

Old Stuff

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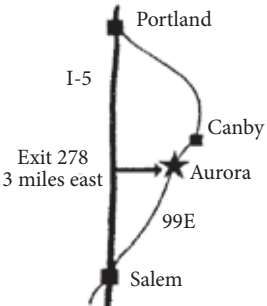
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Yet bank robbers and malfeasant Wall Street tycoons dismissed Jane and Brenda as cute and little at extreme peril. These woman may have been backdoor feminists, but they were the true precursors of girl power.

The best place to find truly powerful comic book journalists, male or female, was Extra! -- a series of comics published for only five issues by EC Comics in 1955. EC Comics was the pioneering and socially progressive company of William Gaines, whose lasting legacy is Mad Magazine.

Hard-boiled to the point of hokiness, Extra! featured journalists like Slick Rampart, Keith Michaels, Jock MacDuff and Geri Hamilton -- who all work for the World Press News Service and its editor Joseph MacDonald.

Hamilton was the woman of the group. She traveled the world in search of stories with no thought of broken nails or snagging a husband.

Extra! was part of Gaines' attempt to get away from superheroes and provide more realistic stories through his "New Direction" line of comics.

While Superman still flew about the pages of Action Comics, Gaines not only published Extra! but another comic called (not kidding here) Psycho-analysis that offered "stories of people searching for peace of mind through the modern science of psychoanalysis."

Reprints offered through Gwandaland Comics don't always have the sharpest reproduction values, given the roughness of their original source material. However, Dark Horse Comics in Milwaukie, Oregon, has beautifully restored all the original issues of Extra! for a hardbound volume originally priced at \$50.

That may seem spendy. However, an earlier hardbound edition published by Missouri publisher Russ Cochran originally retailed for around \$100 and was printed only in black and white.

A few other comic book reporters from the Golden Age deserve mention. Who can forget Front Page Peggy of The Daily Ledger, who first appeared in the 41st issue of Startling Comics (a far cry from Psychoanalysis as comics book titles go) in 1946?

Everyone apparently. And it's too bad. "The Demon Girl Reporter" (as Peggy was also known) deserves better. She had a fun habit of kicking people and hitting them with her purse.

Other reporters of note during the era included Scoop Scanlon Jinx Jordan, Rex Dixon, Flash Cameron, Linda Lens, Lucky Wings ("The Atomic Bomb-shell"), Honey Blake ("The Blonde Bomber") and the Phantom Reporter. By the way, Flash Cameron and Lucky Lens were photographers, in case you missed the subtle clues in their names.

Heroic journalists were so ubiquitous in the comics of the last century that one was featured in a backup story in Captain America Comics No. 5 in 1941. The character was Jerry "Headline" Hunter who worked in London during the Blitz.

The introduction of the story was a bit, uh, hyperbolic.

"Wherever we find news, excitement, mystery and adventure -- there too we find the newspaper reporter always on the alert for something new, ready to risk his very life for a scoop and finding adventure in every corner of the globe!"

The narrator continues: "This story is respectfully dedicated to the news-

papermen of all nations who, without regard for their own personal safety or security, live each moment recklessly so that we may have news!"

Such hyperbole fairly represents the attitude toward journalists at the time in comics and perhaps the greater society, a time when pursuing the facts and reporting the truth was still consider a romantic, noble and worthy calling.

The style of prose also fairly represents the writer.

Those words from Captain America Comics No. 5 introduced the first bylined story of an 18-year-old comic book writer working at Timely Comics for publisher Martin Goodman, who was married to the writer's cousin. The teenage writer was Stanley Martin Lieber.

Comic book fans know him better as Stan Lee. 'Nuff said.

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(Tom Henderson is a reporter for the McMinnville News-Register and has worked as a journalist for newspapers in the Pacific Northwest for 40 years. A comic book collector, he has been interviewed on National Public Radio and by the Kansas City Star on the role of journalists in comic books. He is also featured by on the University of California's Image of the Journalist in Pop Culture website at www.ijpc.org.) OS



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A Penn 20g Ocean Real on top of a Jordan Lawrence Wicker Creel. This real would have been used for surf casting or salmon fishing off the Oregon coast.

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TACKLING VINTAGE LURES

Story and Photos by Rusty Rae of the News-Register

Put it succinctly, Brian Landry is hooked on vintage fishing lures; and other vintage and antique fishing gear as well.

Landry, who is the proprietor of Third Time Around, an antique shop in McMinnville, Oregon, came by his penchant for vintage fishing equipment and other collectable items thanks to his grandfather.

"My grandfather ran the Yankee Trader in Coos Bay and when I was a youngster I was always rummaging about in the store. I've been around antique and vintage stuff most of my life," he recalled.

His grandfather instilled in him a love for fishing which ultimately led him to the world of vintage fishing lures and equipment.

"As a little kid, he taught me the basics of fishing; I had my Hills Brothers coffee can, learned to fill it with worms, and was privileged to use his reels and bamboo rods," he remembered.

His collection of vintage fishing tackle equipment actually started when his grandfather passed and he inherited rods, reels, creels, lures

and such.

Someone heard about his assemblage of gear and came to look at it. There were two cherry creels, one a George Lawrence creel made in Portland.

