



# NEWSLETTER

November - December, 2007

## Our Great Adventure & Treasure Hunt pt. 2

by Jim & Barb Cieslak

The second half of our September trip took us to Brimfield, Mass. to experience the Brimfield Antique Extravaganza. This was our second trip to Brimfield. Our first trip was cut short by Hurricane Floyd in 1999, but we had always hoped to return someday. The Brimfield show ran from September 4th thru 9th (**6 DAYS!**). It's really a bunch of shows put on by different promoters in adjacent fields that are separated by chain-link fences. Most of the shows have parking areas behind them, and each separate show takes hours to see. Luckily, there is a Brimfield Antique Guide that tells which fields/shows will be opening which days, so we just tried to use the schedule to find out where to start each day. Then, we'd continue on down the street from there to try and see as much as we could. It was very hot all week (mid 90's), so we usually gave up each day by 3:00 p.m. We'd also break for lunch and try to sit in the shade. We found a great BBQ sandwich place (our favorite place to eat) and a frozen lemonade stand that helped to cool us off several times.

We found a lot of fantastic antique Disneyana items in Brimfield, such as a Vernon Kilns Fantasia Elephant, a bisque Mickey wearing a tuxedo, a tiny Mickey & Minnie ramp walker, a Jiminy Cricket pencil sharpener (Bakelite), a very early Snow White & Seven Dwarfs biscuit tin, an early chalkware Snow White lamp, and several more bisque pieces. The most incredible thing we found was a Mickey egg timer that we had never seen before. It appears to be made by Rosenthal. A dealer was asking \$465 for it, but he would take \$365. Not really knowing what it was, we decided to hold off and try and do some research. So, late that afternoon we visited an antique mall and found a book with some very similar porcelain pieces attributed to Rosenthal and valued between \$250 and \$1,000. We were still thinking about the egg timer the next day, when eagle-eyed Barb spotted the same egg timer in a different booth across the street, and that dealer was only asking \$75 for it. We could barely contain our excitement as we picked it up to examine it, but we managed to pause long enough for the dealer to drop the price to \$65. We decided to go ahead and buy it for \$65 and chance that it was authentic. We then walked back across the street to the antique dealer who had the expensive one, and sure enough, it was identical to the one we had just purchased. We told the dealer that we'd think about it some more, then couldn't help but do the happy dance as we walked away.



Here's some advice if you ever get the chance to go to Brimfield:

- 1) Get there early. Some of the shows open at 6:00 a.m. The best deals happen early in the week, or as they tear down on Sunday.
- 2) If you find something, buy it right then, or at least that same day because the dealers keep moving around, so you will probably never find the dealer again.
- 3) Wear the most comfortable shoes you have. Train ahead of time to walk slowly back and forth for long distances.
- 4) Lastly, be prepared to be overwhelmed.

Our next stop was West Stockbridge, Mass., just a stone's throw away from where Jim grew up. We looked forward to stopping by the Hotchkiss gallery to visit Joel, our favorite mobile maker. Joel remembered how much we love Mickey and anything Disney and pulled out a mobile shaped like Mickey's head that he had made in 1994 for Disney. We snatched it up right away and assured him that we know a few more Mickey lovers who might be interested in buying the few remaining Mickey mobiles that he still has left.

Our final destination was New York City where we spent a couple days shopping and walking all around Manhattan. We always walk our socks off in New York, and it never fails to rain on us when we're there, either! During one particularly heavy downpour we dodged into the World of Disney Store, then kicked ourselves for forgetting to bring our lanyard with us so we could trade pins with the cast members. But, we still had fun admiring the original and limited edition artwork upstairs in the gallery. And, of course, we also bought a bunch of pins! That night we decided to have dinner in Chinatown, so after walking a couple of blocks, we gave up and jumped onto the subway near our hotel in Times Square and rode down to Chinatown. After dinner we felt up to walking all the way back to the hotel. We walked nice and slow and stopped a couple of times for a Coke and to rest. It was the night of September 11th so we were able to see the two memorial search lights shining straight up into the night sky during most of our walk back to the hotel. It was a magical evening and a great way to end our trip.

We look forward to our next trip back East someday, although our feet will never be the same!

PS. When we got home, we were surprised to find out that we had placed the winning bid on two items from the Morphy's Auction: a framed production cell of Briar Rose and Owl from Sleeping Beauty, and a great Dopey and Doc pull toy.



## Pinup Guy

by John Garcia

While decorating for Christmas, I came across my AP lanyard. Upon my last return from Disneyland, I had hung it on a hook in the corner of my den. There it rested, heavily laden with Pins. I began to muse....

For years, I didn't understand why these Pins find such favor with Disney fans, and further, why, in some circles, trade and acquisition of these little knick knacks is a rabid obsession.

