

Antique Festival still growing after 45-year run

By **CHRIS LEONARD**
Staff Writer

MILLERSBURG — With 45 years under its belt, the Millersburg Antique Festival hasn't stopped growing. And this year is no exception, with the addition of a 240-piece consigned glass auction, adding to a weekend full of activities.

According to Georgie Cool, antiques festival chairwoman, one of the festival's newest attractions, the glass auction by Millersburg Glass, is sure to be a hit.

"The festival has never had anything like this before. We've never had a large auction like this," she said.

The 240-piece auction is being put on by Millersburg Glass. The pieces of glass range in price from \$50-\$2,000.

She said she has seen the brochure for the auction and the pieces are "absolutely breathtaking."

The festival starts at 9 a.m. Saturday, at which time residents can choose to participate in the 5K race. Pre-registration is \$10. Day-of registration is \$12.

According to race chairwoman Wendy Brown, there will be giveaways at the race.

"They are donations from area businesses, so that could be anything — blocks of cheese, souvenirs, gift certificates. It just depends on what is given (for

the festival)," she said.

For race details, call (330)-231-6484.

And if that's not their cup of tea, there's always plenty of entertainment with the variety of shops, crafts and displays.

"We try to have it at the festival that there's something for everyone," Georgie Cool said. "There's events for adults, there are events for children with the parades. They're separate so if you don't want to be in town for both parades, you only have to be in town one day."

According to Todd Day, classic car show chairman, the Saturday and Sunday antiques and classic car parade and show gets quite the mix of cars.

"We get a wide range of everything," he said, of the Ford Model T's, military cars and vehicles from the early 1900s. "We encourage anyone who has an antique car to drive it in the parade."

To get an antique car into the parade or car show, call Day at (330)-763-0472. Registration is from noon to 2 p.m. Saturday at Snyder Brothers Sales and Services on County Road 623.

Festival attendees can also check out the lumberjack competition in front of the main stage Sunday afternoon.

"Anyone can try it," Fred Hawkins said. "We'll have a saw there for anyone who wants to try it real bad."

Hawkins, who runs the competition, said there will be women's nail driving competition, an ax throwing competition, wood chopping, chain saw and a Jack and Jill crosscut.

Cool said she's excited for the weekend festival, having heard of reservations at

local hotels from people as far away as California and Texas.

"We're just hoping with the amount of people coming in ... we have beautiful weather. It's going to be such an economical weekend for Holmes County," she said.

Casey to be parade grand marshal

By **CHRIS LEONARD**
Staff Writer

MILLERSBURG — Bob Casey has seen it all when it comes to Millersburg.

Being a second-generation businessman in downtown Millersburg, he has seen the ups, the downs and the major developments.

"I've been in this room 75 years and I've barbered for 55," the 75-year-old said of his small barbershop on Jackson Street.

In that time, he's served nine years on village council and one term as mayor. It's no wonder he was asked to be grand marshal in the Sunday grand parade of the Antique Festival.

"Well, it's an honor to be asked," Casey said.

Georgie Cool, chairwoman of the antiques festival, said festival board mem-

bers chose him for his long history of service, "not only as a barber, but as a community member."

Casey's Barbershop opened April 1933.

His small barbershop, nestled next to Bag's Pub just off Monroe Street, he remembers a time when business was booming, so to speak, in the downtown. Instead of a restaurant, there used to be a Chrysler dealership next door.

But times changed, and businesses either moved on or couldn't make it.

But his small barbershop remained. "It's the oldest business still in the place the business originated," he said.

Cool said all that is required of Casey is that he and his wife, Bev, ride in the grand parade at 2 p.m. on Sunday.

"He and his wife are the kind of celebrities of the parade," she said.

HERSHBERGER ANTIQUE MALL

Where they sell quality ... not junk

By **Esther Leggett**

The Hershberger Antique Mall, one of the best places in Amish Country to find outstanding antiques, is located between Charm and Farmerstown. To get there, you'll travel through some of the prettiest rural areas of Holmes County, observing work horses in the fields, buggies on their way to and from town, little Amish schools and colorful quilts hanging on clotheslines.