"He offered me \$1,500 for the two creels. But I didn't really want to sell any of it at the time. I later sold one of the creels and kept one – which I still have in my collection," he said.

Perhaps the moment, which coalesced his penchant for vintage fishing gear, occurred when he had moved to McMinnville. He met an older man who did lawn mower repair.

One day this guy was holding a yard sale and Brian stopped by. The man had a tackle box which he priced at \$250, much to the disdain of many who couldn't believe he was asking that price for a box of used fishing gear.

Landry eyed the box, recognizing some of the lures as true vintage pieces and didn't think twice about the price.

This was in the early days of the internet and



A pair of bass plugs are displayed on the lid of a wicker creel. The top plug is A Creek Chub — not the \$700 one but just an average every day Creek Chub lure. On the bottom is a Hidden bass plug.

eBay and Brian started listing contents of the tackle box online almost immediately.

"I just wanted to get my 250 bucks back," he said.

He was surprised when a Creek Chub Weed Bug brought in \$765. Not every lure sold at that price, but when he finished selling everything from that tackle box he grossed more than \$2,000.

"At the time, I had no idea the value of the Creek Chub Weed Bug. It was a one-and-half inch by one-and-a-half inch chunk of wood with eyes painted on it with a hook – not a conventional lure.

"I was truly in shock – and of course joy, too – when I made all my money back on one sale," he said.

Like many hobbies these days, Landry says today the vintage fishing lure business isn't nearly as volatile as earlier.

"Since the crash in 2008, the market for fishing gear isn't quite as strong. It was a hot market for a while -- everything seems to run in a cycle – it takes time for the cycle to turn," he adds.

Today he uses the online sold listings as a guide for pricing items in his store. Generally he says, he marks items 10 to 15 percent below the online sold prices and negotiates with clients from there.

Though there may be a lull in the vintage fishing gear market, since 1976 the National Fishing Lure Collectors Club (NFLCC), a nonprofit, educational, international organization has fostered an awareness of fishing tackle collecting as a hobby and assisted members in locating, identifying and trading vintage fishing-related equipment.

Like Landry, Larry Kerlock of Kelso, Washington, a NFLCC member, considers himself hooked on the collecting of vintage fishing equipment and has been actively involved for 30 years as of this April.

A life-long fisherman, Kerlock, at the tail-end of aggressive chemotherapy for lymphoma, drove over to Long Beach, Washington with his wife.

"I walked into an antique store there, stood at the front door, where there were three fly-fishing rods. Being a fisherman I held each one of them – and it felt so good just to be alive," he recalls.

His wife bought the three rods for him and later he inherited a number of vintage bass plugs from his grandfather.

Kerlock had an old wicker creel from Hebo, Oregon, that he used when fishing. But after becoming a catch-and-release rodman that went into his collection.

"But it was really a George Lawrence creel that got me started seriously collecting," he said.

The wicker baskets generally came from Japan, but then Northwest leather companies, like Lawrence and Nelson, put the finishing touches on them and that is what makes them special and highly collectable, according to Kerlock.

Kerlock notes the three metrics for collecting lures are rarity, condition, and color.

"This is obviously true when looking at lures. Workmanship is key, as well and some of the early lures which were made by jewelers near the turn of the 20th century are highly sought after," he said.

Though some anglers may use some vintage equipment, Kerlock said you won't find many

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risking a vintage lure that may sell for thousands of dollars on the chance of catching a fish. Fly reels from the turn of the century, according to Kerlock, may fetch two to three thousand dollars. He adds, "The older the better, again assuming they're in good shape. Baits from the early 1900s and wicker creels from that period are highly sought after."

In the Pacific Northwest, Salmon plugs have become valuable trading stock, along with bass plugs, fly rods and reels, and casting rods and reels from the turn of the 20th century.

"I'm not as intentional in my collecting these



A Heddon Fly Reel with a bamboo pole from the early 1900s is shown in front of a Jordan-Lawrence wicker basket.

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days – I mostly purchase from people I know or have met, many through NFLCC," he said.

Kerlock concurs with Landry regarding the impact of the Internet on collecting, noting, "Ebay changed the collecting world."

"You put something online and the net will tell you what it's worth. Most hope to see a bidding war on their items, but some of my best buys have been online," he said.

That's because Kerlock says his knowledge "gives me an edge" and he adds, "The NFLCC is a great place to gain expertise. In addition to meets, they have also have a nice magazine."



A Jordan-Lawrence Wicker basket, which was finished in Portland.

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The NFLCC's Northwest district meet scheduled for April is canceled, but Kerlock said the fall meet, set for the first weekend in November in Kelso, is still scheduled. More information can be found at the NFLCC web site, www.nflcc.org.

As for Landry, he's taking social distancing to the nth degree.

"The shop is closed, so I might as well take the grand kids fishing."