I see Pins wherever I see Disney. At Disneyland, Pins are for sale in every shop. In fact, when on any Disney property, it seems you can't walk more than 500 feet without running into some kind of a Pin cart. Do a search on EBay for "Disney", and hundreds of Pins are sure to appear in your browser. And, if you attend any kind of NFFC function, you can't swing a Stitch Plush without hitting someone or something sporting Pins.

Now I call myself a Disney fan, and by any sane person's estimation, I've got my own obsession with things Disney. Movies, shorts, art, Walt and particularly Disneyland all resonate with me on an almost spiritual level, but with Pins – I just didn't get it.

Last January, I attended my first MountainEar meeting, and within moments of walking in the door, I spotted Pins – on and around many of the club members. And, before the meeting was over, more than a few Pins had been exchanged. It was then that I decided there must be some substance to these things. Pins must have some kind of purpose or value, sentimental or otherwise, that escapes me. What was the secret they possessed, and how can I be enlightened to the wonders of collecting and trading these little treasures?

So it was that last July I resolved to enter the world of the Pin Trader. I was making the trip to Anaheim (arguably the Pin Trading Center of the universe) to attend the 2007 NFFC Convention, and while there, I was determined to not only purchase a pin, but to successfully trade it. Perhaps then I would finally understand and partake in the joy of Pins.

Fortunately for me, several MountainEars were in attendance, and

I called upon them seeking advice and counsel as to the subtleties that must exist in the art of Pin acquisition and trade. Vexingly, the bulk of the advice bestowed upon me came in the forms of, "...simply trade the ones you don't like for the ones you do like" or "...find the ones that appeal to you and trade for them".

Alas, those little things didn't appeal to me, and thus I was handicapped. Still I was bent on the achievement of my goal and pressed on. I continued to seek advice from the "Pins Pros" - looking for tidbits of information that might aid me in my quest. I even consulted several Disneyland cast members (figuring they must have the "inside" scoop on the Pins). I did manage to glean a few general tips, but strangely all my would-be mentors were consistently vague on details. Never the less, all were still passionate about their Pin vocation, and all encouraged me to partake – save one.

In my hunt for Pin knowledge, I did come across one soul with an ominous warning for me. He was an Anti-Pin Collector and as passionate about avoiding Pins as Collectors are about seeking them out. His message to me went something like this, "Don't do it. John! It's a trap! A trick! Once you've traded your first Pin, there's no going back. You'll be hooked! Once you start down the path of Pin Trader, forever will it dominate your destiny!"

While I did give his Yoda-esque advice due consideration, I was undaunted, and ultimately ignored his admonition.

Then it happened. By fate I found myself, along with several other MountainEars, invited to the "Disney Cast Member Store". Once there, not only was I informed there were Pins for sale (no big surprise), but I was told they were GREAT Pins and they were available at a bargain price! Destiny had played her hand. With air of casualness (pretending like I knew what I was doing), I strolled up to a Pin rack. Calmly rotating the stand (pretending like I knew what I was looking for), I spied the Pin that would soon be mine. With cool hands, I lifted it off the rack and dropped it in my basket. Excited and with a small amount of pride, I informed my fellow

MountainEars I was about to buy my first pin. To which they responded, "What? Only one? With prices like these you better pick up several".

My pride turned to humility – only one Pin? A rookie mistake. I returned to the Pin rack, and quickly lifted three more and rested them in my basket. At this point I glanced over at my compatriots and raised four fingers in the air. They, in turn, shook their head in disapproval, and motioned to me, "more!"

I gave the rack a few more spins, and as 2 more Pins found their way to my basket, the Anti-Pin Collector's words echoed in my head,



"Once you start... you'll be hooked".

Nonsense! Six Pins were enough, and despite pressure from my Pin Collector (now) peers to purchase more, six was what I left the store with.

Chapter one of my odyssey was complete. I purchased Pins. On to Chapter two – Trading Pins.

I now owned Pins, but I still wasn't a full fledged Pin Trader yet. I had to trade at least one of my new Pins before I could claim that lofty distinction, and I impatiently sought to do so. Upon departure from the Cast Member Store, I immediately inquired of my fellow MountainEars, "Does any one want to Trade a Pin?"

They all declined my invitation, but in doing so, something had changed. Earlier in the trip, when I asked for

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## Kids rhymes with Christmas. Doesn't it?

by Greg Heberlein

The largesse of MountainEar members is extraordinary. What that means is our members give until it hurts when the cause is just.

Since the early 1990s, MountainEars have purchased or otherwise collected new Christmas toys and other gifts for children under the age of 18. That has produced so much for Seattle's Children's Hospital that it is hard to imagine any other group of comparable size matching it. Remember, we range from 25 to 35 families.

In the past nine years, MountainEars delivered almost 2,500 gifts worth more than \$20,000 to Children's. Last year, thanks to an amazing bonus presentation from a Disney outlet store, MountainEars gave Children's 616 gifts worth more than \$4,400. Both of those marks were records, easily exceeding the 2005 totals of 354 gifts worth \$2,979.

