



The M&M'S® Dispenser

Volume 24, Issue 2

October, 2022

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MINNESOTA



2022 ANNUAL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

M&M's Collectors Club 2022 Convention Minneapolis, Minnesota



The 24th M&M'S® Collectors Club Convention was held in Minneapolis, Minnesota September 26-28, 2022.

This year, we had members from Canada and Australia join us. We had 10 people who were attending their first convention. Our hotel was an Embassy Suites near the Mall of America, which provided breakfast and happy hours every day. Registration packets and Convention t-shirts were handed out on Sunday night. After everyone had their name badges, gifts and room signs, we were ready to start our 2022 Convention.

Continued Pages 3 - 18

The convention started off on Monday with our Welcome Party. We introduced ourselves and played some rounds of LCR. If you were lucky enough to win, some of the prizes were: ice cream bowls, trays and spoons and a cookie jar that is one of the first items to have the Characters with their "new look". Thanks go to Michele Nelson for picking out not just 1, but 2 delicious cakes. We had the baked, M&M'S® Munchums available for everyone to try. To get to know each other better, and to get some good newsletter pictures, we kicked off a 'picture scavenger hunt' where groups had to take pictures of various scenarios during the convention. We have some very talented and funny members! We ended up having some great pictures and videos. If you haven't, feel free to post those pictures in our facebook group.

On Monday night, we learned a lot about Australian candy thanks to the things that Anne Davis came up with that helped her table win our "Candy from A to Z" game. I think a room full of judges is much better than just me! Everyone received a sparkly Character diamond painting kit. Karen Hawkes brought us Honeycomb M&M'S® from Australia to try. At the end of the night, the fencepost Character centerpieces were given out.

One of the perks of going to a city with an M&M'S WORLD® store is a visit to the store where they open just for us. This year, the Mall of America M&M'S WORLD® opened on Tuesday morning from 8:00 to 10:00 AM for our members only. We were treated to breakfast, fun pictures, Minnesota-branded items and discounts on merchandise. All of the employees at the store were helpful and great to work with.

On Tuesday we had a silent auction with all of the tables filled with items to bid on. Then later that night, we had a pizza buffet dinner & definitely showed our true colors... At each table, baskets of prizes were unveiled. Members were given a few minutes to study them and then they were covered up and everyone had to write down what they could remember. The person who remembered the most items at each table, won a prize. Then we played a game where if you met certain criteria, you got to steal the prizes from each other - Of course, in the end, everyone got at least 1 of the prizes.



It was good timing that Mars announced the addition of their new Purple character during our convention (the announcement was originally to be on 9/13/2022). New merchandise is not expected until next year. Our business meeting was at noon on Wednesday. We discussed club elections and next year's convention. Then it was time for our live auction - which lasted nearly 4 hours. There were many great items to be won! We took our group picture before our Farewell Banquet. We played more games and gave out more prizes. Jo Ann Bellamy won our club-wide raffle. Carmen Williams currently has the t-shirt for traveling the furthest. There were drawings for the store displays donated by Mars and the table centerpieces which were made by Marla Rivera. And then it was time to pack all of our goodies into cars (or jam-packed suit cases) and head home.

Our convention is a great opportunity to obtain items from other countries. Some of the registration packet items and prizes were from Australia (movie theater caps – Thanks to Doris Montesin / socks – Thanks to Bob & Karen Hawkes) Europe (London dispensers) and China ("beach towels" / lunch bags / blankets). While room hopping (when we aren't doing activities, we are shopping in each other's rooms), members were able to buy items from Canada, Australia, Europe and Hong Kong. This is also a good way to rehome those duplicate items you get during the year.

Thank you to all the members who attended and all of the members that helped behind the scenes to make this a great convention! It is our members that make our club and conventions so much fun!

See you next year! - Carolyn

The Election / Nominating Committee

The Election / Nominating Committee did not receive any volunteers for new board members for 2022-23. Therefore the current Board Members will retain their positions as discussed.