But rest assured, he won't be taking any of his grandfather's vintage equipment on this trip. OS



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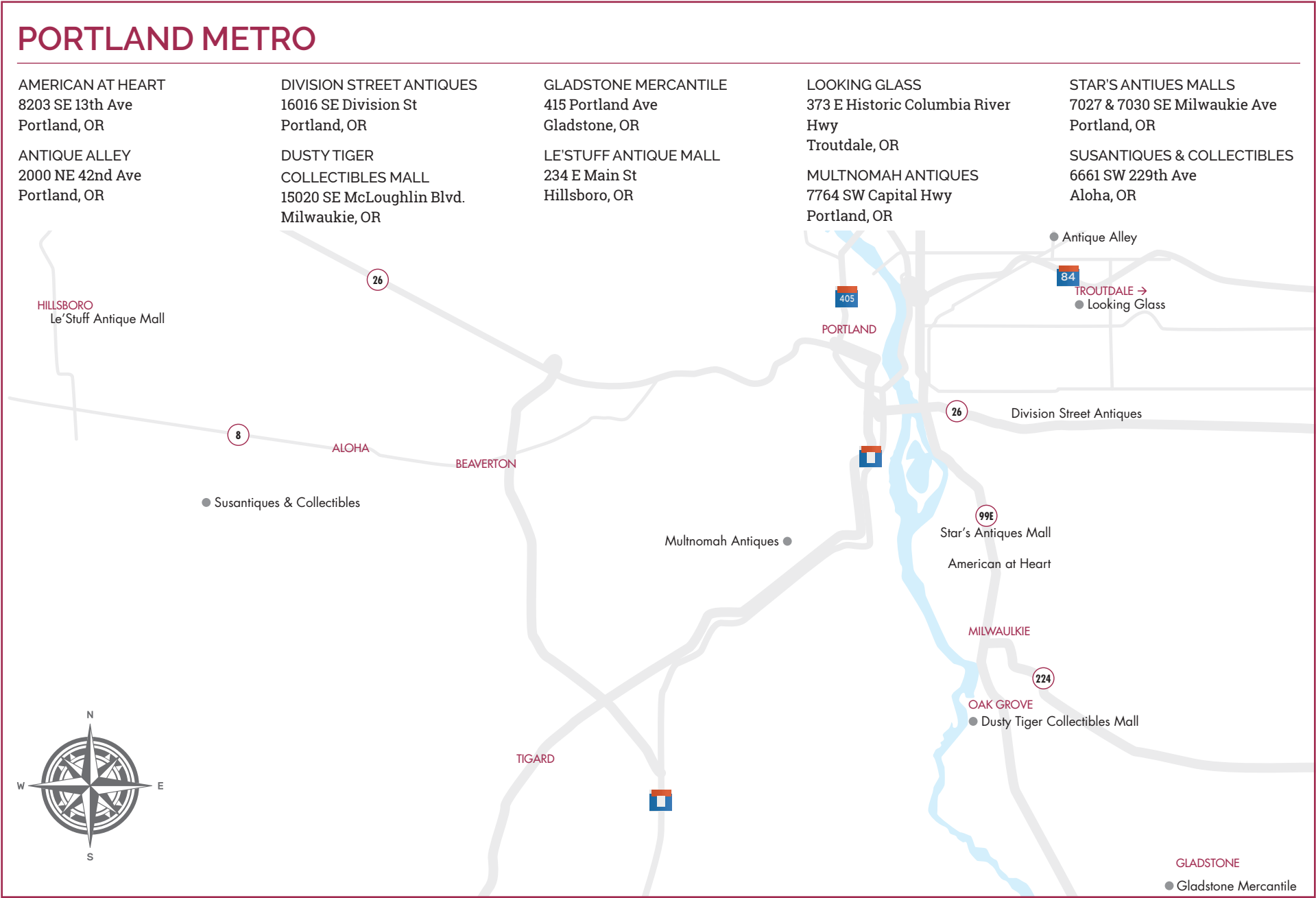
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By Anne Gilbert

Born in the U.S.A. more than 100 years ago, even rare slot machines and coin operated gaming devices are being passed up by millennials. As one dealer told me, "the generation who collected them is now selling them."

Back in 1983 I interviewed Marshall Fey, grandson of Charles Fey, who invented the first three-reel slot machine in 1889. Fey had just published the first book on collecting them. The book, "Slot Machines-A Pictorial History of the First Hundred Years". That book has been revised, and a price guide added, six times over the years. To date over 22,000 copies have been sold.

Fey told me at the time that a collector would pay several thousand dollars for a first, Fey, three-reel slot machine. Currently an authentic three-reel sold at auction for \$174,000.

Slots have been late comers to the collecting scene. One reason is that unlike other American inventions, the slot machine was virtually shunned for decades by museums. Yet, its complicated mechanisms are the ancestors of today's video games and microprocessor lots.

For years slot machines and coin-operated gaming machines suffered from an image problem dating back to their beginnings in turn-of-the-century San Francisco saloons and mining town gambling halls. In the 1920s they were associated with racketeers who placed them in illegal "speakeasy" bars during prohibition. That

stigma and various reform movements kept them out of mainstream collecting and conventional museums.

In 1950 California's \$500 "Possession" law made it illegal to own slot machines or ship them interstate. Hundreds were destroyed. They were continued to be made and used in private clubs and on casino ships. That changed with demand in the 1970s and the growth of casinos in Nevada and Atlantic City. Once again laws changed. By the mid-1990s slots returned big time and more than 300,000 slot machines were operating in twenty-two states.

