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# the mountain states collector

FEBRUARY 2016

ESTABLISHED IN 1972

Volume 44, Number 2

DEVOTED TO ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES, FURNITURE, ART AND DESIGN.

## Keeping Cupid Busy

By Michael Remas

The Holiday of Love, that ancient custom that keeps Cupid busy linking the world's lovers, is upon us again — Valentine's Day.

Men buy greeting cards, flowers and chocolates for their sweethearts, the gals select ties for their fellows, and kids send valentines to their "secret pals," favorite teachers and parents in a custom that will find millions of cards flowing through the mails.

Although the origin is cloudy, tradition tells us it all began in pagan Rome about 250 A.D., when a priest named Valentinus, bishop of Spoleto, was put to death on Feb. 14 by Emperor Claudius II for refusing to renounce Christianity. Valentinus, later named a saint, had preached that love was a fine basis for marriage and sent a farewell to his friend, the jailer's blind daughter, who had befriended him, signing it "From your Valentine." Thus, the first "valentine" was born.

In 496, Pope Gelasius established Feb. 14 as St. Valentine's Day to be a festive Christian occasion for young, unwed persons. During the 14th and 15th centuries folks believed birds mated on Feb. 14. Eventually, Valentine's Day and Mating Day, the one for the birds, became one.

It was about 1400 that the first written valentine appeared.



Charles, Duke of Orleans, reportedly sent one to his love while he was a prisoner in the Tower of London.

Exchange of love poems, sweet sayings and gifts seemed to grow quickly after that, as did the oddness surrounding the event.

*Continued on page 7*

## Brass Armadillo Offers Historic Iconic WWII Archive

By Jon DeStefano

Once again Brass Armadillo is offering an historic archive for sale. You may not remember Technical Sergeant George R. "Bob" Caron offhand but no one will ever forget his iconic photo of the mushroom cloud over Hiroshima which ushered in the atomic age.

Caron was the tail gunner on the famous bomber Enola Gay on August 6, 1945 and on that day he had his own personal camera with him. After the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima he took the iconic picture on their way back to Tinian.

There was an official photographer on board the Enola Gay but he had inadvertently forgotten to pull his shutter lens up and consequently thanks to Bob Caron one of the most important historic photographs of the twentieth century was taken.

A few days after the bombing of Hiroshima the Air Force dropped leaflets over Japan urging the Japanese



people to persuade their government to capitulate immediately, which they did not do. Hence the second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki.

The entire crew of the Enola Gay became famous especially captain Colonel Paul Tibbitts and Bob Caron because he took that photograph. Caron gained publicity he never sought. Over the years Caron's historic collection continued to grow including many unique items, photographs and correspondence with famous people.

It just so happens he left the archive to his daughter Jane who is a dealer at the Brass Armadillo.

Gary Stober has done several shows and interviews for antiques with Jane on the items in her father's collection. The entire archive including the iconic photograph and unique historic phonograph recordings will be sold this February and is available for viewing in person at Brass Armadillo. For more information and further details, call Gary Stober at Brass Armadillo, 303-403-1677.

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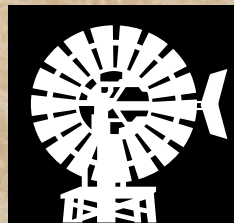
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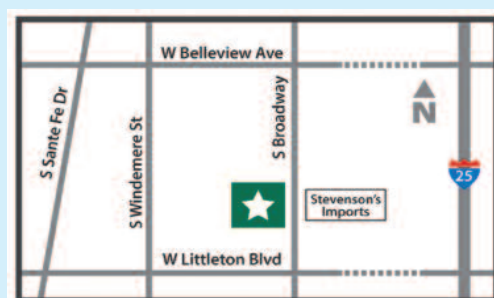


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## SHOW CALENDAR

# February Events



FEB. 10: **MAKING VALENTINE CARDS FROM THINGS FOUND AT THE BRASS ARMADILLO** Discussion led by Cheryl Miller at 2:00 p.m. at The Brass Armadillo, 11301 West I-70, Wheat Ridge, CO. More information, or if you would be interested in doing a presentation in your area of expertise, call Dixie or Charlotte at 303-403-1677.

FEB. 20: **TIMBER DAN ANTIQUE AND COLLECTIBLE TOY SHOW AND SALE**, Loveland, Colorado, sponsored by the Loveland Lions Club. More than 180 tables, 9-3 at the Larimer Country Fairgrounds ("The Ranch"), First National Bank Exhibition Bldg., North Hall. Take I-25 Exit 259 east to Fairgrounds Ave., then north 1/2 mile. Adm. \$4. More info, call Doug Larson, 970-667-9655.

FEB. 24: **STAR WARS COSTUMES** Discussion led by Ian Kisluk at 2:00 p.m. at The Brass Armadillo, 11301 West I-70, Wheat Ridge, CO. More information, or if you would be interested in doing a presentation in your area of expertise, call Dixie or Charlotte at 303-403-1677.

MAR. 11-13: **WORLD WIDE ANTIQUE and VINTAGE SHOW** at the Denver Mart in the EXPO Building, 451 East 58th Avenue, Denver, CO. For more information, go to [www.findyourantique.com](http://www.findyourantique.com). Future shows will be July 15-17 and October 14-16.

