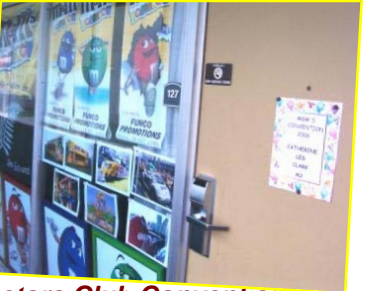
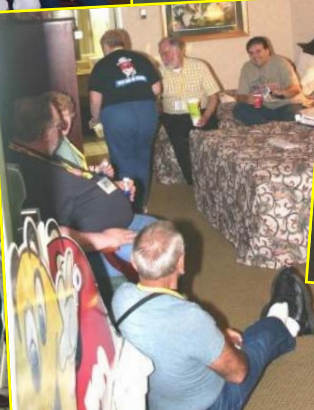


# The M&M'S® Collectors Club 2006 Convention



**Nice Gifts, Meet Friends, Lots of Fun!**

*The M&M'S Collectors Club Convention*

# Mmmm ... Sweet!

**M&M'S® Collectors to hold convention May 4-6**

By RACHEL STREITFELD

Staff Writer

*Reprinted from the Zanesville Times Recorder*

ZANESVILLE - M&M'S® Milk Chocolate Candies melt in your mouth, not in your basement, luckily for Mary Ann Graham.

She's filled three rooms of her home with candy-coated memorabilia, ranging from cookie jars, figurines, decorated clocks and old store displays. Graham has been collecting for 20 years, and she's traveled across the country to buy, sell and trade various items.

This week, collectors with similar interests will set up shop at the Holiday Inn for the M&M'S® Collectors' Club Convention May 4 to 6. About 150 chocolate enthusiasts are scheduled to attend.

Ralph Corner, president of the club, said anyone who likes chocolate was welcome to attend. Serious collectors head straight for the older collectibles, but everybody enjoys bags and bags of the candy.

"(We'll have) any kind of advertisement with the M&M'S® Brand, toy dispensers, ceramic dishes, pottery, the candy itself," Corner said. "Some people just collect the candy wrappers. They collect just about anything." Corner has also attended the yearly Coca Cola Convention in Zanesville. Kelly Ashby, vice president of the Zanesville-Muskingum County Chamber of Commerce, said the chamber makes a point of enticing conventions like for M&M'S® Brand and Coke to the city.

"Any time we have a convention it does have a wonderful economic impact on the area," Ashby said. "The attendees certainly are spending money at restaurants and visiting our attractions." For Graham, the convention is about meeting other collectors in the area, though she expects to meet people from all over the country as well as Canada and Australia. Graham turned to M&M'S® Brand after collecting antique glasses and her husband's pinball machines. She buys her pieces online, at local stores or at garage sales. She has filled several display cases in her basement with the toys and covered the walls with framed candy advertisements. "I like the little characters," Graham said. "You get depressed or something, you can go downstairs and look at all the colors."

Her career highlight came when she bought out the collection of a 28-year Mars employee, the company that makes M&M'S® Milk Chocolate Candies. Graham now displays the woman's Mars medals and several rare items she had collected over her years at the company. Though memorabilia can be pricey, Graham said she's not trying to make money with her hobby. She usually buys items after they go on sale, or at garage sales where they cost a fraction of their original price. "It's purely fun," Graham said. "If I have extras or doubles then I sell them. It's happy. It's got to be one of the most colorful, happy collections."

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## M&M'S® Collectors from around the world travel to Zanesville

Patricia A. West-Volland

TR Community Reporter

*Reprinted from the Zanesville Times Recorder*

Originally, they were brown, but in 1960 the colors red, green and yellow were added to the package of candy that "THE MILK CHOCOLATE MELTS IN YOUR MOUTH-NOT IN YOUR HAND®."