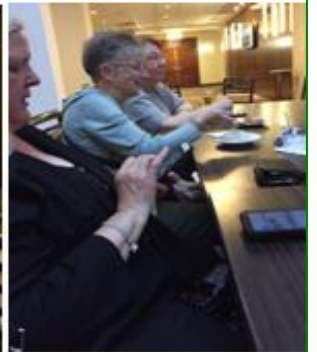
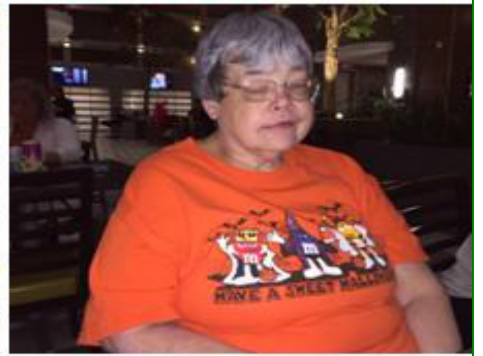
As of November 1, 2022 Nominations are closed. We would like to thank The Election / Nominating Committee for their service. **Your current board members are:**

President	Jo Ann Bellamy	joann.bellamy@att.net
Vice President	Libby Dixon	elizabethdixon@cox.net
Secretary	Ralph Corner	colacorner@windstream.net
Treasurer	Carolyn McAlarney	Pprincess@aol.com
Senior Trustee	Greg Brown	
Trustee	Sara Landis	slandis1997@yahoo.com
Trustee	Rose Hudson	rvh1946@ptd.net

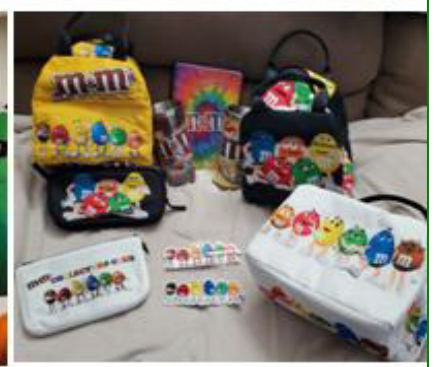


THANK YOU! To all the members who provided me with convention pictures and other information for this newsletter: Carolyn McAlarney, Sandy Bantz, Jo Ann Bellamy, Jackie & Dan Blindauer, Greg & Vickie Brown, Anne Davis, Libby Dixon, Melissa Eller, Jill Flynn, Rose & Dennis Hudson, Sara Landis, Michele Nelson, Sheila Mansfield, Maryann & Chuck Ramono, and Wanda Taylor.

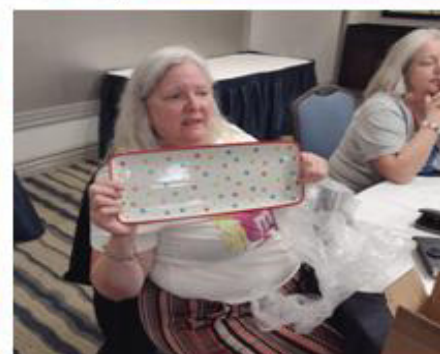
HOTEL MEET & GREET HAPPY HOUR



REGISTRATION, T-SHIRTS, PACKET ITEMS



WELCOME PARTY, INTRODUCTIONS, GAMES, PRIZES, CLUB CAKE



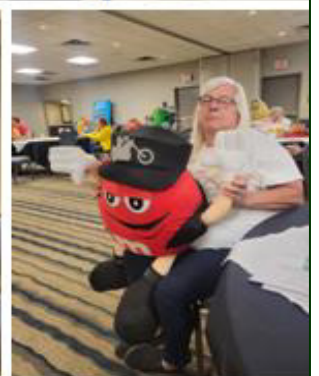
WELCOME PARTY CONTINUED FEATURING DIAMOND ART & PRIZES







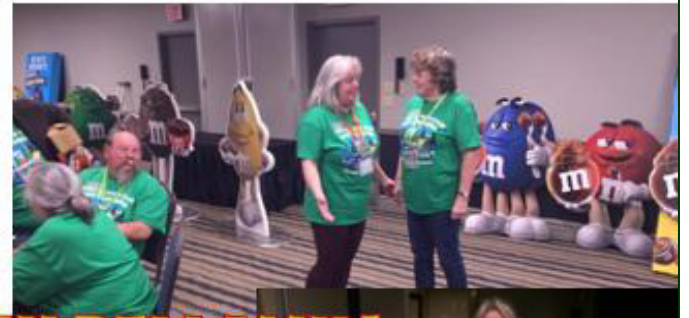








2022 CLUB WIDE RAFFLE WINNER!

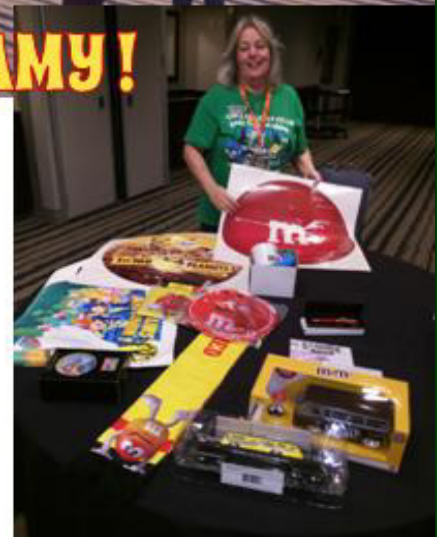


CONGRATULATIONS JO ANN BELLAMY!