MAR. 18-19: **39TH ANNUAL TABLE MOUNTAIN TREASURES DOLL CLUB 2016 DOLL SHOW & SALE**, Early Sale, Fri., Mar. 18th 4-7 p.m., \$10, Saturday Show & Sale, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., \$5, Door prizes, Antique & Vintage Dolls, China-Composition - Hard Plastic, Miniatures, Doll Accessories & Clothing, Lace - Material - Fabric - Ribbon, Toys & Bears, to be held at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 15200 W. 6th Ave., (Frontage Road) Golden, Colorado, Show Coordinator, Mary Ann, 303-985-2770

MAR. 23: **ADVERTISING SHOW** Discussion led by Dan Mayo & Jeff Johnson at 2:00 p.m. at The Brass Armadillo, 11301 West I-70, Wheat Ridge, CO. More information, or if you would be interested in doing a presentation in your area of expertise, call Dixie or Charlotte at 303-403-1677.

APR. 30 - MAY 1: **CASTLE ROCK ANTIQUE AND JEWELRY SHOW**, Douglas County Fairgrounds Event Center, (The Fairgrounds are centrally located between Denver and Colorado Springs, one mile east of Interstate 25 at Castle Rock Exit 181.) Antiques, furnishings, collectibles, vintage, jewelry, glassware, art, pop culture, retro, Americana and more. Dealer booths are available (first come, first serve) Saturday and Sunday, Free parking. For more information, call 303-619-4940.

JULY 15-17: **WORLD WIDE ANTIQUE and VINTAGE SHOW** at the Denver Mart in the EXPO Building, 451 East 58th Avenue, Denver, CO. For more information, go to [www.findyourantique.com](http://www.findyourantique.com). Future show will be October 14-16.

OCT. 14-16: **WORLD WIDE ANTIQUE and VINTAGE SHOW** at the Denver Mart in the EXPO Building, 451 East 58th Avenue, Denver, CO. For more information, go to [www.findyourantique.com](http://www.findyourantique.com).

## Upcoming Shows

MAR. 9: **WWI & WWII WAR BONDS & RECRUITING POSTERS** Discussion led by Michael Finney at 2:00 p.m. at The Brass Armadillo, 11301 West I-70, Wheat Ridge, CO. More information, or if you would be interested in doing a presentation in your area of expertise, call Dixie or Charlotte at 303-403-1677.

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## SHOW

### 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Table Mountain Treasures Doll Club 2016 Doll Show & Sale



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### About Table Mountain Treasures Doll Club

Chartered in 1977, Table Mountain Treasures Doll Club is a non profit group of doll collectors and enthusiasts who are dedicated to the history and preservation of antique and collectible dolls. The club has sponsored a very successful annual doll show for over 38 years, with proceeds going to charitable and club activities, such as the annual Christmas party for children at the Southwest Improvement Council of Denver.

Table Mountain Treasures is a member of the National United Federation of Doll Clubs, Inc. The club thanks everyone for their attendance in prior years and looks forward to seeing familiar as well as new faces this year.

Vendors at the show, to be held March 18 and 19th (see ad to the left) will have diverse and exciting merchandise including antique bisque, china, and cloth dolls, modern dolls, collectible dolls, doll and doll house accessories, doll clothing, books, and miscellaneous doll and toy related items.

The show will appeal to everyone, from the most devoted collectors to new collectors with a developing interest in dolls. For more information, call Mary Ann at 303-985-2770.

## VALENTINE'S DAY

# Keeping Cupid Busy

*Continued from page 1*

Young men in Elizabethan England threw an apple or orange with valentine attached through the window of any eligible women they adored. Women ate the whites of hard-boiled eggs on Valentine's Eve and fastened bay leaves to their pillows in hopes of dreaming of future husbands. Frenchmen sent sweethearts huge, homemade lace-edged valentines.

But all was not sweet and smooth. In the 16th century, St. Francis de Sales, leader of the church in England, criticized valentines as immoral and forbade their use.

As church opposition relented, commercial valentines began to appear in the 1800s to relieve the task of composing and making such greetings. They became the custom in the United States about 1850, with lacey hearts and flowery type, although the verse was cautious and even shy, a far cry from later racy writings. Reports are that in 1857 about 3 million valentines were delivered for Feb. 14.

The oldest known valentines in this nation, however, date to the early 1700s and were small cards with German script. World Book Encyclopedia said they might have been made by monks and nuns.

One of the first large makers of valen-



tines was Esther Rowland of Worcester, Mass., who reportedly controlled the market in the mid-1800s. Ironically, she died a spinster in 1904, never finding her own valentine.

Although comic cards still exist, the insulting "vinegar" valentines of the late 1800s and early 1900s have all but been replaced by sophisticated and sentimental verse, new art forms and finishing, fine paper, elaborate patterns, pop-up designs and - senders may hope - heart-winning appearance.

As relationships continue, valentine's greetings grow. It is safe to say that when the big day rolls around, cupid and the world's mail deliverers will be busy hauling millions of love notes from heart to hearth.

# A Kiss Is Just a Kiss?

By Henry J. Pratt

The young and the old did it and still do it. Egyptians, Romans and Greeks did it, as did the Puritans in Colonial New England.

