

MIDWEST  
**GLASS CHATTER**  
MIDWEST ANTIQUE FRUIT JAR & BOTTLE CLUB

Since 1972

Midwest Glass Chatter  
April 2010

### Club Officers

- *Dave Rittenhouse, Pres.*  
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- *Richard Cole, Vice Pres./Lib*  
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- *Anne Szopa, Treas./M.C.*  
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- *Joe Coulson, Sec./Editor*  
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317-915-0665
- *Norman Barnett,*  
*Pres. Emeritus*  
P.O. Box 38  
Flat Rock, IN 47234  
317-738-3232

### Membership

The Midwest Glass Chatter is a monthly publication and is a forum through which collectors can share information.

Membership cost is \$15.00 per year, per family, due each December 31. All jar/bottle related collectors are welcome. Send to MAFJBC, Attn: Anne Szopa, 11199 U.S. Highway 35, Economy, IN 47339

## Meeting Minutes, April 4th, 2010

The April club meeting was held at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. Vice President Dick Cole opened the meeting and welcomed 12 members. Dave and Kay Rittenhouse could not attend the meeting.

Dick passed around "Thinking of You" cards for Norm and Junne Barnett. Norm is continuing his physical therapy in an assisted living facility in Franklin, Indiana (close to Flat Rock). Junne is staying with their son in Flat Rock. Norm would love to hear from you: 317-738-3232.

Dick learned some jar news through Minnetrista recently. The gift shop had placed an order with Jarden for the over-size Ball® Ideal jars. They were told that the 2 and 4 gallon jars have been discontinued. The 1 gallon jar is still available. There will be no new edition of the Blue Book for 2010. The gift shop also has several of the 1980's Ball salt and pepper shaker sets for sale.

Dick reported that Minnetrista has another canning jar exhibit going on. The exhibit is titled "She Can" and will run from May 22nd to Sept. 26th.

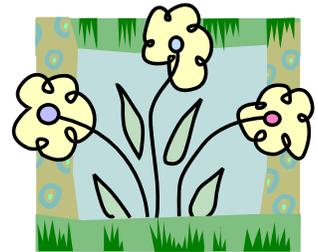
Anne gave the Treasurer's report for April. Expenses were recorded for printing and mailing the club newsletter.

Income was recorded for club membership renewals. Please send in your dues renewal to her if you still have not done so. The club continues to maintain a positive bank balance.

Dick Cole gave an update on the club library. Dick motioned to purchase the book "F. C. Ball, Memoirs". The motion was seconded and approved. Dick is looking for other suggestions on books that would be useful to club members. Charles Williams and Lou Ebert recommended glass history books that Dick will investigate.

Dick reminded us that there is a "Boom Town" event in Gas City on Friday, June 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. Dick is on the planning committee for this event. They will rent the fruit jar-making machine from Minnetrista and have it on display. On Saturday from Noon until maybe 5pm there will be a large room available for free for exhibits and sales tables. Several club members said that they would setup during this time. Contact Dick for more details.

Our next club meeting will be June 13<sup>th</sup> at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. Please bring Figurals (or figures depicted on jars and bottles) for Show and Tell.



The plans for the July 10<sup>th</sup> Get-Together are coming together. This will replace our normal club meeting, and the event will occur at The Signature Inn in Muncie, Indiana. Marianne Dow is taking charge of arrangements and full details can be found at a link on our club website.

See you all at the next club meeting.

Joe Coulson, Secretary



Ball Ideal jars made at the time of the U.S. Bicentennial (1976)

## Show and Tell

Club members were asked to bring Presentation jars (retirement, open house, and other non-production jars and bottles) for Show and Tell.

Lou Ebert displayed a green soda bottle with applied color labels on both sides: Kerr salutes The Midwest Antique Fruit Jar and Bottle Club INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA July 4, 1982 (on front); illustration of an Economy jar and a Kerr Self-Sealing Mason jar (on back). Dick Cole mentioned that these bottles were originally sold for \$2 at that show.

Lou also displayed an amber bottle in the shape of a glass day tank. The bottle was embossed with the following: Glass Day Tank 1931 Hocking Glass 1931–1937 Anchor Hocking Corp. 1937–1981 Plant 3 Winchester Ind. E.G. Foust Plt. Mgr. R.T. Brown V.P. Mfgr. L.A. Burnham Div. V.P.