Ben Hershberger knew early on he didn't want to farm for the rest of his life because his real love was furniture. He was always fascinated by the craftsmanship of the older pieces — the dovetailing, intricate detail, one-at-a-time production — handcrafted without today's modern tools.

So Ben decided to go into antiques and antique furniture sales.

"My dad thought I was crazy," Ben said, "but after a couple years, he thought I'd made the right decision. Actually, now he works for me! And so does my sister."

In business now for more than 14 years, the antique mall consists of two 4,000-square-foot buildings plus a "rough room," where furniture in need of repair is housed.

Hershberger Antique Mall is a combination of antiques; most are owned by Ben and some are on consignment. Ben used to have to go out and look at auctions for his antiques to sell, but now, most of them "just come in the front door!"

"I even do 'house calls,'" Ben said laughingly. "People tell me they have 'this or that' and want me to come to their home to see it. Sometimes I buy the piece, sometimes I end up buying the whole houseful!"

Browsing the mall, you'll discover at least 500 pieces of antique furniture for sale.

"You could come in here every week — nearly every day — and see new furniture on display," Ben said.

During the last couple years, Ben has begun to focus on rare, unusual items, especially bigger, even massive pieces. Large cupboards and sideboards are extremely popular right now, as are large mantels. These mantels are nearly a wall-full of old charm — some have large mirrors, some are plain, some have intricate woodwork.

"We're trying to find unusual pieces that aren't found most places," Ben said. "Most of these aren't here very long; they come in and are snatched up by a buyer very quickly."

Personally, I enjoy browsing for antiques like those I already own, discovering their worth and adding to my collection. The day I was at Hershberger's, I found a Shirley Temple pitcher from the 1930s like the one my grandmother gave me, and a Bozo the Clown record. My record is "Bozo Under the Sea" and this one was "Bozo on the Farm." I was tempted to buy the cup and plate to match my pitcher and the other record, but decided to wait for another time!

Although many customers coming to the antique mall are tourists from Ohio and beyond, a large contingent comes from Holmes and neighboring counties — especially for the furniture, Ben said. Many of the local bed-and-breakfasts furnish their guest rooms with furniture and accessories from Hershberger's.

Outstanding customer service is part of Ben's business philosophy.

"If people are looking for a specific item and can't find it here, we'll hunt for it and give them a call when we find it," Ben said. "We offer layaway, arrange for delivery and

can have anything shipped."

The mall is a beautiful site during the summer and fall, when 1,500 to 2,000 flowering plants fill the area around the mall with bright color. Some of the antiques displayed outside are filled with blooms as well!

How do people find out about his fabulous antique mall?

"Word of mouth is one of the best ways," Ben admitted. "Someone comes, then goes back home and tells someone, and that's just how it goes."

Ben related a story to be about a lady and her mother who drove down from Michigan.

"They'd been looking for a very big hall seat," Ben began. "They just happened to talk to someone who'd been down here visiting Amish Country and had seen a hall seat here at the mall. The two ladies drove down, looked around here in this building and couldn't find it. They were really disappointed. We asked if we could help, and they told us their story. Well, to their delight, the hall seat was up at the other building (just up the hill a few steps). They were thrilled; and they bought it!"

This antique mall is definitely not to be missed. You'll discover things you've been looking for and things you've forgotten about. I bet you'll say, "Oh, I remember those" many times. And you'll always see good antiques.

"We sell quality here; not junk!" Ben concluded.

Hershberger Antique Mall — 3245 SR 557, Baltic 43804; answering service at (800) 893-3702, Ext. 0300; Hours: Mon, Tue., Thu. & Sat., 8 a.m.-5 p.m.; Wed. & Fri., 8 a.m.-8 p.m.; closed Sun.