At the October meeting, we began the formal collecting period for 2007. The final collection time will be at Doug and Betty's Christmas party Dec. 9. Gifts must be new and unwrapped. The hospital always encourages givers to think about teen-agers, items such as music, cosmetics, clothes, phone cards and the like.

If someone cannot attend the December meeting but has goods, contact Greg at gheb53@yahoo.com or 206-633-2313 to arrange pickup.

This year's collection was kick-started early. Throughout the year, items destined for our monthly auctions that qualify as Children's gifts were set aside. Also, some members, recognizing the coming of the season, have donated early. So far, we have significant contributions from Tiny Toraya-Sudy, Jim and Barb Cieslak, Pat and Karen Engle, Sue and Tom Moore, and others.

Don't be left out. Find a toy store going out business, hit your favorite Costco, beg for low prices at your beloved kid shop, and



## At Disney, this Kent was super

by Greg Heberlein

Ralph Kent, 68, a longtime friend of everyone and everything Disney, died September 8 of complications from esophageal cancer.

A dedicated Disney fan at age 10 in New York, Ralph sent a letter to Walt Disney. At the time, Ralph had not yet changed his last name, which was Kwiatkowski. Nearly a half century later, working for Disney, Ralph generated the courage to ask Walt if he remembered the letter. Walt said something about a letter from a kid with a long name, and Ralph knew he had.

Kent's Disney footprint was so huge that in 2004, the same year he retired, he was named a Disney Legend. Here was the primary reason:

After Kent joined the company in 1963, he and others in merchandising would go to Disneyland to see what was

working, what wasn't, and what could be needed. Afterward, the merchandisers would go to the Inn at the Park, south of Disneyland, and discuss their insights over a cocktail. One time, in 1965, the group had assembled, doing their thing, when a light bulb went off in Kent's head. Although Disney had produced children's watches for three decades, watches for adults never had been proposed. Walt Disney was so delighted he had 25 special watches made for senior executives. Meanwhile, millions and millions of adult watches now span the globe – more than a hundred versions are produced each year.

Disney fans of the non-Disney film "Pink

Floyd: The Wall" get a special treat. In the opening, Bob Geldof, who launched Live Aid and other musical-benefit concerts, lies in bed. On his wrist, you see an Ingersoll Mickey Mouse watch. About 37 minutes into The Wall, another camera shot catches the tell-tale wrist with watch.

Four other Kent notes: A window at Walt Disney World is dedicated to him . . . The Kissimmee, Fla., Big Bamboo Lounge, voted the best after-work stop in the region, has a seat at the bar dedicated to Ralph . . . At the end of his career, his Disney mission was to work with young artists, including Alex Maher, a vital force in NFFC . . . Among the many, many Disney treasures Kent developed was the Two-Gun Mickey chess set, one copy of which is nestled in the home of yours truly, along with Ralph's business card and autograph.



Joy, well....

The next day, I continued my foray into the Pin Trade. Like those who came before me, I attached my newly acquired pins to a lanyard and hung it around my neck. As I walked the banquet halls of the NFFC convention, I covertly viewed and assessed other Pin laden lanyards, but now, mindful of the "Bad Trade", I utilized discretion – perhaps too much. After a few hours of seminars, I had yet to encounter a desired trade. At the conclusion of the day's NFFC events, I made my way to Disneyland. Certainly, I would find a trade there.

But, it was not to be.

I searched throughout the park for a Pin to trade. I sought out Cast Members with requisite "company" lanyards and pins, but I didn't see anything I liked. I went by the Plaza Pavilion near the hub, and while several Pin Traders were present, they all seemed shifty – perhaps purveyors of the "Bad Trade" or perhaps I was just overly suspicious. In either case, I didn't see any Pins that appealed to me.

I made my way towards Tomorrowland where I hoped to find a Pin Trade at the "Little Green Men" shop (another hotspot for Pin Trade). Along the way I ran in to some more MountainEar members. We stopped and visited awhile (under the old PeopleMover tracks).

Amongst the chit chat, I told of my quest for my first Pin Trade, and I explained I hadn't had any success. They asked about the locations I had tried thus far. I told them, and they gave their approval and wished me luck, but then came another ominous warning. In addition to cautioning me about the "Bad Trade" (no worries there, I was in the "know" with that one), they went on to warn me about Downtown Disney's Pin Traders.

"Be careful about them", they warned, "They will eat you alive over there!"

Sage advice and I would heed it. There would be no "Bad Trades" for this, ever more savvy, Pin Trader. Actually, there would be no Trades at all – bad or otherwise. The day ended with no Pins exchanged and no joy of trading.