Lou also shared a copy of LIFE magazine dated May 6, 1940 which had a “letter to the editor” inquiring about the date on Mason’s Patent jars. The reply was written by Gladys Kimbrough of Ball Brothers Company.

Anne Szopa brought a clear quart jar made by Ball-Foster: (logo) Ball-Foster Glass Container Co., L.L.C. Ruston LA. 30 Years of Success Through Teamwork (on front); (logo) (map of Louisiana) 1968–1998 (on reverse).

Anne displayed a clear quart 10-paneled jar—similar style to the old product jars. The base was embossed with the following: Presented by the Chattanooga Glass Co. at the

1980 International Exposition for Food Processors St. Louis, MO.

Anne displayed a clear pint jar (threadless sipper lip) which was made by Ball: 75th Anniversary 1908–1983 (on front); National Fruit Product Company Winchester, Va. 1983 (on back).

Anne also displayed a clear quart retirement jar: Kerr “Self-Sealing” Wide Mouth Mason (on front); (face) Jerry T. McDowell 30 Years of Service (on back). Metal lid: All-tristra 30 Years of Dedicated Service Jerry T. McDowell 12/70–9/01.

Sue Wilson shared a half pint Ball blue Ball ® Ideal with an applied color label on both sides: All-America City (in flag shield) (on front); All-America City Finals June 21–23, 2001 Atlanta, Georgia Compliments of Muncie, Indiana (on back). There was a paper insert which reported some of the highlights of Muncie. The city of Muncie did not win the contest. The jar was given to Sue by a person who was a member of the committee. According to Dick Cole there were approximately 2000 of the jars made.

Sue also shared a pint Ball blue Ball ® Ideal with an applied color label on one side: 10 Years 1988 1998 Minnetrista Cultural Center. According to Dick Cole there were approximately 250 of the jars made. The person in charge of having them labeled was Gordon Stagge, and the jars were labeled in Kentucky.

Vanessa Granger brought a clear pint jelly jar (rolled lip): 1776 (liberty bell) 1976 (on

front); Anchor Hocking Bicentennial Open House (factory) Winchester Indiana Plant 3 (on back). Base: large stippled Anchor Hocking logo.

Vanessa also brought a pint and quart Ball blue Ball ® Ideal jar. These were produced at the time of the U.S. Bicentennial.

Colleen Dixon brought several wonderful colored jars. She got ahead on our monthly show and tell themes. We will report on those jars next month when we do odd-colored jars.

Jeff Denney displayed a bright green quart Ball ® Happy Holiday Carteret Plant; a clear bottle, Jersey City Plant 1935–1980; and a clear pint Ball ® (house) Guest House (threaded mouth). Dick Cole told us that every Ball plant had an open house during the company’s 100th year anniversary in 1980.

Charles Williams told us that the shape of old coke bottles made it easy to grab them out of a tub of ice. That’s the way you could buy them in many places in the old days. Dick Cole told us that the Root family (designer’s of the Coke bottle) got a royalty on each bottle made!

Joe Coulson shared a clear pint Golden Harvest Mason jar: For Freezing—Fill Here Atlanta GA Home of DBM (figure of state) Multi State Glass Protective League Meeting July 24 25 1987 (on back).

Joe also shared a couple of metal beverage containers made by Ball. The first can commemorated the Findlay,

Ohio open house on Aug. 22, 1980. The second can commemorated the Metal Container Group in Colorado 1980.

Dick Cole displayed a clear pint Ball ® (house) Guest House (threadless sipper).

Dick also displayed seven different variations of the Ball ® El Monte California jars. These jars are embossed upside down and are shaped like a baseball. Dick knew Gene Kozuk (both of them worked at Ball). Gene was responsible for performing Quality Control. A sample of each jar had to be sent back to Muncie for inspection by Gene. Russ Simpson was Gene’s boss. Gene would often give Dick some of the jars that passed his way!

Dick displayed a trio of Ball Standard R.G. Simpson jars: R.G. Simpson 1952–1982 (train car) 30 Years Service (wax sealer mouth); same jar but sealed with tin lid and wax; and same jar but with the scarce threaded mouth.

Dick displayed a couple of “art glass” pieces made from the R.G. Simpson mould. One was clear with the blow-over intact, and the other was blue.