In his book, Fey notes that there were other slot machines invented as early as 1891. Mortimer



Liberty Bell, 1st fruit and bell fruit and bell reel strip | Las Vegas Museum

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Mills in 1897 introduced the 1st free standing cabinet machine, "The Owl", decorated with colored panels and owls.

The Clawson Machine Company of Newark, N.J. was the first to manufacture coin machines. Their first was named "Automatic Dice." It was a "trade stimulator" that mechanically shook a set of dice and paid awards in cigars and drinks. Two years later, Clement C. Clawson made the first cash payout machine, "Three Jackpots." Another early pioneer, Gustav F.W. Schultze patented the first counter wheel automatic pay machine, "The Horseshoe" in 1893.

Because over the years money-paying slot machines were illegal, some ingenious means to get around the law were invented. There were the trade stimulators that paid off in items that could be redeemed for cash and the arcade and vending machines that showed no cash rewards. Some counter slots were made to look like clocks. The best known were the gum machines and cigarette machines. Some payouts were made in tokens or trade checks good for replays or other merchandise. Machines were often equipped with an extra "kitty" that paid in coins.

Over the years hundreds of patents have changed not only the mechanics but the appearances of the slot machines. One of the most prolific of the inventors was Edmund Fey, Marshall Fay's father. Among his inventions was a 1922 coin-operated pistol range, as well as 21 patents on gambling devices.

Other famous names include the Caille Brothers of Detroit who specialized in quality, automatic-paying floor machines and their own version of the "Liberty Bell" slot.

One of the most sought after slots is the Caille

Brothers "Eclipse triplet" that paid out in 5cents, 25cents and 50cents. One sold at a 2017 Morphy's Las Vegas auction for \$217,000.

Electro-mechanical machines were made briefly in quantities by the Paul E. Berger Company. The best known was the "Oom(dutch for uncle) Paul. Since they had electrical problems they didn't last long. They are popular collectibles if you can find one, or can afford one.

Also collectible are the machine reel symbols. These have changed over the years. The earliest were four card suit symbols, horseshoes and stars. In 1899 the Liberty Bell machines added the bell symbol that earned the highest pay of all, 20 coins. In 1910 the reel symbols depicted fruits. The machine was actually a slot machine with an attached gum vendor.

Problems with reproductions and restorations can plague buyers. Often the reel tapes that are really made strictly for restorations are used in repro machines. Only an expert can recognize the look of new metal parts. They can be cast from an old existing machine.

Award cards and trademark cards are also easy to reproduce and be ordered through slot mail order catalogs. Also heavily reproduced are counter-top slot machines. While the exterior is usually a new casting, the inside may use original parts. Professional restorers are available but they are expensive since the process is time consuming. Some machines have to be completely disassembled and any cast iron parts might have to be re-nickled at a metal plating shop.

As collectors say, slot machines are one investment you can play with. OS



"The Snake"1936 | Morphy's Auctions, Las Vegas



Mills counter top, "Little Monte", c. 1900 | American Antique Museum

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SUCCESSFUL ANTIQUES COLLECTING

EBAY AND CRAIGSLIST SCAMS TO BEWARE

by Mark A. Roeder

Wherever cash is changing hands there is someone waiting to take advantage. Some scams are so transparent they are laughable, but others are harder to identify. In this column, I’ll focus on two scams that are the most likely to cause problems for collectors.

eBay has done wonders in protecting its members by developing its message system. All emails from eBay and from one member to another appear under “Messages” in “My eBay.” I also have my messages delivered to my email address, but when in doubt I check “My eBay.” If the message also appears there I know it’s legitimate. If not, I know someone is trying to pull a scam.

There is a scam that slips by eBay’s efforts to protect its members because a legitimate eBay member initiates it. The scam is often not even recognized as a scam because it appears to be a legitimate business offer. In fact, it is a legitimate business offer, but it is intended to take advantage of the seller.

When I was hit by this scam, I didn’t even realize it was a scam. What happened was this; I had a circa 1950 motion lamp up for bids on eBay. It featured a steam engine that billowed smoke then the light bulb produced enough heat to turn the inner cylinder. I’ve bought, sold, and collected a lot of stuff in my years of collecting, but I didn’t realize that I had a valuable piece. Unlike earlier motion lamps, the outer shade of this one wasn’t made of glass. It was made of plastic. I was so unimpressed by the lamp I almost didn’t bother to list it on eBay. I went ahead and listed the lamp, hoping I could get a little something out of it. A few bids were placed on the lamp, but as with most eBay auctions, the early bids weren’t impressive. Then, I was hit with the scam...

I received an email from an eBay member telling me how much she liked the lamp and how she wanted to buy it as a birthday present for herself. She didn’t want to wait until the end of the auction. She offered me \$50 for the lamp if I would sell it to her off eBay. A request to sell an item off eBay is a red flag, but not necessarily a scam. I was still unaware I was the victim of a

scam. I might have sold the lamp to her if there had not already been bids on the lamp. After all, \$50 was far more than I expected to get for the piece. I emailed her back and told her I was sorry, but I couldn’t sell her the lamp because bidders had already placed bids on it. I never heard from her again. I refused to sell off eBay not because I thought I was being scammed, but because cancelling the auction would not have been fair to those who had already placed bids. As the auction drew to a close, the bids on my lamp grew higher. I was amazed when the bids exceeded \$100. In the final seconds, the bids shot up and the lamp sold for \$325. I was amazed. I would have sold the lamp at a flea market for \$10 and been happy with the price!

