintage Christmas items for raffle prizes; gift baskets, registration for the next year's convention, antique candy containers, popular new ornaments like Radko and others are a few examples of past prizes. They are displayed near the registration desk and the prizes change each day. Tickets are sold, usually \$1.00 a piece and you place your ticket in the container next to the prize you want to win. Tickets are drawn each evening and winners are posted on a board. The funds raised go into the GLOW general fund and benefit all members. It is exciting to see what each day brings and join in the fun loving competition.

50/50 Raffle: In addition to the regular raffle, some conventions also hold a 50/50 raffle. You buy tickets, usually \$1.00, and all of these tickets go into one large collection pot. Then on the last night of the convention one lucky winner is pulled. They win half the money raised in the 50/50 and the other half goes to the GLOW general fund. This is an extremely popular fundraiser and many years it is not uncommon for the winner to take home \$1000! Of course you can turn around and spend it room hopping so don't miss out.