

More than likely you're already a collector

This is the first installment of a new weekly column about collecting that I hope will be both entertaining and useful for readers.

Each week I will present information about collecting. I also plans to print some questions from readers, along with responses from me.

I will cover what types of items are being collected, how to build a collection, how to sell, what is valuable, how to spot a fake and many other topics.

The fascinating truth about collecting is that most everyone is a collector, whether they realize it or not. You may know someone who for years has collected matchboxes, masks or even magnets. Possibly your mother has 60 magnets on her refrigerator door. Maybe your friend has 20 masks from throughout the world on his wall.

They are all indeed collectors, because those masks or magnets mean something to the person who

Collecting!



By
Jeff Figler

owns them. These people are not like serious art collectors, but people who collect things such as vintage movie posters or record albums are still collectors.

Here is a brief list of what is being collected today: coins, lunch boxes, books and Bibles, postcards, fountain pens, sheet music, playing cards, autographs, dolls, Disney items, baseballs and milk bottles.

If none of the above interests you, there are still many other options because nowadays collec-

tions truly span the spectrum. A recent publication, "Men and Collections" by Brian Jenner, features stories about people who collect such obscure items as signposts, sugar packets, military vehicles, lawn mowers, shoes, valves and rulers. But that is what makes it interesting — you create your own boundaries and rules.

There is not an exact date when the collecting craze mushroomed, but ever since the late 1950s and into the 1960s, people have been attracted to items of the past, to trivia. Television shows like "Antiques Roadshow" and "Jeopardy" have cashed in on peoples' nostalgic craze about the past.

People were amazed when they heard about a Honus Wagner baseball card selling for more than \$1 million dollars. Some wondered if the baseball card collection that their mother threw out years ago might have contained a Wagner card. What if? What if? How about the person who took apart a picture

frame only to find an original copy of the Declaration of Independence. If he was so lucky, why can't you be?

Collect because you want to have fun. Sure, collections can be used as investments, but enjoy what you are doing. After you have had a hard day at the office, walk into your house and look at a few collectibles on your mantel. Your attitude might quickly improve.

So each week when you read this article, let your creative juices flow. I will answer questions, but keep in mind that I don't want to be involved in any domestic disputes about your favorite collectible toys. After all, I need to fight my own battles with my wife over my collections. But I do have some leverage — my wife collects witches and Ginny dolls.

Jeff Figler, a noted collector, can be reached by e-mail at jml1018@sbcglobal.net.