It was not until after the lamp sold that I realized someone had tried to scam me. The eBay member who tried to get me to sell the lamp off eBay likely knew the lamp was a valuable piece. By making an offer early, she attempted to get the lamp for much less than it was worth. Her attempt wasn’t actually illegal, but I would have missed out on \$275 of profit if I had taken the bait. Of course, there is the possibility that it wasn’t a scam and that she just really wanted the lamp for her birthday, but most likely it was indeed a scam. I’ve had similar offers since, not many, but a few. My experience with the lamp educated me and allowed me to recognize such scams. Now that you’ve read about my experience, you can recognize them too!

Craigslist warns sellers that “Most cashier’s checks and money orders offered to craigslist sellers are COUNTERFEIT – cashing them can lead to financial ruin” and “Requests that you wire money abroad via Western Union or moneygram for any reason are SCAMS.” Craigslist even includes a link on their very own scams page. Be sure to check out this link even if you don’t buy or sell on Craigslist because it’s filled with useful information and links. Even with the warnings, it’s easy to be taken in.

I recently offered a few things for sale on Craigslist. One of the emails I received stated that the sender would take my item, but would pay me by cashier’s check. The email requested my name

and address and said that someone would be picking up the piece. The email seemed legitimate. If I had provided my name and address a cashier’s check would probably have shown up, but it would have been fake. If the check had made it past the scrutiny of the bank, I would have been paying a lot of fees when it was later discovered that the check was counterfeit. Someone would have shown up to collect the piece and I would have been out the piece I was selling, plus all the bank fees! I didn’t respond to the email and never heard from the individual again.

A lower-level craigslist scam isn’t out to steal your money or merchandise, but is an attempt to get your email for spam purposes. It’s easy to fall for this one because it seems so innocent. It works like this: the seller receives an email that simply asks “Is the piece still available?” If the seller answers nothing too bad will happen, but they will start receiving spam. This scam works so well because a potential buyer might send such a message. Most emails that ask this question are attempts to get your email address, so

beware! I received one while I was writing this column that asked, “Did it still available?” in exactly those words, which is a humorous tipoff that at least some of the scams are coming from outside the U.S. and are initiated by those without a firm grasp of English.

When posting an item for sale on Craigslist, you can protect yourself from this scam by requesting that potential buyers contact you with a specific phrase in the subject-line or include something in the email that lets you know they are local. It can be a mention of the weather, a local sports event, or whatever. You can also do what I do, delete any email that only asks if a piece is still available.

Scams can cost one a lot of money or they can be a mere annoyance. Either way, they aren’t difficult to avoid with a little effort and a little knowledge. Both eBay and Craigslist offer information and tools to avoid scams. Use them! OS



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THIS & THAT: ANTIQUES & COLLECTING

By Terry and Kim Kovel

WHISKEY NIP



Would you have priced this 5 1/4-inch long figural whiskey nip (a small bottle that holds one shot) at \$702? It sold at a Glass Works bottle auction in Pennsylvania in 2018. The rare bright-blue color added to the value.

Why not start a collection this year? It's fun and encourages healthy exercise and family outings. It creates new friendships and sometimes a lucky find brings money. Bottles can be found in stores, house sales and even dug up from old dumps. There are thousands of bottle collectors who go to shows, meetings and even on trips to add to their knowledge and collections. Prices of bottles range from a few dollars to thousands of dollars. The top prices are for antique bottles that were made in a mold or blown. The most expensive of these are figural flasks of the 18th century that have the design raised in the glass. Almost all are listed and pictured in the books by Helen McKearin, so you can find out when and where they were made.

Or search for less expensive inks, poisons, medicines, bitters, perfumes, figurals, old sodas,

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milks, mineral waters, miniatures and even modern Jim Beam, Avon, perfumes and children's shampoo bottles. Some people collect and display the advertising that was used to sell the products in the bottles. You can even find groups that dig for bottles in old areas. Each type of bottle has been researched, and there are books, websites, museums and clubs that share information about rarity, prices and fakes. You can even join the National Federation of Bottle Clubs, which meets in many cities and welcomes new members. It's easy to search online for information. All types are listed by name.

The Kovels' online price guide shows hundreds of examples with prices. There also are numerous Kovels' books about bottles. This week's pictured blue clamshell-shaped bottle held whiskey. It has a screw-on metal cap used on many 1885-1900 bottles.

Q: I'd like information about a teddy bear I have. It has long mohair, felt pads on its feet, glass eyes, straw stuffing and a growler. The arms, legs and head move. It's in good condition. There is a label that reads "Made in Federal Republik of Germany."

A: Your teddy bear was made between May 1949 and October 1990, when the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was in existence. Bears made before World War II are more desirable than newer bears. Without a maker's name, it's not possible to give a value for your bear.