Romantics perfected it; chimpanzees do it; the Victorians long ago in England dreamed about it—and then when no one was looking, did it—even on Valentine's Day.

They all kissed romantically, passionately and longingly—and, most likely quite often. Kissing is nearly universal. Men and women in most cultures love to kiss, and a review of the history of kissing reveals a long and lusty legacy.

"It's logical to conclude kissing is very ancient, very primitive and very common," says Helen Fisher, an anthropologist at Rutgers University.

Fisher, for 10 years, was a research associate at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Then she wrote a book, *Anatomy of Love: A Natural History of Mating, Marriage, and Why We Stray*, published by Ballantine Books.

If Fisher isn't a top authority on love, lust, mating and kissing, she's very close to it. But another author, Diane Ackerman, staff writer for *The New Yorker* magazine, has also explored this subject in some depth in her book, *A Natural History of Love*.

Fisher found kissing to be older than humanity itself. Well-acquainted chimps and orangutans kissed before men and women arrived on the scene, and still do. Some of these animals even French-kiss today, sometimes in front of zoo visitors.

Kissing has a lovely, luscious, lusty background, Fisher maintains, and she estimates more than 90% of all peoples on record engage in kissing. However, until they became Westernized, kissing was reportedly unknown among the Somali, the Lepcha of Sikkim, and the Sirionon of South America.

*Continued on page 9*

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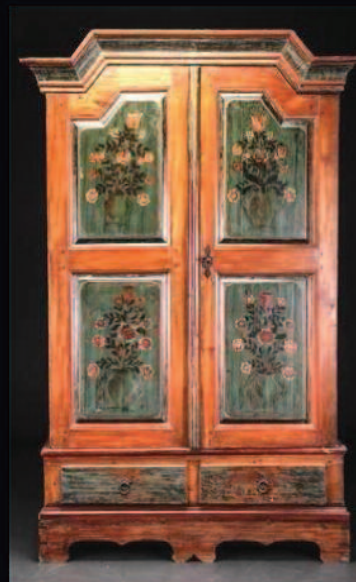
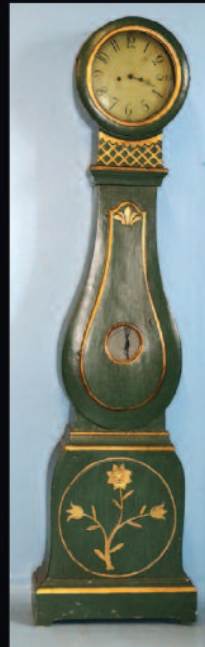
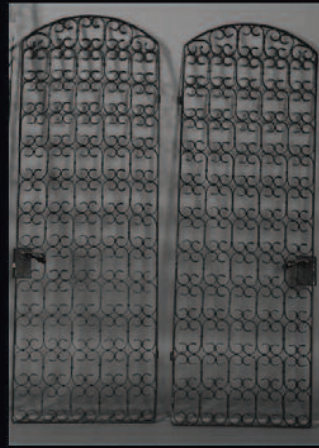




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## VALENTINE'S DAY

# A Kiss is Just a Kiss

Continued from page 7

Asian cultures regard kissing as a much more private activity than Western cultures do. The Japanese media frequently castigate young people in Tokyo, who defy unwritten social rule against kissing in public.

Japanese lovers are supposed to do a polite bow

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when they greet each other in public, leaving the kisses to take place behind pulled drapes and closed doors.

Researcher-author Ackerman described Finnish tribes who bathe together completely nude, but regard kissing as indecent. She also mentioned certain African tribal people whose lips are decorated, mutilated, stretched or in other ways deformed, who nevertheless don't kiss.

"A kiss is the height of voluptuousness," Ackerman writes, "an expense of time and an expanse of spirit in the sweet toil of romance, when one's bones quiver, anticipation rockets, but gratification is kept at bay on purpose."

"Then, all this builds up," Ackerman adds, "to a succulent crescendo of emotion and passion." So one could say—without any tongue in cheek or tittering at all—a kiss, indeed, can be a lot more than just a kiss. Did you ask, "A kiss is just a kiss?"—no way.

However, researchers found another interesting phe-

nomenon about kissing. Historically, painters have depicted kissing as something negative, rather than as a tender exchange between the sexes.

Northern European painters, for example, occasionally showed peasants drinking, carousing around, and kissing. But their strokes carried a strong moral message—nice people don't just do that. Such strokes were left for other folks.

Pop music has given us too many kisses to count—Hall and Oates' "Kiss On My Lips," Barbra Streisand's "Kiss Me In the Rain," Mary Chapin Carpenter's "Passionate Kisses," even the defunct theatrical rock group KISS.

Concludes Fisher, "Kissing is a lot older than marriage, but is not more ancient than romantic love. That's because romantic love comes out of nature itself."

Now, on Valentine's Day again this year, we can properly conclude a kiss, indeed, is more than just a kiss, and the best way anyone ever thought of to say "I Love You."

## February, a Month for Celebration

By Myrl Prather

February is a month chock full of days for us to celebrate, one way or another. There is Valentine's Day, which is a happy day for all. Lovers of all sorts, sweethearts, friends, etc., remember each other with flowers, candy and beautiful cards on this romantic occasion.