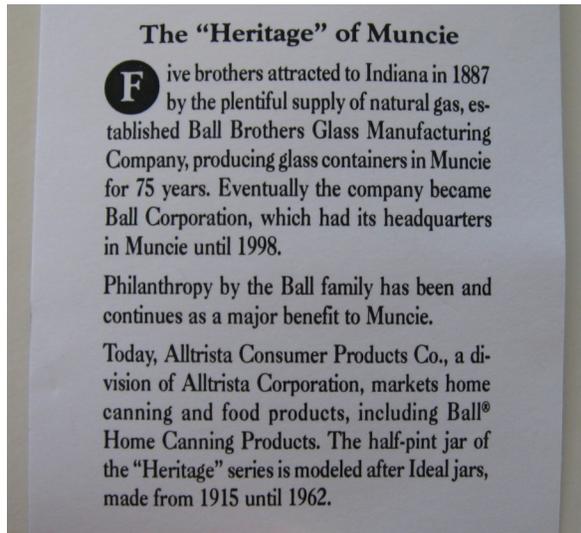
Dick also displayed a clear quart: Russ & Sunny Simpson Ball ® (train) Mason Keep on Chuggin; an amber glass Ball-Incon paperweight; and a clear glass Ball-Incon paperweight.

Dick mentioned that he is working on a booklet titled “Who the Hell is Harvey Groman?”. It will describe all of the special occasion jars made by Ball. Harvey Groman is represented on one of the employee retirement jars!

## Show and Tell



This jar with applied color label was issued "Compliments of Muncie, Indiana" for the "All-America City Finals" in 2001.



Paper insert that came with the HP Ball Ideal on the left. This advertised the virtues of Muncie for the competition.



This pint Ball Ideal jar with applied color label celebrates Minnetrista's 10th Anniversary



Bright green quart, Ball ® Happy Holiday Carteret Plant



Clear quart, (face) Jerry T. McDowell 30 Years of Service

# Show and Tell



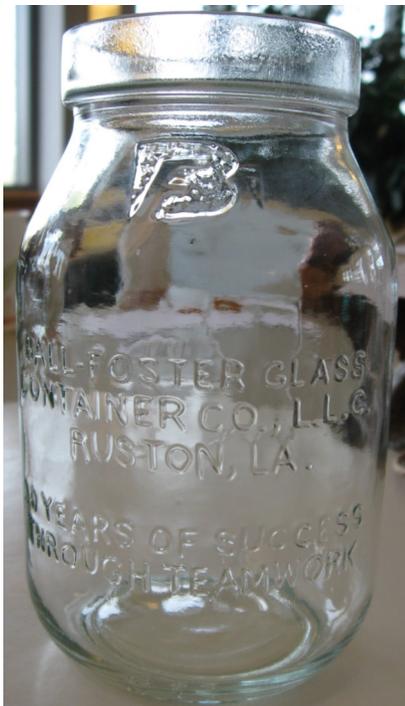
National Fruit Product Company Winchester Va 1983



Unusual paneled jar. Look at base in next picture.



Presented by the Chattanooga Glass Co. at the 1980 International Exposition for Food Processors @ St. Louis, MO.



(logo) Ball-Foster Glass Container Co., L.L.C. Ruston, LA. 30 Years of Success Through Teamwork



Ball ® (house) Guest House



Anchor Hocking Bicentennial Open House (factory) Winchester Indiana Plant 3

# Show and Tell



El Monte California. We got to see several scarce variations of this jar.



El Monte (base of jar on left): Our Centennial Year (logo) 1980



El Monte (base of jar, similar to one on far left): Only the best comes in glass



Left: R.G. Simpson special run, wax sealer; Middle: same jar but sealed with wax; Right: a scarce threaded mouth variation