CURRENT PRICES

Humidor, bust, red cheeks, teeth, yellow scarf, red bowtie, painted, Austria, c. 1900, 5 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches, \$90.

Kitchen, churn, wood, crank, stand, Standard Churn Co. 1910, 22 x 38 inches, \$250.

Map, globe, terrestrial, paper, composition, Art Deco, 1920s, 9 x 14 inches, \$340.

Barrister's bookcase, quarter-sawn oak, graduated sections, leaded glass, Globe-Wernicke, c. 1910, 12 x 34 inches, \$740.

TIP

Look behind all hanging pictures once a year to be sure there are no insect nests, dust or loose wires.

CLOBBERED PORCELAIN



Would you have priced this 5 1/4-inch long figural whiskey nip (a small bottle that holds one shot) at \$702? It sold at a Glass Works bottle auction in Pennsylvania in 2018. The rare bright-blue color added to the value.

The English word "clobbered" has been used since at least the 1600s, but its meaning has changed. It still means beaten up, badly injured or damaged. But the word had a very different meaning in the 1700s. It describes porcelain dishes or ornaments with blue-and-white underglaze decoration that were altered. And in an auction catalog or antiques display, the clobbered alterations are not bad and not damaging, but enhancing, and not a reason to pay a lower price.

The Chinese made most of the blue-and-white pieces in the late 1700s to early 1800s. They were

CLOBBERED PORCELAIN

continued

shipped to many countries and overpainted with colored glazes because the public would pay more for colored urns or dishes. The decorations did not follow the blue-and-white outlines of the original glaze, but were applied as new pictures and ornamental designs over the old glaze. The English did the same overglaze decorating, but many thought it was damaged, not improved. The Germans called it "schwarzlot" (blackish) decoration.

A pair of "Chinese Export clobbered porcelain vases" were sold at a New Orleans auction for \$5,750. Clobbering in green, pink, yellow and copper red in the mid-1800s has added to its value today.

Q: Wouldn't spoons made in the 1800s be worth more than the silver meltdown price? What makes sterling silver flatware eligible to be called "museum quality?"

A: Most old silver flatware is no longer popular and doesn't sell well. People don't want to bother cleaning silver. It needs to be washed by hand, polished regularly and stored properly in order to avoid tarnish, scratches and dents. It shouldn't be put in the dishwasher with stainless steel or other metal flatware. Certain foods, rubber, felt, wool, oak and some types of paint will cause silver to tarnish. Silver flatware should be stored in special flannel bags or chests lined with tarnish-resistant flannel. Storing silver in plastic wrap or newspapers, or in cardboard boxes, causes it to discolor.

Sterling silver has a "meltdown value," the cash price of the amount of silver the piece contains. "Museum quality" is whatever the museum decides it wants to include in exhibits as interesting art, design or history. Even the name of a famous or early maker doesn't guarantee the piece is of great value. Best sellers include Tiffany, Georg Jensen and some top-of-the-line Gorham.

CURRENT PRICES

Creamer, porcelain, pink and brown border, company monogram, marked, Ellerman Lines, 1900s, 3 3/4 inches, \$25.

Basket, purse, lightship, scrimshaw lid plaque, Nantucket style, signed, 7 x 9 inches, \$125.

Tazza, bronze, gilt, cat, owl, arabesque, leaves, vines, berries, Antoine-Louis Barye, 7 1/4 x 6 1/2 inches, \$170.

Fireplace, andiron, brass, steeple finial, ball, scrolling legs, ball feet, 22 inches, pair, \$480.

TIP

If a white powder forms on a piece made of lead, or glasses or pottery decorated with a lead glaze, immediately remove the piece from your house. The powder is poisonous. Consult an expert conservator if it is valuable and should be saved. Do the ecologically correct thing if you must dispose of the piece.

PADDY AND THE PIG



Paddy and the Pig is a caricature found in political cartoons during Victorian times. A toy based on the caricature sold recently for \$1,320.

Famous mascots, logos and characters from books and songs are being tossed aside in this modern, more politically correct world. The Aunt Jemima of today doesn't resemble the original. Chief Wahoo of the Cleveland Indians baseball team made his last appearance at the end of the 2018 season. But has it gone too far? It has been suggested that the Fighting Irish Leprechaun, mascot of the University of Notre Dame sports teams, be dropped as not politically correct. Though derived from Irish folklore, some think he is a negative stereotype that is insulting to those of Irish background. As always, there are two sides to the argument, and so far, those who like their leprechaun are winning.

This leprechaun probably was inspired by "Paddy and the Pig," a caricature used by British political cartoonists since the 1840s to represent Ireland and the Irish people. Paddy was the ignorant peasant; the pig was the backward agricultural nation. Paddy wore breeches, a patched coat and a strange hat. Most of the political arguments were about Irish Home Rule, a hot topic in Victorian England politics. The comic Paddy was re-created as a toy.

A version made by Lehmann, a German toy manufacturer, depicts Paddy trying to ride an uncooperative pig that moves back and forth while Paddy holds on for dear life. It sold at a Bertoia auction in New Jersey for \$1,320.

Q: Is there an easy way to date an unused postcard? I know the amount of the postage stamp has often changed and there are lists of the prices and dates. But when were photographs rather than color pictures used? When was it

called a "postal card"?