Then, there are days honoring Presidents Washington and Lincoln, those important people who helped shape the destiny of our country. The Boy Scouts of America, one of the great organizations in our country, was founded on Feb. 8, 1910. Ash Wednesday, a special day for Christians, is generally celebrated sometime in the month.

The famous poet and a person worth honoring, Henry W. Longfellow, was born in February. And that day never to be forgotten, Feb. 20, 1962—the day Americans realized their dream of putting a man in orbit. And, of course, the day a little furry weather forecaster predicts our weather—Groundhog Day.

It's nice to have a reason to celebrate and join the rest of the nation in honoring important people in history, and remembering important events that happened to make our country and our lives great.



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# The Appraiser's Diary: The Collecting Instinct



**Rachel Hoffman**

In the depth of the subconscious mind, everyone wants to collect and preserve something. Collecting objects is one of the oldest forms of human activity. A normal child is born with a collecting "instinct." Every boy's box of stamps, coins, and toy cars confirms this notion -- as does every girl's jewelry box or shelf of dolls and figurines. You can see proof of this notion in every photo album and scrap book. The need to collect is in-born and becomes a motivating force for advancement, especially if the behavior is encouraged by parents and society.

Collecting antiques is one of the most popular forms of collecting objects. Antiques connect us intellectually and emotionally to our ancestors and our heritage. They seem alive or at least to have retained some element of their original life. It is fascinating to see how people do it and to speculate what motivates each of them.

Collecting often refines one's sense of beauty -- what is beautiful to a person varies from each individual and as they wander in their collections, they seem to find out more about what they find beautiful. Man's instinct for collecting has given rise to a love for all sorts of collec-

tions. Do you have a favorite collection that you have seen and remember? A car collection or fabulous art exhibit at your local museum? Or your Mother's collection of hand painted tea cups? We thrill at the sight of a group of interesting artifacts. Collecting reflects our desire for longevity because collecting involves the preservation of objects.

Collecting transcends national boundaries and unites us to every culture.

We enjoy seeing ethnic artifacts and are fascinated by comparisons that demonstrate our common humanity. We are especially fortunate today with the advances in technology that allow us to shop and exchange knowledge worldwide. Today, the whole world benefits from the individual who takes collecting seriously. The collector's resources grow every year, and the value of fine collections increases in time to unprecedented sums, as auctioneers and art dealers realize.

Collecting is no frivolous pastime. When we collect and preserve things special to us, we are amply rewarded in many personal, social, and economic ways. It's important to collect what interests and excites you and keep growing in your knowledge of your collection. Collect what you love and enjoy it. Don't indulge in the popular notion to 'downsizing' If you love it, GO for it. I want to hear about your collection! If you have something interesting, please tell me about it. Part of the fun of collecting is sharing it with others.

To learn more about Rachel Hoffman and her appraisal practice, please visit [www.rachelhoffmanappraisal.com](http://www.rachelhoffmanappraisal.com)



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# Federal Furniture Pride of American Cabinetmakers

By Anne Gilbert

In the post American Revolution years up to the early 19th century (1780-1820s) America's finest craftsmen created what has come to be known as "American Federal" furniture. It was adapted freely from English designs by Chippendale, Sheraton and Hepplewhite. For the growing wealthy classes quality and fine design was important.

While the finest examples are in museums, many important pieces still fetch top dollar when maker's names are attached. However, great examples may still be awaiting discovery if you know what to look for, far from their origins.

Consider that during those decades Philadelphia became the center of culture, attracting the great thinkers of the day, as well as the finest artists and craftsmen. The finest pieces of furniture were custom-made from native American woods, along with inlaid stringing, banding and decorations. Veneers of satinwood, tulip wood and various fruit woods were used on what is known as "high style" furniture. Among the woods used for inlays were satinwood, boxwood and ebony.

Today's furniture experts are often able to identify not

only the market but the region where Federal furniture was made by the type of woods used, style of carving and the patterns of inlays, stringing and banding.

CLUES: Unfortunately reproductions and fakes abound. Reproductions were made during the 1876 American Centennial. They are being collected and are affordable. During the 1920s, 30s, there was a great revival of collector interest in Federal period furniture. Often repros were sold as authentic with faked labels.

Feel underneath tables and the backs of cabinet pieces, they should be rough and unfinished. Look at saw marks on dovetails and other exposed areas. They should be cross hatched from the use of the pit saws. Circular and other saw marks would indicate the piece was made after 1830, after the Federal period. Don't get carried away by the sight of an eagle inlay. They can be ordered from woodcraft catalogues and added to new pieces, upping the price.

Research can lead to discoveries.

PHOTO CAPTION: AMERICAN CHIPPENDALE



PEMBROKE TABLE

PHOTO CREDIT: SOTHEBYS AUCTIONS

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## Will World Politics Affect Russian Items?

By Anne Gilbert

There is a certain mystique about Russian antiques and objects that brings in big bucks at auctions. Perhaps one of the reasons is that when Russian royalty and the wealthy fled during the Revolution they took their most valuable possessions with them. They escaped to many countries, even China. They were often sold for low prices to buy food. They often go unrecognized even these days. An example was a rare Faberge gold egg that turned up last year and was discovered as such, and sold for millions.