The next day, possibly out of paranoia or simply because my interest was waning, I toned down my trading efforts. I was still on the make, but the thrill of the hunt seemed diminished. The day wore on, and the thoughts of Pins were slowing fading from my mind. Then when I had just about forgotten and fallen off of my quest, I stumbled back on to it.

I was having lunch with several MountainEars, when someone casually mentioned Pins. I responded that I had some I wanted to trade, but so far I was unsuccessful in doing so. That's when the woman sitting across the table from me said she had one she wanted to trade. I quickly produced my lanyard and displayed

my inventory. Simultaneously she brought out hers. She had a nice looking "50th" pin, and I had a "Pirate" one that caught her eye. Negotiations were short – meaning I simply asked everyone at the table if this was a "Bad Trade". They all responded "no". Instantly, the deal was done. A moment later, my newly acquired Pin was borne on my lanyard.

Finally, I had traded! Finally, I knew what it was to own Pins. Finally I knew what it meant to trade Pins. Finally, the joy of Pin Trading was mine. And, you know what? I STILL DIDN'T GET IT.

That was the first and last Pin I traded at Disneyland. Here in Washington, I've traded a couple more Pins at MountainEar meetings, but the trades were anti-climatic. Now six months later, adorned with several traded and purchased pins, my lanyard hangs on the wall in my den all but ignored.

I sought the wisdom of the Pros. I disregarded the warnings of the Anti-Pin Collector. I journeyed to the Pin Trading center of the universe. I successfully navigated the treacherous waters of the Pin Trader where the foolhardy are "Eaten Alive" and "Bad Trades" lurk around every bend. Without a doubt, these Pins have purpose and value, sentimental or otherwise. There is certainly a secret joy that comes with the acquisition and trade of these little trinkets. But not for this guy...I still don't understand why these little knick knacks find such favor with Disney fans.

## "Enchanted" was enchanting

by Pat Engle

Children and adults, we have a new Disney Princess, sort of. Actually, she's a composite of ALL the princesses. She sings like Snow White (True Love's Kiss), looks like Ariel (red hair), and cleans like Cinderella (complete with New York's finest animals).

There are so many references to past Disney princesses that it is impossible to see them all in just one visit to the theatre. Think Shrek on steroids. Disney pokes fun at itself in every scene. And it works. I'm thinking this movie on DVD would make a great game. Name the movie and scene that Enchanted is mimicking or parodying.

Amy Adams is Giselle who is tossed into a well and ends up (down?) in New York. She is delightful and shows just the



right amount of naiveté (she only sees the good in everyone) and imagination (turning drapes into clothing). McDreamy, from the Grey's Anatomy TV show, is her NY rescuer and can't decide if she is a royal pain or too good to be true. Past "princesses"

Jodi Benson (Ariel), Paige O'Hara (Belle), and Judy Kuhn (Pocahontas) make cameo appearances. It's fun to spot them.

We took our 7 and 9 year old nieces and they loved it as much as we did. It's a great family movie that would make a great break from shopping this Christmas season.

## Make Mine Music AND Chili

by Pat Engle

Fourteen MountainEar members and 2 guests traveled out to Ken's house in Yelm for our September 2007 meeting and had a wonderful lunch of Walt Disney's Own Chili and Beans.

While some of us were partaking of multiple bowls of chili, others were taking tours of Ken's redesigned Disney Room. There was an HO Disney train overhead that encircled the room and went through walls with holes in them. His unparalleled Disney album collection was neatly arranged in bins under the desk and other music memorabilia was nicely displayed on the walls. Great remodel Ken.

VP Barb conducted the business meeting in Carol's absence. 33 members are on the roster while less than half that number have paid this year's dues. Hmm.

Jim C. mentioned that the four people who went to the Cascade Chapter meeting in Portland got to see some great Disney things that don't exist anywhere else – family pictures of Walt, track from Walt's Carolwood Pacific Railroad, and the Disney Family organ. The 19 people that said they would go and didn't really missed out.

Karen and Pat and Doug and Betty met Ken at the EMP for the closing of the EMP/Disney music exhibit. Light snacks were served before Mickey Mouse came out and led everyone upstairs for pictures with the Big Cheese. The exhibit will now pack up and head up to Vancouver to be opened in 2008.

Ken took a small part of his huge musical collection

and put in on display in the Hobby Hall at the Puyallup Fair. Viewers were impressed enough to award him the People's Choice Award a couple of days before the Fair ended.

If you are looking for something to do next

time you are in Portland you could visit the Pittock Mansion where the Cascade Chapter has decorated one of the rooms in a Fairy Tale theme for Christmas.

Betty mentioned that the Christmas Meeting is still on at her house on Dec 9th.

Karen and Pat took a trip to Denver and luckily remembered that The Little Mermaid Musical was in town before it goes to Broadway. Our seats were spectacular, the additional songs were sing-able, and the "wheelies" were unexpected, but perfect. The boy who played Flounder had an awesome voice and Ursula was delightfully villainous. We highly recommend seeing it.