M&M'S® Collectors not only eat the sweet treats but they collect anything with the M&M'S® Brand logo on it. Mugs, canisters, jackets, dispensers, toppers and many other items filled the rooms at the Holiday Inn during the M&M'S® Collector's Club Convention.

More than 175 members traveled to Zanesville from 18 states, Canada and New Zealand to buy, sell and trade M&M'S® Brand items. A van and car painted with the M&M'S® Brand Characters were parked in the hotel's parking lot.



CHRIS CROOK/Times Recorder

Mary Ann Graham has been collecting M&M'S® Brand memorabilia for 20 years, and will attend the M&M'S® Collectors' Club Convention in Zanesville this week.



Photos by PATRICIA A. WEST-VOLLAND/Times Recorder  
Seated from left, Shirley Olah, Marilyn Griggs, Pete Christiano, Liz Rutan, Vicki Brown and Joyce Losonsky, standing from left, Sue Hoffman, Al Griggs, Dottie Christiano, Greg Brown and John Olah pose for a group photo at the M&M'S® Collectors Club Convention at the Holiday Inn.

***The M&M'S Collectors Club Convention***



Ralph Corner, right, assists Colleen Leigh and Don MacKay with the M&M'S® Brand merchandise he brought to sell or trade at the convention.

The couple has thousands of M&M'S® Brand items now. Other members tease Vickie about being the Queen of M&M'S® Milk Chocolate Candies. "We both just liked M&M'S® Candies when we got together," Vickie said.



Vera Cothorn, owner of Golddust Treasures in Missouri, sells M&M'S® Brand collectibles from her hotel room at the convention.

Ralph Corner, club president, brought a portion of his collection from Pennsylvania. Every inch of his room was filled, including the beds, with M&M'S® Brand items to sell or trade to his fellow collectors. Ralph's collection began with a gift and has grown into a large collection with thousands of pieces including some from around the world. "It's always fun getting things from other countries because you have different languages," he said. "I didn't know I was collecting. Every year for Christmas my mom bought me a topper and a dispenser."

Dispensers are among the most popular items to collect and were the beginning of a collection for Liz Rutan. She now has more than 67,000 pieces. Liz, a charter member, attended the very first convention in Las Vegas in 1999. To celebrate, she got an M&M'S® Character tattoo on her leg before the convention. "It started in '91 with the little pocket dispensers that came in the five colors," Liz said. "And then it became an obsession."

Obsession describes many of the collectors, but Vickie and Greg Brown took their love of M&M'S® Chocolate Candies to a new level when they married at M&M'S World® in Las Vegas during a convention.

Don Mackay and Colleen Leigh, of Toronto, while not quite obsessed yet, are well on their way to a world-class collection. "You try to keep it (the collection) in one room but it's spreading," Colleen laughed. "It started at a garage sale. I bought 10 toppers. They were such happy little things. That started it!" Colleen is not alone in her quest to keep her collection in one room. Wendy and Laszlo Herczku of New Jersey began collecting in 2000 but their basement is now full. Wendy arrived wearing an M&M'S® Brand jacket. "I collect it all," Wendy laughed as she glanced at her husband. "I keep it confined to the basement. It creeps but we keep the door shut tight." Laszlo while not a collector or member of the club, admits that he helps his wife with her collecting.

Pete and Dottie Christiano, of Pennsylvania, are charter members of the club too. Pete was a taste tester for M&M'S® Milk Chocolate Candies and started eating chocolate as soon as he arrived at the convention. Before retiring his job was to taste test chocolate from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. "I'd go home and my hair was standing straight up," Pete laughed. "They'd know I was wired."

Arriving members were greeted at registration by Juanita Merritt and Bill Merritt, club secretary. Each member received a set of mugs, a bag of M&M'S® Milk Chocolate Candies and various other items in their registration bags. A special convention T-shirt was created with a picture of Zanesville's famous Y-Bridge and M&M'S® Brand Characters on it.