Jersey City Plant  
1935 1980

## Show and Tell



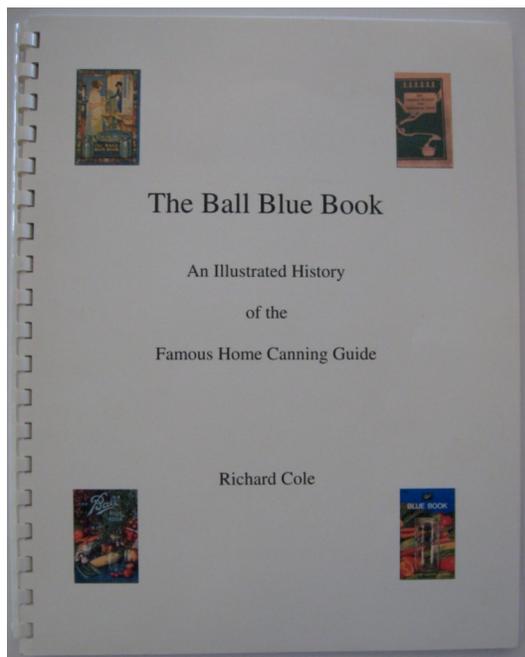
Clear pint Golden Harvest Mason. For Freezing—Fill Here Atlanta GA Home of DBM (figure of state) Multi State Glass Protective League Meeting July 24 25 1987



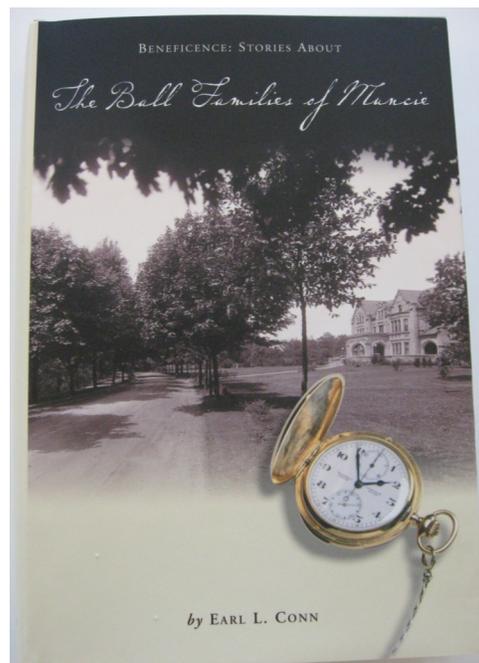
Clear quart, Russ & Sunny Simpson Ball ® (train) Mason Keep on Chuggin



Amber glass paperweight; Ball-Incon Leadership Through Quality and Service (logo in center)



Booklet written by Dick Cole: The Ball Blue Book, An Illustrated History of the Famous Home Canning Guide



Book (available at Minnetrista gift shop): Beneficence: Stories About The Ball Families of Muncie

# LEGENDS OF THE JAR!

[Editor’s Note: This article is a result of long time collector and author Bruce W. Schank reaching out to long time collector Paul Shoecraft.]

Paul was born July 24, 1940 in Indianapolis, IN. He has a PHD in Mathematics Education from Michigan University. He developed an elementary school math program (Move it Math) that he hopes will add to his finances now that he’s retired. Anyone interested can go to <http://moveitmaththesource.com/> and check it out. You never know, you just might find out (at least in math) that you’re not as smart as 5<sup>th</sup> graders after all.

Paul became interested in fruit jars approximately 35 years ago. What happened was Paul’s mother took him to an old dump where they lived in Globe Arizona and he discovered “purple” glass. The dump was closed in 1925 and had never been dug and the mineral deposits are so good in AZ that many of the jars were beautifully opalescent. But what really caught his eye were SCA jars and the Arizona sun sure made them turn really dark



and in an incredibly fast time period.

Up until 2003 He was just a regular collector like anyone else he supposes but when he discovered eBay it was like going to a jar show every night for him. He had the discretionary



Paul says...Go Blue!

funds at the time so he bought big and man did he go hog wild after jars. He ended up giving himself a birthday present on a daily basis. Every day for years he can remember a delivery man was knocking on his door with boxes and even more boxes. It's a safe bet to say that he ended up getting a tad carried away too because before his eBay buying spree he had a so-called paltry 700/800 jars in the collection. Incredibly when the dust settled from his buying binge he had over 5,000 jars! Now, you might say OMG, what in the world was he buying anyway but Paul says he was simply buying "pretty jars." If it had character, color, was scarce or rare, he had the knowledge to know what was what so he went after it. He was astounded at the types of jars he could buy for \$10 or \$20 a piece and best of all, he didn't have to drive 500 miles to find them.