Visiting with us were Shelly and her daughter Aria (collects Stitch pins). They just got back from a stay at the Grand Californian - \$280 per night for annual passholders. They are avid pin traders and took 150 pins with them and traded them all.

Ric said he emailed Leonard Maltin (yes, *THAT* Leonard Maltin) about upcoming DVDs and Leonard wrote back that there would be three new Silver Tins coming in December. Must be nice having friends in high places.

BJ also just got back from Disneyland. He heard that the Gallery would be closing

soon taking away prime viewing area for Fantasmic. Soon DL will be charging \$68 for prime seating along the shores of the Rivers of America.

Jim and Barb took a vacation to New England for antiquing. They had a

marvelous Mickey head mobile made, visited Adamstown – the antique capital of the world, and went to Brimfield where 7-10,000 dealers set up. They saw 4 Disney items they had never seen before – Snow White lamp, Lagoon Bayton Donald Duck, Britton Mickey bisque, and Mickey and Minnie ramp walker.



The Davis' and Engle's went to the 5th Avenue Theatre for a preview night and unexpectedly heard a medley of Disney songs.

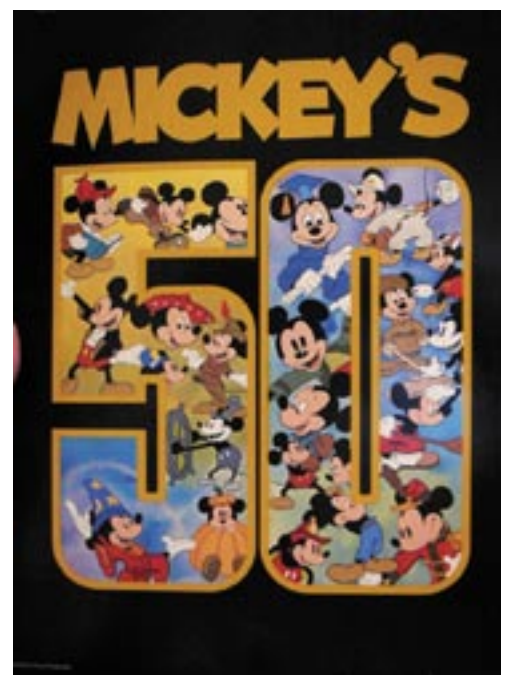
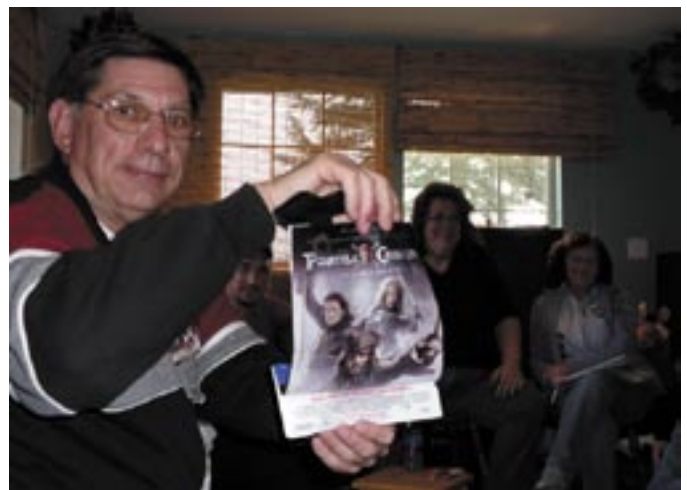
Greg mentioned that long time Disney animator Ralph Kent died on September 8th of cancer. He found more John Hench items for his collection this past month – a drawing Omar Fuentes gave to John on the 55th anniversary of Mickey Mouse in 1983 (Fantasia Broom with Mickey ears) and a poster of all the people that were interviewed for the 2001 TV show about Walt Disney, *The Man Behind the Myth*.

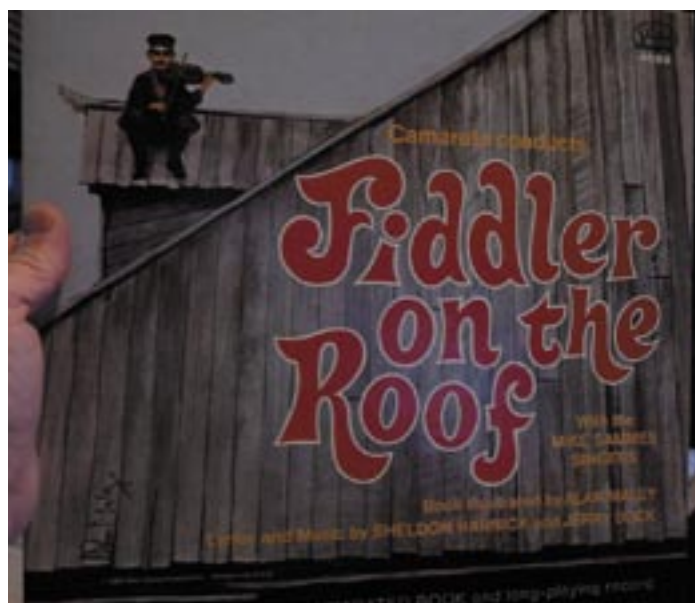
Ken's Trivia Contest had to do with MUSIC. No? Yes! He asked us to write down as many song titles from Disney's amusement parks as you can. The winner was John who was able to remember 25 songs in the time we were given. Ric wrote down 20 and Doug came in 3rd with 14.