A: Postcard collectors know and have listed the table of postage and postcard changes online, and they are in our book "Kovels' Know Your Collectibles." A postal card is an early card called "pioneer" with no picture used from 1893 to 1898. A government printed card had printed postage, a privately-printed card required a stamp and a divided-back card was used from 1907 to 1914. Photochrome cards were used after 1939. Collectors call them photographs, although many are lithographs with a shiny finish. Real photo cards were used since 1900. If you want to sound like an expert, refer to them as RPPC. Used cards can be dated by the amount of the postage stamp; the postmark; a two-digit postal code, used after 1943; and a five-digit ZIP code, used after 1963.

CURRENT PRICES

"Peanuts" Lucy cookie jar, yellow dress, 12 x 8 1/2 inches, \$15.

Irish lace collar, ivory shawl, flower blossom pattern, trailing leaf border, c. 1910, 11 x 46 inches, \$50.

Pitcher, silver, lid, hinged, inset Irish coin, armorial, hammered, 1800s, Ireland, 6 inches, \$90.

Wedgwood chalice, fairyland luster, orange interior, cobalt exterior, gilt, birds, chased base, 7 1/4 x 5 1/4 in. \$180.

TIP

To get candle wax off your antique table, use a hair dryer set on low heat. Melt the wax, then wipe it off.

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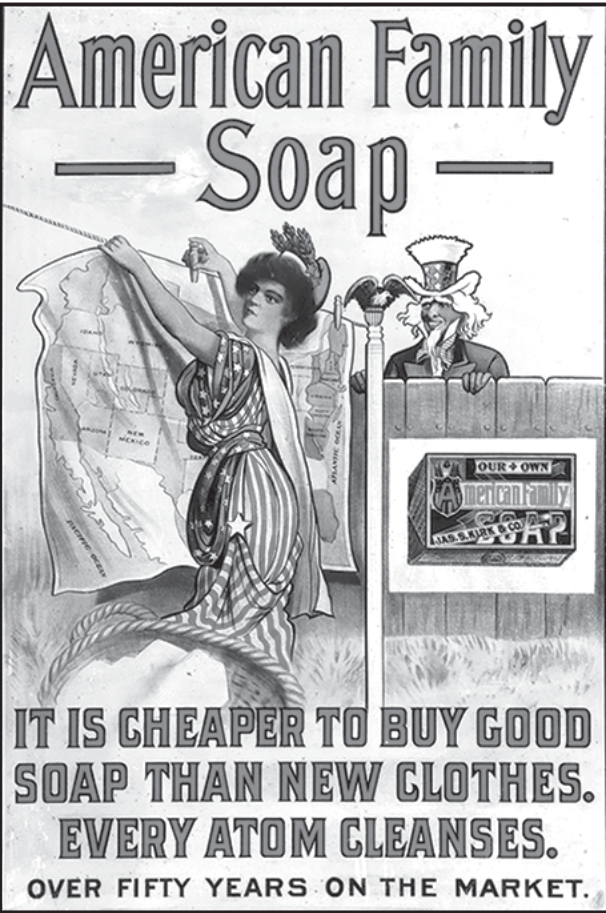
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DISCOVER

THIS & THAT

By Terry and Kim Kovel

ADVERTISING SIGNS



Could this sign date from 1889? In small letters at the bottom it says: "Over fifty years on the market," and Uncle Sam and Miss Liberty look Victorian. Is it 50 years from the founding of Kirk & Co.? Or 50 years from the 1930s Proctor & Gamble ownership, in which case, the sign was made in 1980.

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RAMMELSBERG FURNITURE



This Gothic Revival secretary bookcase was made by Mitchell & Rammelsberg of Cincinnati. It sold for \$1,320 at a Cowan auction in Cincinnati.

If you never lived in Ohio you've probably never heard of Mitchell & Rammelsberg furniture. It was the largest furniture manufacturers of its time located in the Midwest, but not in Grand Rapids, where most of the furniture was made. (Lots of lumber and goods are transported from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River and then to the ocean and overseas.) The company started in either 1836 or 1847 in Cincinnati. It made top-quality Victorian furniture with hand carving and steam-driven woodworking machines making the parts. It became Robert Mitchell Furniture Co. in 1881 and didn't close until 1940.

Pieces often were marked "M & R," or the inside of a drawer might be stamped "Mitchell & Rammelsberg." Only a few pieces of a bedroom set were marked, so many pieces today are identified by the design and quality of the work. The company worked in many styles, from Classical to Egyptian Revival. It also made dining sets, desks, sofas, hall trees, occasional tables and other pieces. Buyers pay the most for mahogany and the least for walnut, but the design, carvings and trim also influence the price. A mahogany bedroom suite with bed, table, chairs and dressers sells for thousands of dollars today, but they are scarce.

Q: I have a decorative porcelain dish marked "Not for food serving, may poison food." I'm not sure if it's an antique. Can you explain the marking?

A: The wording on your dish indicates it is not an antique. In 1971, the Food & Drug Administration set regulations on the amount of lead in glazes on ceramic dishes used for food. The standards have been revised since then and now also include regulations governing the amount of cadmium in the glaze. Cadmium is often used in bright red and orange glazes. The words marked on your dish are a label the FDA requires on dishes that contain unacceptable levels of these metals.