THANK YOU CAROLYN!

ANOTHER GREAT CONVENTION!



**NICE WORK ON THE
CENTERPIECES MARLA!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
HELP TO OUR CLUB!**



**CONGRATULATIONS
CARMEN! FURTHEST
DISTANCE TRAVELED!**







ROOM HOPPING EVERY DAY!



IN THE NEWS! MINNESOTA

LOCAL • STATE • REGION



M&M's lovers stood with 4-foot-tall figures they won at auction during the 24th Annual M&M's Collectors Club Convention in Bloomington.

SWEET TREATS, SWEET FRIENDS



Carmen Williams of Las Vegas tried on an M&M's jacket up for auction Wednesday at the Bloomington convention.

These international fans have one small thing in common: M&M's.

By JAMES WALSH • jwalsh@startribune.com

Sure, Richard Stern said, it started with liking M&M's. The milk chocolate — "Don't call them plain!" — are his favorites. He used to keep a big bag in his desk at work, where co-workers gathered in the afternoon to snack.

But it was one of these co-workers who helped this fandom go far beyond the candy. One day, she gave Stern a smiling M&M's figurine. From that day 20 years ago, the Pennsylvania man became a collector.

"For some reason, she thought I liked the character," he said, before admitting that

he has, indeed, come to like the characters. "Collecting starts out because they're just funny. Even just standing there, or on the commercials, they're usually pretty amusing."

It has, he admitted, become so much more. His collection could easily fill a large bedroom. On Wednesday, he was joined by 50 or so other people, many wearing various forms of M&M's clothing, at the 24th Annual M&M's Collectors Club Convention at the Embassy Suites in Bloomington.

Surrounded by tables stacked with

• M&M's has 88 jackets, puzzles, toys, lamps, candy dispensers, backpacks, bedsheets — all featuring the Blue, Red, Yellow, Orange, Green and Brown M&M's characters — many acknowledged their love might just border on obsession.

"Does it seem a little crazy?" asked Vickie Brown, who lives in Ohio with her husband, Greg. They met at an M&M's collectors convention. They got married 19 years ago at M&M's World in Las Vegas.

"Yeah," she laughed. "Maybe."

Carolyn McAlarney, M&M's Collectors Club treasurer, said the club began in 1998 with eight to 10 people who'd found a common affection for M&M's stuff. Now, more than 100 folks attend the convention. This year is smaller, she said, due to

fuel prices and spotty flight schedules. More than 15,000 members belong to the club's Facebook page.

McAlarney of Kansas City, Kan., said she missed the first three conventions. None since. "We will mostly have fun, play games, network. Get to know each other. A lot of the things that come out in one part of the country don't come out in others," she said, adding that people fill their hotel rooms with merchandise to sell or trade. "We call it room-hopping. People go room to room with their arms full of stuff."

The most common pieces in members' collections, McAlarney said, are the simple dispensers that came out in the '90s. And the rarest? "Probably store displays. Things that you can't just buy. Things you need to be sneaky about, buy the store manager for three months," she said.

"People have a route. They check the trash cans. You beg, borrow or steal."

McAlarney has approximately 10,000 M&M's items filling her basement, she said. She tried keeping an inventory on a spreadsheet but gave up.

"It got overwhelming. You didn't want to know how much I have."

Karen Hawkes from Adelaide, Australia, said she's lost count of how many conventions she's attended. But she flew for more than 30 hours to attend this one "because they're my friends."

Hawkes said she and her husband became collectors after a long-ago trip to America took them to a flea market — where they found a cheery M&M's dispenser.

"And we thought, how cute is that smiling face?" she said. "It just makes you happy."

Hawkes too has lost count of the number of items in her collection. She has thousands, from all over the world — Orlando, Singapore, Hong Kong.

The club, the conventions, the collections. It's all meant to be fun, Hawkes said. All meant to foster friendship. Happiness.

"Isn't that the ideal?" she said.