Incidentally, Paul spent two years Down Under as a teacher at Churchlands College in Perth, Western Australia. A funny thing happened though while he was sitting around in Sugarland, TX many years ago;



Rare improved closure MFJ jar

he actually got lonely for the Never Never. It was that feeling of longing for the old Billabong, the Out-Back; Bushies and the sounds of the cockies that one day convinced him that he ought to buy a jar from Down Under. When he received the first jar it hit him in just the right way. The jars were just so very different from American fruit jars. The glass was thicker, the sides much straighter, the shoulders wider and tended to be more crude than American jars. What also caught his eye was the depth of purple in the Aussie jars and just how darn deep they tended to be in that color. Of course the thickness of the glass is what actually tends to make the jars that eye popping dark sun colored amethyst purple (sca) and is surely something Paul had to have and many other collectors out there want as well too.



Paul believes the women must have been a lot stronger and tougher Down Under because IHO you had to be a hefty lady to lug those larger jars around and work with them on a daily basis.

In his quest to get the Best of the Best Paul fortunately made some Aussie jar friends who started picking up jars for him. He ended up buying a lot of jars directly from them and managed to get some terrific buys in the long run. Kind of reminds me of the popular expression; "being in the inner circle, priceless!" He also managed to get in on a really good auction in which someone was selling out their collection. In that auction alone he managed to get some super nice jars, i.e., dual lined Atlas Mason, Unicorn and Commonwealth which happens to be the only one known made by the Vance Roth Company.

Paul is considered an expert on Australian jars most notably by many of those very people who live and collect fruit jars in Australia. He's terribly flattered that collectors from Down Under contact him all of the time asking questions about different jars and looking for info on whether certain jars are rare, scarce or common. And although people look to him and consider him a source of expertise in regards

Rare Antifermentine fruit jar



to Australian jars, Paul claims the real Australian fruit jar expert is an Aussie by the name of Wayne Harris who started collecting decades ago. Paul claims Wayne has pints that are almost non-existent in Aussie jars.

According to Paul he considers the rarest Aussie jar as the dual-lined Commonwealth jar. Other very rare Aussie jars are the Antifermentine, the Improved closure Mason's MFJ Patent Nov 30<sup>th</sup> 1858, the Mason's VR Improved and another one-of-a-kind with Mason's Improved embossed only on the jar.

Paul told me his best fruit jar deals came from a local Texan named Clarence who bought most of his jars in the 40's & 50's for next to nothing. He bought an 1858 that was almost black with amber swirls in it for \$120 that later on sold for \$1k and a couple of Crowley town lids for \$5 a piece in great shape which later on sold for \$400/500 a piece. He ended up with just astounding things and he didn't even know he was getting a good deal on them. Back then in his mind he believed he was paying more than reasonable prices for everything.

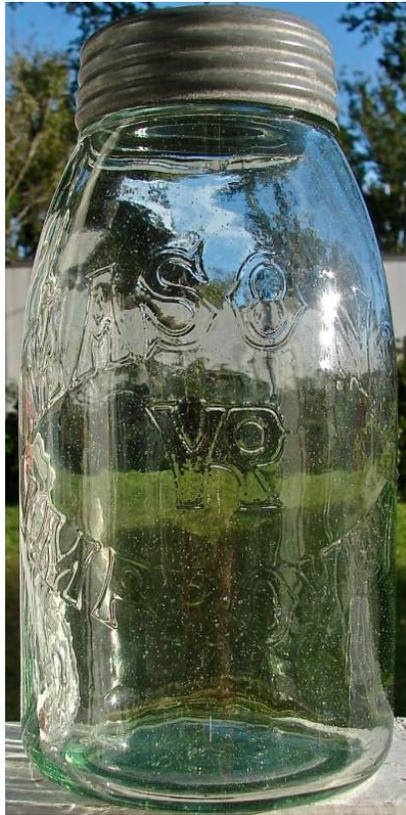
Yet Paul still feels eBay changed everything and that there's been a heck of a trade-off between that forum and Bottle Shows. He used to love



Rare dual-lined Commonwealth jar

the Bottle Shows but now feels they have changed at least in the West from the old days. They just don't seem to be as much fun anymore and there are a lot less people than there used to be going to them. He believes most of the dealing takes place the night before the Show behind the scenes by the Sellers and just isn't right in his thinking. On the other hand with eBay you can go to a new jar show every night and he finds that amazing and best of all, everyone has a shot at the jar.