Fine porcelain dinner services made for one of the Czars can show up as a single plate or cup. A Faberge cigarette box or spoon could be awaiting discovery. Enamels have always been popular with collectors and many were made in many forms.

Icons with religious subjects zoomed into the market during the 1970s and became a hot collectible with high prices. Hundreds appeared and over the years many proved to be fakes.

Until 1999 there was no home market. That has changed over the years. Now wealthy Russians are buying back. Will world situations affect sales these days?

CLUES: There are plenty of fakes. Faked enamels have been around since the late 70s. Faked marks can be added to an old piece. Copies are being made by an electroplating process.

Be wary of Niello work cigarette cases and boxes. Niello is the use of a black metallic substance, rubbed into an incised design. Many such pieces are recent reproductions.

Among the most wanted are Fabergé or from his workshop. Cloisonné on brass cups and bowls are the most reasonably priced and come to auction frequently. While researching I came across an upcoming auction in Germany of Russian items. Auctionata, is a good internet source for European sales as well as others. Your computer can transform from Euro into American dollars.

Some examples: a single plate from the Military Service of Czar Nicholas 1, 1836 has a starting price of \$24,000 Euros. Lenin image items are offered at varying prices. A floor vase with Lenin portrait, c. 1918/23 is estimated at \$5,000 Euros. A writing stand with his image, porcelain has a \$1,000 Euro estimate.



As for Icons, if recently made, they will smell like new wood. Another clue, some icons had metal (sometimes silver or gold) surrounding the painting. Only the hands and heads showed. The fakes are transfer prints. Know the dealer before spending too much.

PHOTO CAPTIONS: (1) Gilt silver cup with a cloisonné design (2) Nicholas 11, Fabergé and wife cigarette case.

PHOTO CREDIT: Auctionata, Berlin, 10587, Germany



**The Mountain States Collector**, a tabloid newspaper dedicated to promoting the enjoyment of antiquing and collecting in the Rocky Mountain region, is distributed the first weekend of every month through shops, auctions, flea markets and antique shows, and is mailed to subscribers.

(Opinions of the writers contained herein are not necessarily the opinions of the publishers.)

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### Publisher

Spree Enterprises, Inc.  
P.O. Box 1003  
Bailey, CO 80421  
[spreepub@mac.com](mailto:spreepub@mac.com)

### Executive Director

Jon DeStefano

### Managing Editor

Margaret (Peg) DeStefano,  
NSCDA/Ohio, DAR,  
FFHC (hcgs), Ohio-USD1812

### Editor

Jon Patrick DeStefano

### Webmaster

Sam DeStefano  
[mrphone@ecentral.com](mailto:mrphone@ecentral.com)

### Production

Spree Enterprises, Inc.  
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# Tea Caddy to Clown Object to Cigar Cutter

By Anne Gilbert

Q. My relatives came to America from England in the early 19th century. One of the many things they brought was this wood apple. Family legend has it that it was used to hold tea. As I understand it, tea was a treasured item back then. That would explain the lock. The key is long gone and the apple stem is broken. Inside are remnants of foil. Does it have any value other than sentimental?

T. Z.- Miami, FL

A. You have an English tea caddy dating to the late 18th century. Historically, in the late 17th century, tea was worth more than the caddy. Those who kept tea on hand stored it in a status container, often silver. By the 18th century the tea caddy was often made of fruitwood in the shape of pears and apples. By the 20th century they became a popular collectible and have often been reproduced. Your authentic 18th century tea caddy because of the broken stem is still worth \$2,000 or more.

Q. I love clown objects. At a recent garage sale I found this glass light fixture with a clown image. It is the perfect decoration for my little boy's bedroom since he is beginning a collection of clown figures. It is 15" diameter. What can you tell me about the history of clowns? Is



it worth more than the five dollars I paid? How old is it?

M. D. -Dallas, TX

A. Historically, every country and culture has had jesters and comic characters. However, it was the



American circus clowns who made clown images popular and collectible in the late 19th century when the Barnum and Bailey circus traveled around America. Clowns have since then, been depicted on posters, dishes and figurines.

During the 1960s the Murano Glass Company of Italy created hundreds of glass clown figurines and imported them to the U.S. Your glass clown ceiling fixture was probably made during the 1960s, 70s. It could sell in a shop for \$25 or more.

Q. This interesting object in the form of a woman's leg was in the corner of my late father's desk drawer. It is heavy and probably bronze. It measures approximately six inches. What the heck is it and worth anything?

R. D. - Lancaster, PA

A. Your Victorian cigar cutter is quite a discovery that a collector would love. It could fetch as much as \$200 at auction.



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### Hampden Street Antique Market Celebrates 23 Years

On Valentine's Day Hampden Street Antique Market celebrates their 23rd anniversary. Owner John Helke says, "Many thanks to the 125 dealers at Hampden Street antique market who have helped create a great store. They have helped the store acquire a reputation which makes Hampton Street one of the best malls in the state of Colorado. We've been so blessed to see our customer base really expand over the years. And now we're seeing a whole new demographic coming into the store in hoards: Millennials! We want to extend a sincere thank you to our loyal customer base who has made it possible for us to be here these 23 years."