James Walsh • 612-673-7428

Collecting memorabilia – and friendships

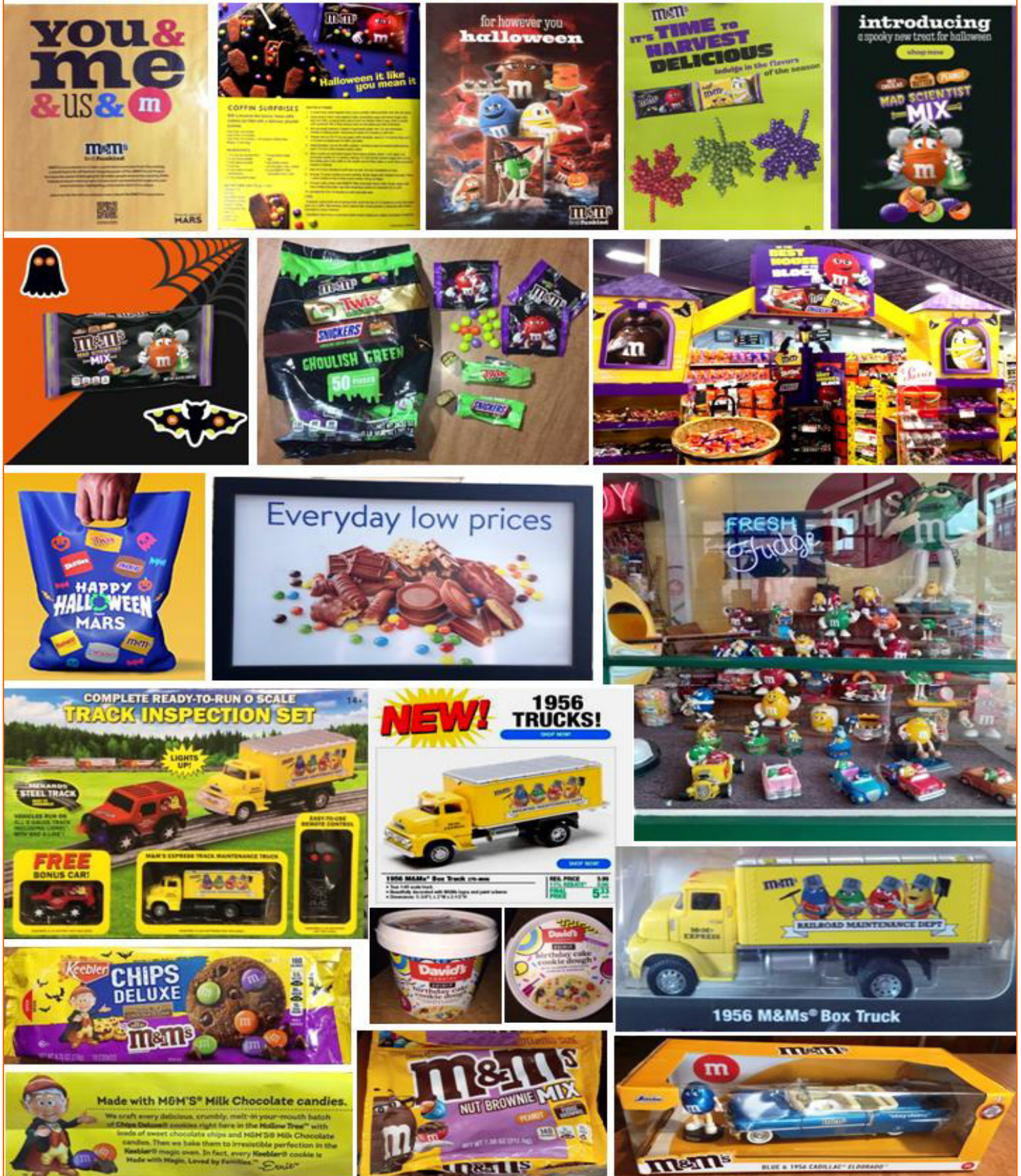
"A lot of the things that come out in one part of the country don't come out in others."

Carolyn McAlarney, M&M's Collectors Club treasurer

Life imitated art as Dennis Taylor of Roswell, Ga., wheeled around an M&M's figure up for auction Wednesday in Bloomington.

NOTE: I have attached this local news article from Carolyn as a separate file with the newsletter in the email so you can print it for your collection.

HALLOWEEN DISPLAYS, CANDY, ADS, MENARDS TRAIN ITEMS & MORE



L-R, Row 1: Various Ads, Row 2: Halloween Candy and Display. Row 3: Halloween Recycle, Walmart Gas Pump Ad, Toy/Candy Store Window in Gettysburg, PA. Row 4: Menards Train Accessories. Row 5: Keebler Chips Deluxe Halloween Cookies, David's Cookie Dough. M&M'S® Nut Brownie Mix, Jada M&M'S® Brand Blue Character and matching Blue Cadillac Eldorado Car.

How Do You Recycle All Those Halloween Candy Wrappers?

The candy company is restocking its free Trick-or-Treat candy wrapper recycling bags.