Paul does his own jar cleaning and he has cleaned approximately 500 jars to date. Unfortunately out of that large of a number a relatively small amount has bitten the dust and it pains him to even think of them. He explained to me that he has shut those jars out of his mind because it's too painful. Although he's only broken but a few \$100 jars he also hasn't seen others to replace them since. Sadly a few good jars are now history because



Rare improved closure VR Improved jar

cleaning a jar in and of itself is a risk every time it is done.

I asked Paul inquisitively why he was now selling off so many of his great jars and it turns out that after 30 years of marriage he went through a brutal divorce in 2004. Suffice it to say he said at one time he had a lot of money but that isn't the case now. The bottom line is he's selling off really great and good jars simply for cash flow purposes in an attempt to maintain the lifestyle he is accustomed to.

Actually Paul is selling his jars now with the mental understanding that an older part of his life has passed away and a new part of his life has now begun for him. He's definitely not going to sell all of his jars and intends to remain semi-

active in the hobby and be able to look at, touch and admire fruit jars for a long time. Of course with a relative fewer amount of jars grant you but fruit jars none-the-less that will remain a part of his life. Paul claims he no longer has the attachment to jars as he once

had and is selling jars he swore he would never part with and would be with him for a life time. And it doesn't seem to hurt as much as he thought it would because once the first one leaves, the next one and those thereafter are that much easier to part with. Some of us and again including this humble author can attest to the fact that once fruit jars are in your makeup it's something we can never kill or remove completely



from our being no matter how hard we try. We might be able to squelch it to a point but not for very long. It always seems to have some grip on us that will last a life time. Fruit jars will always be an integral part of what we are, how we think and what we do.

In a strange twist of sorts Paul feels extremely good that many of the rare, scarce, uncommon and hard to find Aussie jars he prized are now being repatriated back Down Under and to good homes. Some Aussies were complaining that Americans were buying all of their jars. In fact, he told me that New Zealand will not even allow fruit jars to be sold out of the country now. He happens to have one of the finest NZ collections around (on par with his Aussie jars) and case in point is his jars are the only ones showing up for sale right now. Yet he laments the fact that



there's no real knowledge of the true scarcity and historical significance of them and because of that fact they don't garner a lot of money despite many of them being almost impossible to find.

Paul's advice to newer collectors is simply to "follow your heart." Go ahead and make a "rainbow" of jars on your shelf if that's what tickles your fancy.

In talking with Paul I came away realizing that although he's a complicated person in many respects, he's also just a simple guy who like many of us other collectors jumped head long into the hobby and never

looked back. Paul read at one time that there is a direct positive correlation between intellect and collecting something no matter what it is. So maybe in retrospect I can truthfully say it's within all probability that us fruit jar folk are definitely smarter than a five year old after all.



Paul's homemade purpling box during a rare snowfall in the Houston, TX area during Christmas 2004

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*A jarrific place to share and learn*

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Green soda bottle with applied color label: Kerr salutes The Midwest Antique Fruit Jar and Bottle Club Indianapolis, Indiana July 4, 1982. Alex Kerr was owner of the Kerr Glass Mfg. Co. (maker of fruit jars), and he was a prominent fruit jar collector and supporter of the hobby.

## Announcements

- Our next club meeting will be June 13th at Minnetrista in Muncie, Indiana. Please bring Figurals (or figures depicted on jars and bottles) for Show and Tell.
- The Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors (the national bottle club) will have their National Show in Wilmington, Ohio on August 6th to 8th, 2010. For more information, contact show chairman: Jamie Houdeshell, P.O. Box 57, Haskins, Ohio 43525, phone: 419-722-3184, email: JHBotle@hotmail.com
- Greg Spurgeon's next **North American Glass** auction will open June 21st: <http://www.gregspurgeon.com/auction>
- Marianne Dow tells us that the Findlay Antique Bottle Club has a new website: <http://finbotclub.blogspot.com/>
- The Ball Jar Collectors Community Center (BJCCC) is located at this site: <http://balljarcollectorscommunitycenter.yuku.com/>
- Have some spare time? Give Norm Barnett a call, he would love to hear from you: 317-738-3232