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*Continued on page 21*

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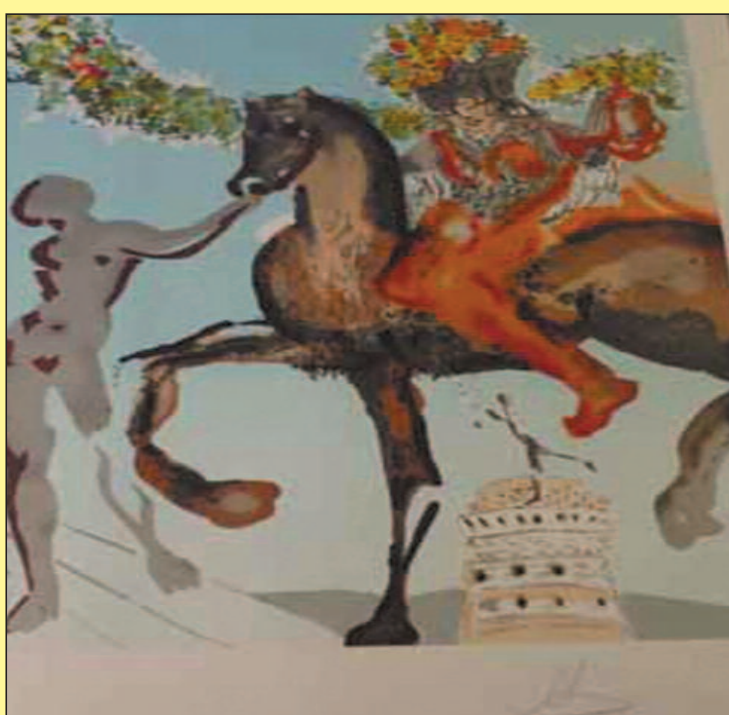
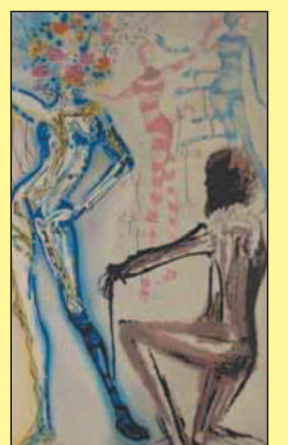
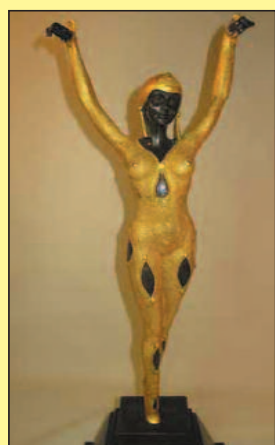
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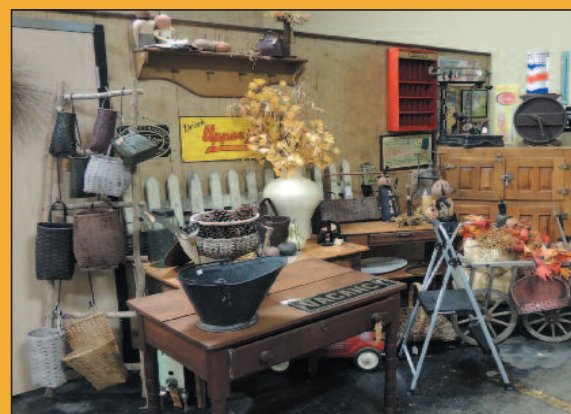
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# Antique Shows Coming in March and April

Continued from page 15

## World Wide Antique and Vintage Show

The always fantastic World Wide Antique and Vintage Show will be at the Denver Mart again in the Expo Building at 451 E. 58th Ave in Denver, Colorado. The Show will take place March 11-13, Friday and Saturday, 10-6 and Sunday 11-4. More information, go to [www.findyourantique.com](http://www.findyourantique.com). The next two World Wide Shows in 2016 will take place in July and October.

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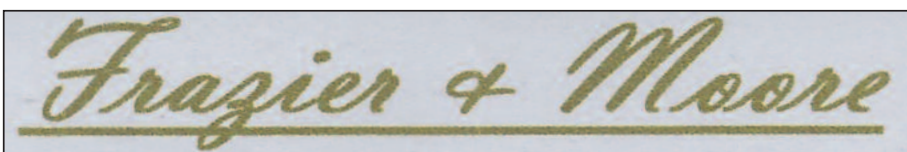
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Table Mountain Treasures Doll Club is hosting its 39th Annual Doll show and sale on Friday and Saturday, March 18th and 19th. The event will be held at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds, 12500 W. 6th Avenue, Golden, Colorado. Early Sale, Fri., Mar. 18th 4-7 p.m., \$10, Saturday Show & Sale, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., \$5, Door prizes, Antique & Vintage Dolls, China-Composition - Hard Plastic, Miniatures, Doll Accessories & Clothing, Lace - Material - Fabric - Ribbon, Toys & Bears. More information, call Show Coordinator, Mary Ann at 303-985-2770.