October 27, 2022 By: Amy Reiter

As you sit in front of a woefully empty trick-or-treat bag with a pile of bereft-of-their-contents candy wrappers heaped high in front of you and a shamefully satisfied look on your face, environmental concerns about throwing those wrappers in the trash may not rank at the very top of the list of things you're thinking about, but they probably deserve a place on there somewhere.

Most wrappers from the 600 million pounds of candy purchased in the United States each Halloween season end up in landfills, thanks to the inadequacies of curbside recycling programs, research indicates. Mars Wrigley – the giant behind candy-bag staples such as Twix, Snickers, M&M's and Skittles – it is now offering a solution to the trash problem this Halloween.

Mars has teamed up with Rubicon Technologies, a digital waste and recycling solutions firm, to tackle wrapper waste with specially designed, recyclable trick-or-treat bags. An expansion of Rubicon's existing Trick-or-Trash program, the collaboration is providing Halloween fans with the bags for free.

Each bag features a prepaid postage stamp and simple three-step instructions: Use it to collect your Halloween candy. Once you've eaten your candy (which, if you're like us, won't take long), put all the emptied wrappers back in the bag. Then seal the bag full of wrappers, drop it in a USPS box or at the post office, and send it off to be properly recycled for future use.

The bag features an attractive candy-covered design and is itself made from renewable, raw, recyclable bioplastic.

"Mars, and our iconic line-up of brands, put the consumer at the heart of all we do, especially during our biggest moments like Halloween," Tim LeBel, chief Halloween officer and president of sales at Mars Wrigley, says in a press release. "This year, our Halloween leadership highlights Mars' commitment to a healthy planet by providing a simple way to minimize packaging waste with the Mars and Rubicon Trick or Trash bags."

Rubicon Chairman and CEO Nate Morris says his company shares Mars a commitment to sustainable solutions "We know that working with a variety of partners across industries is essential to keeping as much waste out of landfills as possible and we are proud to collaborate with Mars, a global leader in the Halloween season and one who demonstrates a strong commitment to protecting our environment," Morris adds.

So how can you get your hands on one of these free recycling bags so you can anticipate feeling virtuous even as you scarf down a bazillion bite-size chocolate bars? The first drop of Trick or Trash bags made available online in early October sold out in just one day. A second drop, earlier this week, sold out in less than an hour. But fear not! A Mars Wrigley spokesperson tells Food Network the company is readying another batch of bags to drop on Thursday, October 27. Yup ... sweet!

A precise time has not yet been disclosed, so definitely keep checking Halloween.Mars.com if you want to snag a free bag.



Melissa & Marissa Eller



Rick Stephan



Jackie & Dan Blindauer



Ob-wan Kanobi
Dennis Hudson

HALLOWEEN - Several Club Members posted they were taking part in Halloween Fun! Melissa & Marissa Eller, Jackie & Dan Blindauer, and Rose & Dennis Hudson all participated in Trunk or Treat. Dennis also appeared as Ob-wan Kanobi. Rick Stephan dressed up as the M&M'S® Brand Red Character.



HUN, I Just Hope I Remembered Everything!

I may have over packed - Rose

With the all airline problems especially lost luggage, I volunteered to take two tubs of merchandise in my truck for Rose and Dennis Hudson to the convention for trading in their room. I was to pick them up at the airport on Sunday before. Rose said that she had a lot to bring. So on Sunday I get their text message saying they were close to arriving at the airport. I have a crew cab truck and was 85% empty. When they landed she called with the gate information and said Dennis has his carryon and is with a cart of her luggage and where to meet them. My sister and I took off to the airport. Upon arriving, I couldn't believe all the stuff she brought in addition to the two tubs I brought! Dennis appeared tired and wore out. After getting their luggage loaded, they were both hungry so we went to the worst McDonalds in the whole Midwest! No one could

speak English and their service was unbelievable! It was a story in itself! But after laughing so much with all the things that happened, we celebrated Rose's birthday with a quick trip downtown Minneapolis on our way to the hotel to see the statue of Mary Tyler Moore where she was filmed throwing her hat in the air, and going by her make-believe-apartment shown on the TV show as well. The exaggerated photo above of Dennis reminds me of all the fun we had in that short time period together.

If you have never been to a club convention, please try to go! One of the fun things about driving to conventions is you can visit places along the way. My sister and I stopped in Le Claire, Iowa to see the Picker's Store, then headed to Walnut Grove, MN to see the museum and areas where Laura Ingalls Wilder lived and wrote about in her books which led to the Little House on the Prairie TV Series. On our way home, we also went to Peppin, WI where Laura was born, to see their museum. It was a great trip sightseeing, seeing everyone, and talking about our collections!