Les and Catherine Clark of New Zealand, Shirley and John Olah, Marilyn and Al Griggs, Sue and Bob Hoffman, Dan and Ginny Wolfe, Sarah Landis and Mary Ann Graham attended the convention.

About the only thing the collectors have not seen with the M&M'S® Brand logo is wallpaper. The items have become so popular that charter members Joyce Losonsky and Ken Clee wrote "M&M'S® Around the World" as a price guide for collectors.

The collectors club is seven years old and has a yearly convention. Every three years the convention is in Las Vegas because it is the location of M&M'S World®. Eleven members and some guests attended the first convention in 1999. There were 26 charter members before the first convention. Ken Clee, Ginny Wolfe and Mike Meadors planned the first convention.

Membership dues are \$20 and is open to the public. Membership information can be found at [www.mnmclub.com](http://www.mnmclub.com).

**Patricia A. West-Volland is the community reporter for the Times Recorder and can be reached at [paw105591@alltel.net](mailto:paw105591@alltel.net). Originally published May 12, 2006**



Wendy and Laszlo Herczku arrive dressed in M&M'S® Brand jackets and t-shirts and ready for a fun weekend at the M&M'S® Collectors Club Convention.

## Scavenger Hunt Winners



**Above Left** - First Place team of the Scavenger Hunt. Each team member received a large advertising magnet for the Lowes theatre promotion.



**Above Right** – Second Place team of the Scavenger Hunt. Each team player received a Easter Basket Making Kit.

The first ever Scavenger Hunt was a big hit and hilarious too. Team members split up in groups of 6 electing a team captain. They were given a list of items from radishes to M&M'S® Brand merchandise to find in a short period of time. Team with the most points won.

## From The Crispy Critters' Corner

Congratulations to Beverly Kuemin of Niles, MI for winning the Crispy Critters' Chapter Raffle at the 2006 Convention.

Thank you to everyone who bought tickets. Great job from Crispy Critter Members Shirley, John, Rose, Marian and Chet for selling the tickets, and Martie for making up the sign. Thank you to the members who donated items to the raffle.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the Picnic in August! Don't forget the Elizabethtown Fair opens on the following Monday, August 21. Masterfoods USA usually hosts a booth at the fair where merchandise can be purchased.



Above: Beverly Kuemin (left) winner of the Crispy Critters' Chapter Raffle poses with Rose Hudson (right) and their party hats.



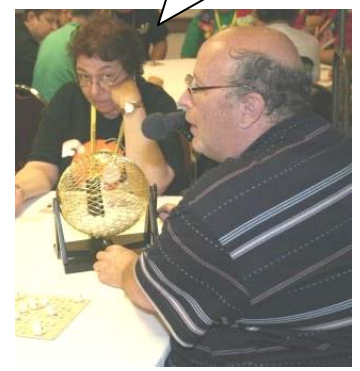
Left – Sara Landis does some shopping for her collection at the convention.

# Magician Beautician!

Thanks to Robin Korbler's magical beautician talents and Wanda Taylor's beautiful red hair, many of the balding guys regained back their youth at the banquet.



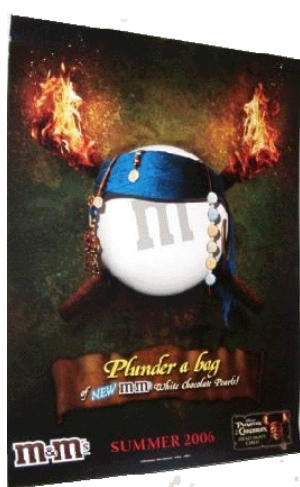
I won't cheat anymore. Can I go back to my table now?



The M&M's Collectors Club Convention



Great Job  
Auctioning  
Mike!



Right - Kathy Chabot from Radical Waves, Inc. models her jean jacket with the Pirates of the Caribbean graphics embroidered on it. There was a limited quantity available. Promotional poster is also shown on left.



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See You In Orlando!

The M&M'S Collectors Club Convention