The door prize was won by Greg and then everyone else got at least something thanks to Ken's generosity. The Silent Auction intake amounted to a \$32.

October's meeting will be at Carol's house as usual on Saturday, October 20th at 7pm. You are invited to wear your coolest Disney costume. Prizes will be awarded.







## Summer doldrums don't affect treasury

by Greg Heberlein

Without a big summer barbecue, or an auction-overloaded Christmas party, the monthly MountainEar auctions can pale somewhat. Nonetheless, we had plenty of items and enough bidders to generate \$24.25 from the October and November meetings.

The annual Halloween affair at Carol and Jim's brought out the best of bidding from B.J. He not only cornered the No. 1 item (a snazzy light-up mug for \$6 donated by Terri) but the No. 2 item, a set of writing tools, for \$3. In all, the October auction generated \$14.25 for the club treasury.

The November meeting at Troy's attracted a smaller crowd. Consequently, the auction netted fewer bids but still added \$10 to the treasury. The most popular piece turned out to be a cassette of "Mickey's Christmas Carol." Janet's guest Don took it home for \$3. The item was donated by Karen Engle.

Don, by the way, brought the day's

most eye-catching piece. It was a display featuring pictures and autographs of most of the first-year Mouseketeers, plus Jimmy Dodd and Roy Williams (who, as was his custom, drew a nice Mickey). It also included an autograph from some fellow named Walt Disney. It's safe to say that at auction, that item would fetch a wheelbarrow full of cash.

The year's final auction will be held Dec. 9 at Doug and Betty's Christmas party. As is the custom, instead of the usual eight items, guests can expect 30 or more, including a few marquee items that have been held back for this event.



October auction results:

Item	Buyer	Price
Coffee mug	John	\$1
Markers	B.J.	\$3
2 Disneyanas	Karen	\$2
Cell cover	Janet	\$1
Lighted mug	B.J.	\$6
Puzzle	Janet	\$1
Earth button	Janet	\$1

Items donated by Terri, Sue & Tom, and Barb & Jim.

November auction results:

Item	Buyer	Price
"Carol" tape	Don	\$3
"Rescuers" tape	Janet	\$1
"Disneyana"	Doug	\$1
Disney mug	Amber	\$1
Magnet	Janet	\$1
Art book	Doug	\$1
Autograph book	Amber	\$1
Pooh candy	Amber	\$1

Items donated by Karen and Terri.





## The Magic on The Med

by Beth Carter

It's no secret that Nick, Logan and I are big fans of Disney on the water – as many of us are. So, when Disney announced plans to sail the Med, we (or more accurately, our wonderful travel agent, Sheilah Messing of Bellevue AAA) were among the first on the phones to sign up. That was almost two years prior to the cruise and was definitely worth the wait.

This was our first trip to Europe, and so for us it was a wonderful way to get a taste of quite a few major European cities in a very short time, all backed up by the very familiar accoutrements of the Magic. The cruise originated in Barcelona. Over 11 days we visited Naples, Palermo, Olbia, Civitavecchia, La Spezia, Marseilles, Villefranche, and returned to Barcelona. That's eight cities in 11 days and believe me they were packed!

On board the ship many things were the same as usual and magically done, as usual. The kids were entertained during any spare time they could find. Cast members on board were as attentive as ever and also very well informed about the various ports of call. We've found over our



cruises that our servers, assistant servers, and head servers have been some of the best sources of information and this was no exception. Our cruise was in July. The crew had, by then, had several opportunities to visit each city and was happy to share the benefit of their experience.

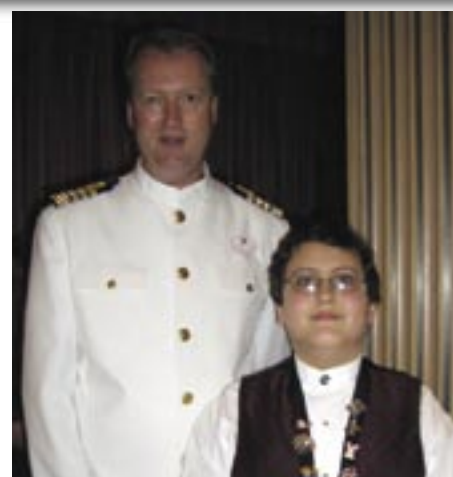
Excursions ranged from city tours to country tours, from medieval buildings to very modern museums. We chose a variety. Our goal was to see as much as we could and identify places we'd like to revisit on future travels. We discovered that we liked the ports better as we progressed north. Naples and Palermo, for example, feature magnificent architecture but are not particularly clean and that includes the beaches. For these cities we arranged brief city tours to cover the highlights and then took our own excursions out of the city. A note of caution: if you arrange private tours like this it's important to make sure

you return early... if you're late you really do get a great picture of the ship sailing away! We didn't find this out first hand, but some on the ship did and their families were not terribly happy. The stragglers were able to catch up with the ship at a later port, but this was at their own expense.