Ceramic dishes made in Asia or Mexico, especially those with bright colors, are more likely to

be unsafe than those made in Europe or the U.S. Acidic foods can cause the metals to leach out of the glaze if the dish hasn't been fired properly and the glaze completely sealed. Enjoy your dish as a decorative piece, but don't use it for food. There are some unlabeled antique dishes that have high lead or cadmium glaze.

CURRENT PRICES

Occupied Japan toy, dancing couple, windup, celluloid, pink, blue, original box, 5 inches, \$50.

Basalt bust, Shakespeare, collar, buttons, convex base, impressed Shakespeare, marked, 12 x 8 inches, \$150.

Snuff bottle, Peking glass, turtle, white opal glass, cobalt coiled snake, gilt stopper, 3 inches, \$375.

Ivory, card case, pierced, curved, people in garden, different scenes on reverse, 4 x 2 inches, \$630.

TIP

Put a piece of plastic jewelry under hot water and, when warm, smell it. Bakelite smells like formaldehyde; celluloid smells like camphor (moth-balls); and Galalith, a 1920s plastic, smells like burnt milk. Lucite does not smell.



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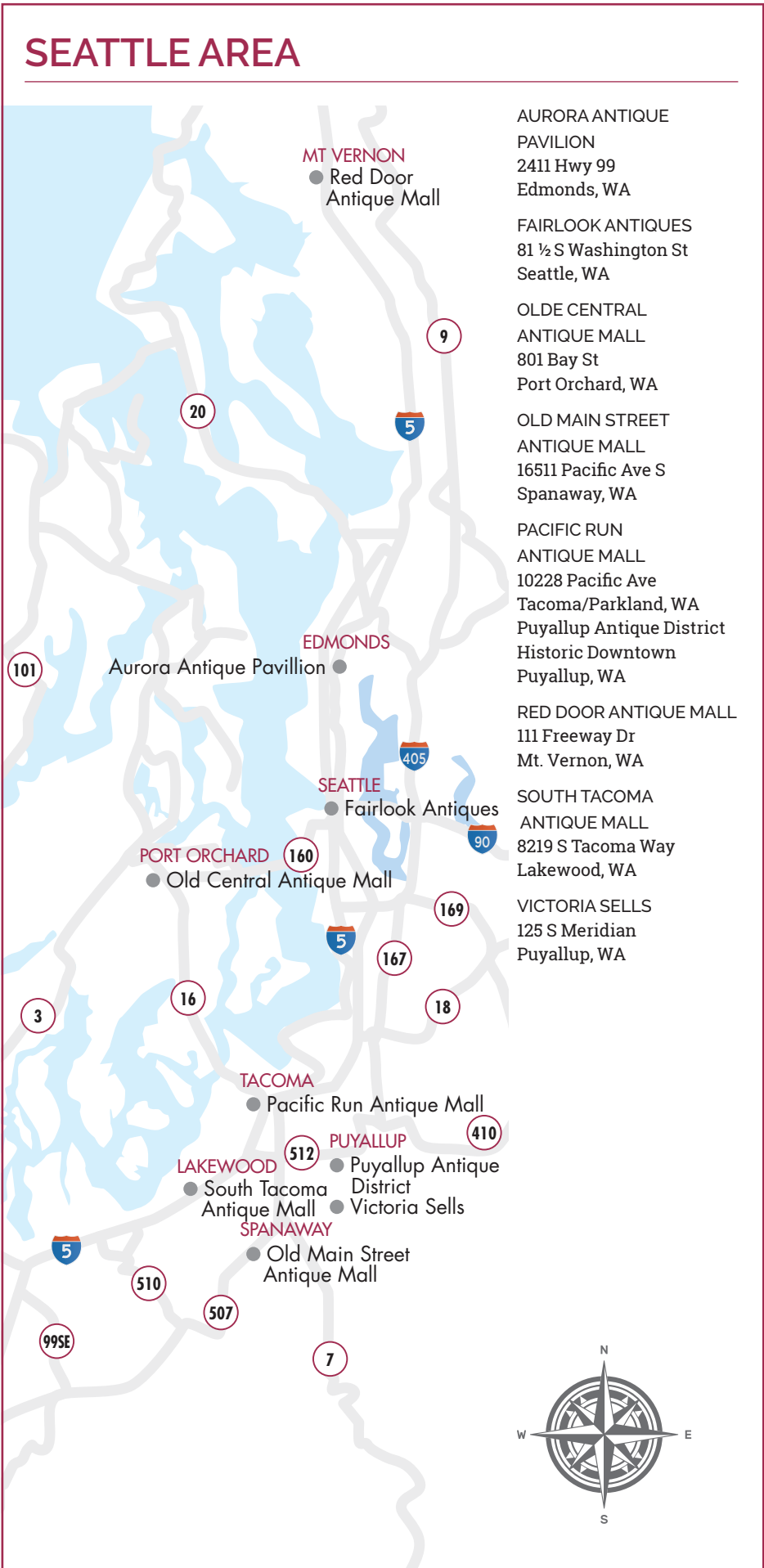
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