

"small talk"

official newsletter of Club Olszewski, Inc.
P. O. Box 29067 * Parma, OH 44129-0067



ISSUE 9

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H A P P Y 2nd B I R T H D A Y !

Starting our third year of "uniting Olszewski FANS", we'll let you in on a little secret - you FANS are wonderful! When it comes time for renewals you rejuvenate our spirit by writing to us. Every time we open an envelope we're anxious to read all the comments, even if it's from Tom C. with just, "HEY! I appreciate your hard work." Elaine L. had us laughing when she sent us her joke, "How so you know a true Olszewski fan? They spell Olszewski without hesitating." We worry when we haven't heard from you in awhile. Linda J. where are you??? Our new fans have been great in responding to Bob's inquiry and sending us their picture. (DO WE HAVE YOURS?) We will no longer be a secret society, we have added the address on our newsletters and changed the format of our renewal forms as suggested by you.

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The Club photo for this coming year is creatively different from other years. It's our Honorary, Bob, in his backyard in Camarillo. Bob commissioned Eva to take some black and white photos of himself. Acquainting herself with the new camera, Eva captured "Mr. Green Jeans" and sent them along to us. Thanks Eva! Selection of just one photo was very hard and Jacci came up with collage idea. Clockwise left to right you have our artist: 1) As typical "Gardener Bob." 2) Sweeping around the backyard. 3) Appearing as "Hollywood Bob." 4) Holding a box of seed packets Bob purchased. They are a grouping of the same flowers from Monet's Gardens in Giverney. These flowers were Monet's inspiration and Bob feels these seeds will grow to inspire him. Watch for this in his work.

This year's renewal gift is one which we feel is most apropos for our members. This magnilens is great to carry in your wallet. It comes in handy when checking out trademarks or to just take a closer look at the minis. We have found many stores don't carry a magnifying glass. Not only is this a fun gift, but a useful one as well! Sorry to tempt you other members, but fans joining in the month of April are always the first to receive the club's goodies. The rest of you have to wait for your 1992/3 renewal time! [The first one or two digits of your membership number indicate renewal month]

Thanks to all for your continuing support!

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3/4/92 Phone Call From Bob

"I just gave David the book 'Lust For Life' by Irving Stone, the biographical novel about Vincent Van Gogh. The book's main source was Van Gogh's three volumes of letters to his brother, Theo. I read it when I was 17. David is 16 now and I thought it's time for him to read this. The wonderful thing about this novel is the letters to Theo about his work - it gives you a sense of who the man really was.

I recently reread the last three Fan Club newsletters and said to myself, 'My gosh, what we're doing is just like the letters to Theo.' There's an awful lot of information in the phone calls. I think the collector can really see the art of it and the intent as to where I'm going. You're not only getting an update, but you get a sense of my growth and the direction I'm going in on a quarterly basis.

I wanted to go back and see just how telling this was and it's very telling. In the July 1991 issue of *small talk* I had just come back from the convention and it states, 'it gave me a lift' - between the lines you knew there was something wrong. This just lifts right off the pages. I was returning to the Studio with a real press for quality and I even say in the newsletter, 'to do the things for the right reasons'. I was beginning to reassess the whole direction we were going in. The heck with the manufacturing, I'm going to do this for the artistic reasons which is where I started out. The self portrait was my way of giving something back and I really appreciate the support. My comment about the Nativity was, 'I don't care what they say, it'll be done when it's done.'

In the September 1991 issue, I'm coming back and saying, 'I really appreciate the support and I'm going to return the gratitude with the quality of the work.' MAJOR LANDMARKS in the Studio's direction are: Too many figurines, cutting back production, zero inventory and M. I. Hummel production staying in the US.

You'll note in the December phone call I'm finally shifting back to my own work. I'm working at home, getting back to my old self artistically and you're going to see it in the work. I no longer felt responsible for the business Studio. Let me just add, the reorganization is going well and I believe we have returned to the early Studio attitudes.

