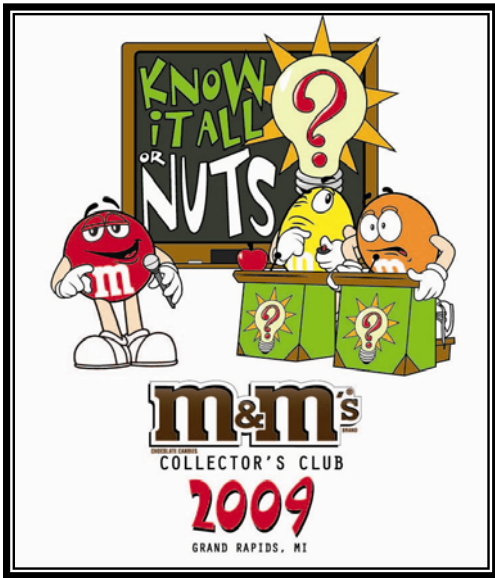


THE 11TH ANNUAL M & M'S® COLLECTORS CLUB CONVENTION

By Pat Wilson



Two days of dismal rainy weather couldn't dampen the excitement and fellowship of the members attending the 2009 M&M'S® Collector's Club Convention held in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Although the official registration was to take place Thursday morning a lot of members registered early Wednesday. This year's theme was, "School Daze". So events were named after school subjects.

Thursday night's welcome party was sports related. Members could wear their favorite college tee shirt. Tables were decorated with basketball, football, golf, etc. items and also included M&M'S® Brand Characters and of course M&M'S® Brand Milk Chocolate Candy. A bit of sports humor was displayed with a huge University of Michigan Bear blowup which hovered over a downed M&M'S® Brand Red Character dressed in Michigan State Spartans pants. Go University of Michigan!!!!

This Welcome Tail Gate Party was enjoyed by all. A meal was provided which consisted of hot dogs or chili dogs, chips, cookies, and a beverage. The night's entertainment involved playing two games. A Spin-the-Wheel game was painted with different colors on it similar to M&M'S® Brand colors. These same colors were represented on a prize table. Prizes were won by matching wheel and table colors. The other game was a Duck Pond. The pond was stocked and ran by Bill and Debbie Harris.

Friday morning produced an unexpected surprise. This year's convention was held at the Grand Rapids Airport Hilton where host Janet Wilson works. Janet had contacted Channel 13 about having them film the convention but they did not acknowledge her email. At 10:00 am Janet along with her mother Pat (who co-hosted the convention) received a call from Channel 13. They said that much of the daily news has been so negative because of the state's poor economy that they would like to report on something a little lighter.

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a little lighter. So could they come to the hotel and film the M&M'S® Collectors Club Convention and broadcast it on their 6:00pm News? The camera man filmed member's rooms that were selling M&M'S® Brand items. They interviewed member Kathy Chabot in her room. They also interviewed Pat Wilson who dressed up in an M&M'S® Brand Costume.

Friday's activities started by members bringing items to be auctioned off. At 1:00 pm the General Membership Meeting was held. Officers and Board Members were introduced. Future conventions were discussed.

Members then filed into the adjacent room in anticipation of the coming auction. Mike Murphy acted as auctioneer. If you've ever attended any of our conventions and seen Mike in action as the auctioneer you are in for a treat. Mike's gift of gab and sense of humor causes the room to rock with laughter. This year was a repeat of past performances. The highlight of the auction was when Chris Sheats won the bid for a giant outdoor M&M'S® Brand Yellow Character blowup (shown left). Chris promised to bring it to as many conventions and picnics as possible.



Later Friday night a school carnival was held. Seven games: Basketball Toss, Dart Game, Quarter Drop, Penny Toss, Bean Bag Toss, Candy Tree, and Racing Game were played. Players won prizes. Free popcorn was available.

The only event scheduled for Saturday was the banquet. Some of the activities people did in their free time was going to a flea market, attending the Holland Tulip Festival, visiting Fredrick Meijer Gardens, shopping for M&M'S® Brand Items at various stores (Members cleaned out the Cracker Barrel Restaurant of the exclusive M&M'S® Brand Tins that are out), visiting with members, and room hopping.

Previously, members decided that they wanted the convention group picture to be taken inside. So after everyone was seated for the banquet members traveled to the hotel lobby for the group convention photo.

As usual many members took their own personal pictures. However, this year a photographer was hired to take the convention group photo. He also photographed all the other convention activities which are available for purchase.

Saturday night's banquet theme was Graduation

Night. A yearbook, An M&M'S® Brand Bear dressed in a graduation cap and gown, a balloon, a set of ABC blocks and a champagne glass filled with M&M'S® Milk Chocolate Candies graced the tables.

Graduates (members attending the banquet) came up front and received their diplomas. Drawings for door prizes, and raffles took place. A delicious

Italian Buffet was served.

Past President Ralph Corner was presented with a plaque. Gifts were given by the club to host Janet Wilson and co-host Pat Wilson.

Special thanks go to Howard Wilson, Bill and Debbie Harris, Linda Whitney, Bill and Juanita Merritt, Thanks to all members who helped with games and provided gifts. Thanks also to the Grand Rapids Airport Hilton Hotel for all their help.





Character Raffle



Gift of Gab!



Mystery Member Revealed!



Many Friends



Friendly Hotel Staff



Mystery Tattoos!



Nuts Under Cover Chapter Members



OHIO Crew



Swine Flu Outbreak!



And The Winner Is :-)



BIG RIG!



Nice Banquet



Fun Times & Late Nights



COOL GLASS!