Olbia and La Spezia were our favorite beach stops. Olbia, on the island of Sardinia, is perhaps best known for the Costa Smeralda. We avoided this trip, however, as we're not fans of celeb watching and opted instead for a train trip through the inland part of the island and some beach time. The beaches and water are pristine – great for beachcombing, snorkeling, and of course sunbathing (bearing in mind that beach attire here, as in all of Europe, is more or less optional). The train trip was very relaxing and gave us an inside look at the cork industry – Olbia is second only to Portugal in its cork production. These

people have really thought about how to use cork. We saw pillows, boxes, bikinis, evening gowns, blankets, tank tops, flip flops, even dinnerware, all of cork. In La Spezia we visited Cinque Terre, a series of five ancient villages built into the sheer mountains of the area. Like Olbia, the water was wonderful, and the residents of these villages were among the most hospitable locals we met anywhere.

Civitavecchia is the gateway to Rome, one of the cities we definitely want to see again on a much longer stay. It is, on the surface, yet another huge city to contend with, but with just the least bit of effort you can find a treasure trove for whatever you're interested in: arts, architecture, technology, you name it. We chose the private tour of the Vatican – well worth the cost, as we were in a group of less than 100 people, roaming the halls usually packed with tens of thousands. It was almost like having the



museum to ourselves. Disney arranged the private tour with a local company. I would highly recommend this kind of tour if you've never been. We saw the Pope's residence and gardens, several of the Vatican galleries, the Sistine Chapel and the Basilica. Disney really opened doors on this one – we bypassed waiting lines, had private security lines, expedited entry everywhere we went. Very long day (14 hours including travel time) but well worth it.

Marseilles and Villefranche were our taste of France. In Marseilles we opted to see ourselves around town and visited a local fort that has defended the city several times through history. In Villefranche we went to Monaco and got a brief glimpse of Prince Rainier with entourage in tow.

We were quite exhausted when it was all said and done but overall it was a great trip. As always, the crew asked for feedback on the trip. Ours was that the trip was worthwhile but it was so busy that there was very little time to enjoy the ship. Also, there was generally so much travel time on the excursions that time at the attraction was very limited. The captain's wife happened to be with us on a couple of excursions and had the same reaction. She shared her thoughts with the captain – in slightly less polite language than we used – complaining that just about the time you reached the destination and found the facilities it was time to turn around and go back. Shopping and sightseeing time were rather restricted. Apparently the captain and crew heard this from a number of guests and we've been assured things will be different if they return to the Med next year. We enjoyed it enough that we would certainly go again, but would likely make different excursion choices and would probably do more on a private basis to better control the schedule.





*A "Magic" Porthole*



# Troy's Tiki, Tiki, Tiki, Tiki, Tiki Room

by Mr. Pat Engle

Our November 2007 meeting at Troy's house was attended by 13 intrepid travelers who braved a wild and windy storm to arrive safe and sound. Waiting for us was a great bunch of snacks and desserts prepared by Troy and Monica. The setting was Troy's Tiki Room, complete with Stitch, Tiki heads covering speakers, and macaws Jose, Michael, Pierre, and Fritz in the corners.

President Carol was in the sick bed so I offered to keep order during the meeting. We currently have 25 paid members on the roster (with an additional 2 members paying after the meeting) and our checkbook has a rosy \$1921.

We discussed the gift exchange that would happen at the December meeting and reiterated that gifts would be around the \$15 area. Parents should bring gifts for their children to open during the day if they won't be participating in the adult exchange.

Greg mentioned that premier Disney collector David Lesjack from the British Columbia Chapter has offered to give a talk to our group. We're looking at Jan or Feb since the Dec meeting usually goes long all by itself.

In a good year we are able to give money to a couple of charities from the proceeds of our monthly Silent Auctions. This year, due to generosity of a couple of our members picking up the tab for an EMP event, we were able to help out four different charities with donations of \$250 each.