After giving David 'Lust For Life', I got to thinking about the similarities between the book and *small talk*. They're both simple, very direct, not flashy - just honest. I'm so pleased with the way this is going. I think these newsletters are real special, more special than we may even realize.

We're really going to have to separate MY work from the licensed products. I'm going to be the creative force at the Studio and I have some great ideas for the licensed minis. Other people will be carving these and I want my collectors to be informed of this. It's not good, it's not bad, it's just the way it is. This is what we've worked for and it'll have a major impact not only on me personally, but on the work as well.

Let's talk about where I am right now. I've been carving at home since approximately last March. I have just completed the Poultry Seller and you'd be interested to learn an apprentice has worked on it approximately 40 hours. I put in another 115 hours carving time on top of that. How long did the pre-Goebel take me? If I were to guess, I would say probably about 40 hours. What I wanted to do is show the difference between the original and this one, 13 years later. It was a tremendous experience. I think collectors really don't want to miss owning this figurine. I'm not trying to scare you, but get your orders in on this piece. Remember, we have zero inventory. The Poultry Seller's going to be released in the June shows.

With going back to an artistic based Studio, you're going to see the difference in the work and pricing. I think the pricing under the old management was very confusing. We mean to bring it into line. One of the three pigs should not cost the same as the Poultry Seller. We are going to stratify the pricing of the Olszewskis carved by me and painted here in the Studio. The retail on these will be between \$120 and \$190, depending on the carving time in them, the coloration and the molding problems on them. We're not trying to overprice them, we're just trying to put the fair price they should be.

I can't wait for the Cherubs. After 6 months, they finally came out of the mold. We are just doing the analysis of the painting on them and they're going to start into production. Availability should be summertime.

Someone called to ask why the features on Mary and Joseph are so slight. I gave him a real good answer. When I did the Nativity, I wanted to elevate it to a very high level. I wanted them to look like porcelain. I could approach this two ways, either paint them very realistically like the Wildlife series or I could paint them and romanticize them more like porcelain in the Historical series. This is a very spiritual event. I didn't want hard looking features on Mary and Joseph, just soft. I simplified the robing because I wanted them to look simple and spiritual. I'm working on the kings right now. They have much more robing and detail. I wanted them to look rich next to Mary and Joseph. Their features will be more severe. Even the eyes need a lot of thought. We used pencil on the eyes for Mary and Joseph because if you do them harsh, they will stand out too much and look strange. I could have done decal eyes like on the Disney pieces, but I played them down intentionally. The kings will have darker skin as I want them to look as though they've been traveling in the sun for months. Their eyes will be deeper set and you'll see more features in their faces. I'm working very hard to have the kings done before the June release. The king I finished first has about 80 hours of carving time. Right now I'm on the second king, he's standing. At this time I call them the kneeling king, the bending king and the standing king. The closer they get to Christ, they start to kneel.

In the next four years, there's going to be roughly 5 displays a year and approximately 18 figurines for everything. For the Olszewskis, the average will be 2 displays and 7 figurines a year which is my capacity for this kind of detailed work.

How are things with Goebel? Goebel has been FANTASTIC! They went all over the world, looked at other studios for producing miniatures, they looked at other sculptors and said, 'We've got the best.' One of the consultants came to look inside the Studio and thought production was very sound and said, 'This is not a manufacturing operation, this is an ART Studio.' I think it is very healthy for us and for people to understand who we are and what our limitations are. In long terms, I see the Studio going on and producing the finest miniature figurines in the world.

Guess what? This is very significant! I had a museum director come visit my home. He would like to put together a retrospective of my work to go on a traveling tour across the United States lasting upwards of two years. To have a museum director come out and reconfirm what I have been saying for 12 years really makes me feel quite good. The full details will be given, should this come into being.

Last night I couldn't sleep and was thinking about the Olszewski plaque. What's happening now is I'm more focused on art and less on the business. Special things are going to happen that we necessarily wouldn't do before. I'd like the plaque to say 'Art of Miniature Olszewski' then the Goebel mark at the bottom. Summer Days will be featured on it. I think what I'm going to do on the first edition is

underneath the name Olszewski, I'm going to hand sign and date each piece and it will be a sealed signature under the finish coat. I want to do this because I feel with the major upheaval we have gone through in the direction of the business, this comes back and says this is an art studio.