## Castle Rock Antique and Jewelry Show

The First Annual Castle Rock Antique and Jewelry Show is being held April 30 through May 1 at the Douglas County Fairgrounds Events Center and is filling up with many outstanding exhibitors. They are featuring furniture, collectibles, vintage jewelry, glassware, art, pop culture, retro Americana and more. For more information, call 303-619-4940.

## ANTIQUÉ DETECTIVE

# Recognizing Collectible String Holders

By Anne Gilbert

Would you recognize a string holder if you saw one? After all the humble string holder has had many looks over the years. It might be metal in the shape of a perforated ball, or a plaster animal or cartoon character head. A few years ago they could be found at flea markets and garage sales for a few dollars. However, they were also made in sterling silver for the wealthy folks kitchens.

Before adhesive tape came into general use string holders were a necessity for general stores, warehouses, home kitchens and offices.

These days the vintage, figural holders can sell for as little as \$30. A 19th century silver ball form holder can be tagged at over \$100.

Historically, the earliest known string holders were made at the beginning of the 19th century. Prior to that the string was sold like yarn by the skein, bundle or hank.

Early wooden holders were often hand-somely carved and turned. Considered rarities are those of lacquered papier mache, earthenware and glass.

By the 1830s string was being wound automatically by machine for business use.



Many of those early holders were circular drums with an opening for pulling out the string.

Some string holders made for home use are small works of art. Carved of wood they came in many forms such as acorns, eggs, pears and bee hives. How would you like a valentine string holder? Those were whittled in heart shape and given as valentines.

The bee hive was the most popular shape and often made with open-work metal, bronze, copper or with a japanned finish. Sizes varied. Some made for stores were as large as 5 1/2" .

Special holders were made just for women in the form of miniature cottages with strings going through the chimney or as wooden dolls the the string under the skirt.

CLUES: In the 20th century women's magazines offered patterns for "do-it-yourself" holders with boxes as the base.

During the 1930s, 40s, chalk ware figures of Shirley Temple, brides, animals and fruit were made.

If you discover one it may be a rarity worth several hundred dollars. Check dealer prices.

PHOTO CAPTION: (1) C.19TH century sterling silver string holder.

PHOTO CREDIT: (1) Birney Creek Antiques, Cincinnati, OH

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## WEATHER PREDICTOR

### The History of Groundhog Day

On February 2, Punxsutawney Phil, Pennsylvania's groundhog extraordinaire, will again stick his head out of his den. The nation awaits his verdict.

Groundhog Day is said to have its origins in ancient weather lore where the prognosticator was often a badger or a sacred bear. In the United States, its origin is said to come from a Pennsylvania German custom.

If Phil, peeking from his burrow, fails to see his shadow, winter will soon be over. If the sun happens to be shining and Phil sees his shadow, winter will continue for six more weeks.

The first trek to meet with Phil began in 1887. He has been emerging from his burrow in Pennsylvania ever since, always eager to greet his public.

Phil is private in many ways, but a few rumors have circulated about him.

- He gets his longevity from drinking the "elixir of life" of which he takes one sip every summer during the Groundhog Picnic. This gives him seven more years of life.

- It is said he is named after King Philip, a famous Native American leader. In his more plebeian days, he was called Br'er Groundhog.

- He speaks only in Groundhogese, which luckily is a language understood by the President of the Inner Circle. The Inner Circle provides for Phil during the year, rather like a court provides for its king.

The city of Punxsutawney offers several days of celebration for those who



gather from around the world to hear Phil's proclamation. The city offers food, music, carriage rides, magicians, crafts and games.

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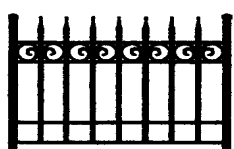
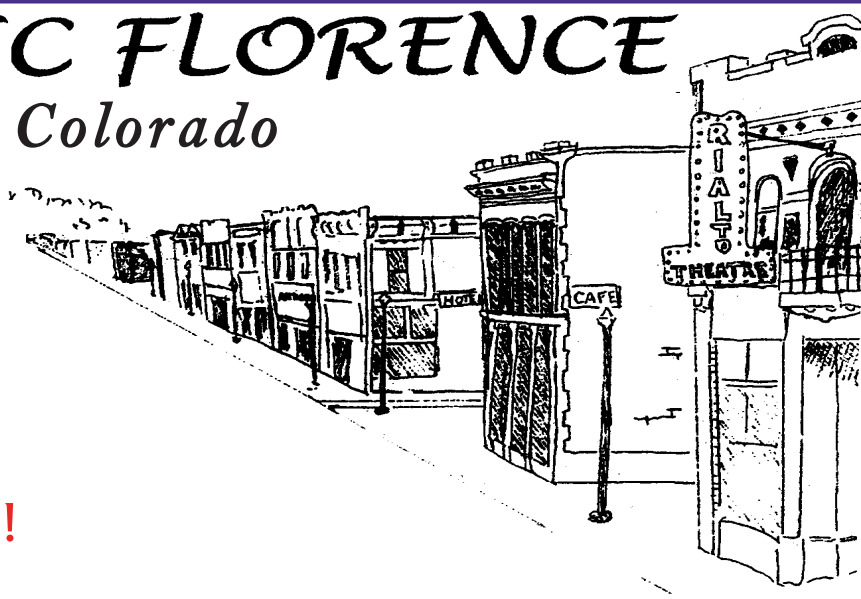
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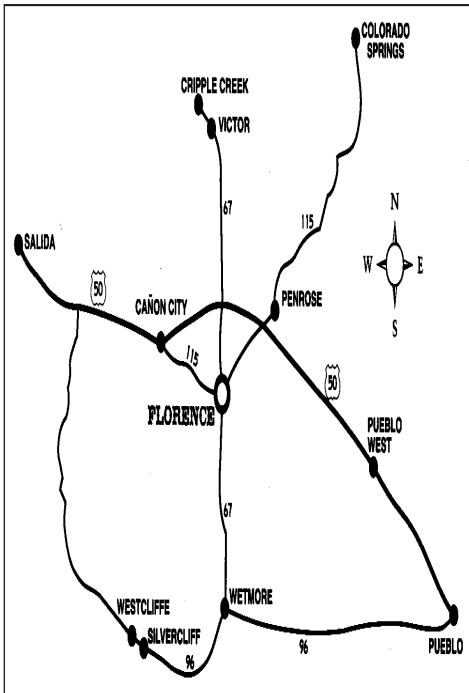
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## CONTEST