- Make-A-Wish donation in the name of former Disney Imagineer, Bruce Gordon
- FamilyWorks; a food bank and family center, nourishes and strengthens individuals and families by connecting people with support, resources and community.
- Ashley House is dedicated to helping families build a new life together with their medically fragile children. They provide high quality, cost effective health care in home-like settings to children who are medically fragile.
- Mary Bridge Children's Foundation's BRIDGES fund serves families with children between the ages of 4 through 18 years who have experienced the serious illness or death of a parent or sibling. BRIDGES provides grief education and twice-monthly support groups for families. Grief counseling is available to help children and adults

cope with loss and grief. The aim of BRIDGES is that no child will grieve alone.

And with THAT happy task accomplished we commenced to share what we'd been doing since the last time we saw each other.

Doug and Betty just got back from 11 wonderful days at Walt Disney World with their son's family. Mickey's Magical Express got rave reviews as *THE* best way to get your luggage and you to and from the airport. They stayed at the Yacht Club Resort as they have in the past. The highlight of the trip was watching their grandsons work together to create "The Kitchen Sink" ice cream dessert at Beaches and Cream. It wasn't quite a work of art but it did make it easier to eat it all.

Janet brought a friend, Don to the meeting that she met years ago at her antique shows and he brought some wonderful items to share with us. There was the 1955 Coffee Shop menu from the Walt Disney Studios in Burbank - 55 cents for a ham and cheese sandwich. He also brought a framed Mousketeers piece of paper. This paper was a birthday gift for the son of a Disney employee. It had all the signatures of the Mousketeers, Jimmy Dodd, Roy Williams, Jim McDonald (the voice of Mickey), Fess Parker, AND Walt Disney. The list of names was a whos-who of the Mickey Mouse Club.

John G. reminisced about the contributions of Bruce Gordon. Karen joined in and recounted Bruce's story of how the Nickel Tour book was published. No American publisher would publish the book for him and David Mumford. They thought it was too big and had too many pictures. So David mortgaged his house and Bruce took it to Italy and Camphor Tree Publishers took the job. The rest, as they say, is history.

Karen also showed us a beautiful monorail piece that she obtained from a former Northgate Mall employee. It was a gift to the employee given when Disney visited the Mall to promote the 35th anniversary of Disneyland. It is made of ceramic and sits on a wooden base.

Janet is making her first visit to Walt Disney World in January and is soliciting advice on "what to do". Send her an email with your suggestions.

This will come as a shock but Greg DID NOT bring in a John Hench item this month. Instead he told of his timely purchase of the classic Hench monorail litho that actually was hanging in Hench's home.

Betty showed us the Halloween Party pin that

she got at "Mickey's Not So Scary Halloween" event at WDW. She mentioned that getting a table at a restaurant is harder than ever thanks to the Disney Dining Plan. She and Doug also had an opportunity to see members Tom and Sue at the Park one day.

Ken found an LP record that he didn't own the other day. It was a Fiddler on the Roof that was conducted by Tutti Camarata, who formed Disney Records in 1955.

Troy mentioned that Star Tours would get a 1 1/2 year makeover starting soon.

Troy's friend, Monica, is looking for the "Sarge" matchbox-sized car from Cars. If you find one she would be in your debt.

Everyone lingered around for awhile longer trying to finish off the great food. Some went out into the garage and looked at the train layout Troy has been working on. The weather finally settled down and everyone felt it was safe to go outside again and the afternoon meeting ended.

December's meeting will be at Doug and Betty's home on the 9th at 1pm. It's probably been 10 years since we've met there and they've probably added a few new Disney items so come join us.



# Upcoming Shows

by Janet Fairchild

You won't find us at any January shows this year. It's not that there aren't fine shows in the area, in fact, there are two. Sunday, January 12, 2008 brings the return of "Harvest of Toys". This is really a fun show for us. We find quite a few great toys at this show. It will be at the Double Tree in Southcenter. I believe the show opens at 10:00 am for around \$5 per person.

And if you're willing to brave the cold for a drive down south, the Clark County Fairgrounds, just north of Vancouver, WA hosts the Palmer Wirfs Antique Show. This show is promoted by the best of the best in the Pacific Northwest. They really know how to put on a show! Dale and I missed the first go-round in 2006. I've heard it was a great show. Last year, we did work the

show, but a series of events, not the least of which was our January snowstorm, made it a poor one for us.

And why, you may ask, are we missing these two fine shows? Poor Dale. I'm dragging him off to Florida. We're very excited (at least I hope Dale is) about our first trip to WDW.

February brings on a couple of really fun shows. The weekend of February 2nd & 3rd Palmer Wirfs will be presenting their local show at the Puyallup Fairgrounds. We love this show! Not only is it fun to sell at home, but this is our chance to talk to our local collectors. This is truly our favorite show. We've found many fun things to add to our collections at this show! (Formerly held at the Tacoma Dome.)

The following weekend we get to go to Ocean Shores. It's a small antique show. There are several dealers who sell only locally, so we get to check out stuff we don't see elsewhere! And, when the show closes for the day, you've got that great beachfront playground!



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