### January's What Is It?

We had two correct answers for a January's What Is It. Jean Roller of Boulder, Colorado suggests that it is probably a flag standard for a fraternal group called the "Owls." This group was formed about 1904 and only Master Masons could join. Jean is right that it belongs to a fraternal organization. This item is a staff carried by the gatekeeper of the farmers' service group called the Grange. The owl represents watchful alertness. Ann Abbott of Denver, Colorado also suggests it might be a walking stick which, in essence, it is.

Congratulations to both of you. You have both won a year's subscription to **the Mountain States Collector**.

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### February's What Is It?



Send your answers to the What Is It contest, postmarked by Feb. 20, to **the Mountain States Collector**, P.O. Box 1003, Bailey, CO 80421.

Three winners will be drawn. Winners receive a year's subscription to **the Mountain States Collector**.

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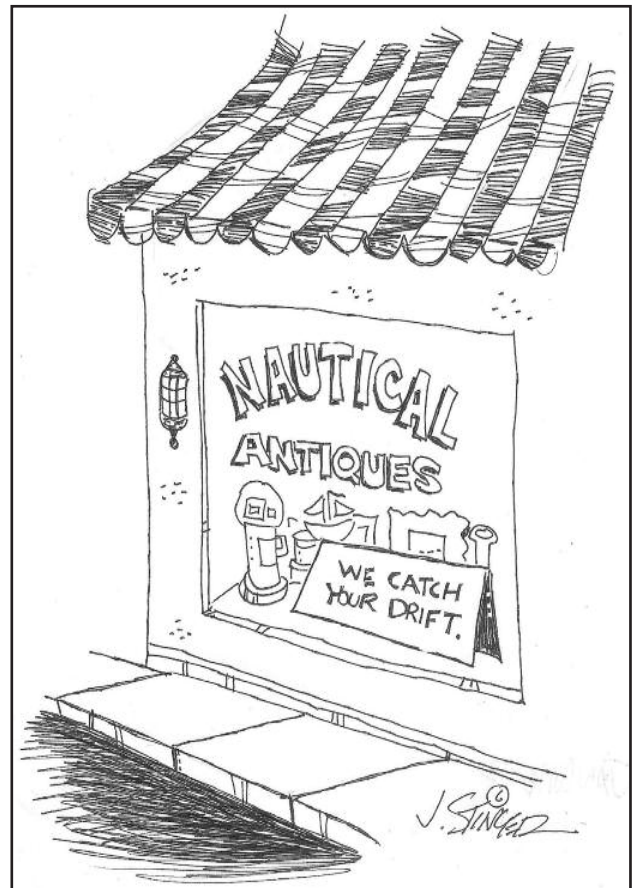
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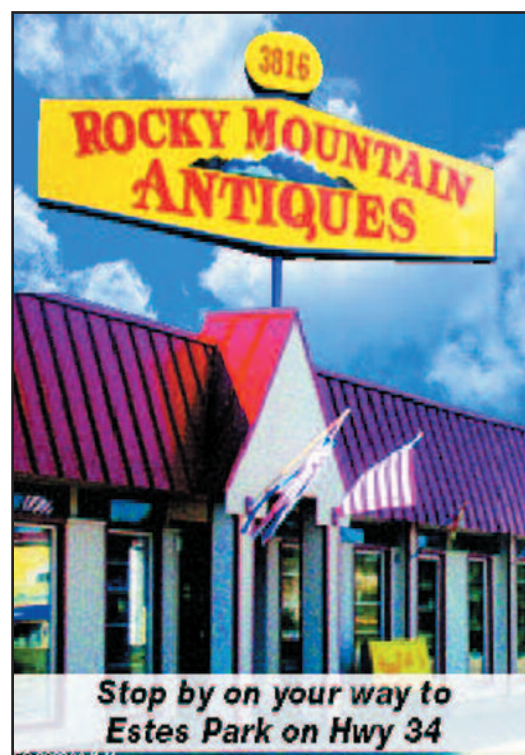
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