I want to put a stop to the rumor that the self portrait has been made open stock to the dealers. THIS IS NOT TRUE. We had a lot of dealers call and say, 'Gee, I've been your dealer for 10 to 12 years and I can't even get it. We collect the pieces.' During the time it'll be out, I may only see 50 to 60 dealers. What we did was offer our PCS accounts a one time offer of two pieces which I think is fair - so it's NOT open stock. You can't offend people who have put eight to ten thousand dollars worth of your work in their shops.

I did something I've been wanting to do for years - I took pictures of the Poultry Seller being carved every day. No one has ever watched a figurine being carved. When I got to a major stopping point I would photograph it and we're transposing them into slides. This will be my main focus at my appearances this year.

I had a wonderful Christmas, but put off the lamp thing because I'm not certain what I'm going to do in that office. Right now I'm using it as a research studio. I'm carving out in the painting studio since it has more light. I got some great shirts and a new display case for my figurines. I really enjoyed Meredith coming home over the holidays, it was the nicest month I had with her in years. Her first semester's grades are definitely better than mine were.

I just talked with Mom the other day and she continues to show up negative on the cancer. I think she's really put it behind her and is doing well.

As a footnote, I'd like to include the museums I've been to recently. David and I went to see the exhibit on Mexico, a George Bellows show and an exhibit on gold snuff boxes for the last 200 years at the LA County Museum. On the way home from the exhibits I asked to hear what he likes and hear his descriptions. He is really moving toward the feeling in the work and will be his own person. Last Saturday about 8 in the morning here comes David. Can you imagine a sophomore in high school up at that time? He went up into the canyon behind us with a sketch pad under his arm. I was so thrilled! When David came back, we went over his drawings and talked about them. It was a real rewarding experience.

Two weekends ago I went to the Metropolitan Museum in New York and saw the Stuart Davis show. Eva and I went up to the Santa Barbara Museum last weekend to see an exhibit on 100 years of photography in CA. There was also a display of a fellow artist of mine when I was painting, William Dole, who died in 1983. It brought memories of days when we had exhibits at the same shows. It was really a fun feeling to see his work at this museum, with a catalog on it and everything.

Do these visits to museums influence my artwork? Oh tremendously! What happens is you're always comparing yourself to the best of the best. You're trying to not only improve the technical quality of the work, but also the spiritual side of it. Collectors are just beginning to see the impact of the museums on my work.

I'd like to close with my best personal regards to all my fans. I'm so grateful for the trust people have in my integrity. They weathered through this bad time with me. We are through the woods on the direction of the Studio. They don't know how much I appreciate their support."

ATTENTION CLUB MEMBERS ---- BOB NEEDS YOU!

This is the first time Bob has asked our club for any "media" blitz. While speaking with Bob, our mouths dropped when he related Goebel does NOT want to release the mountains to complete the KinderWay series. Bob has always wanted the ALPS as they are a softening element and feels they put the whole village into perspective. The model work is already done and Bob thinks artistically it would be an incomplete statement without the ALPS. Get out your pens NOW and write to Goebel, Inc., c/o Goebel Plaza, Route 31, P.O. Box 11, Pennington, NJ 08534-0011.

-Thanks-

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There were about 700 letters to Theo in "Lust For Life." That means we have 691 newsletters to go. Line up those margaritas! There are many similarities between Van Gogh and Bob. A few of them are: Both lived through hard times; they like to paint from life experiences and capture the feeling in painting or in Bob's case - also sculpting; Vincent used pencil, charcoal and oil whereas Bob used these plus miniaturized his work; and both compare themselves to other great artists.

Bob, just don't cut any ears off. OK?

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"It's better than Home Shopping." It's the Club Olszewski bargain store: Men's or Ladies logo watch (\$35), bumper sticker (\$1.75), tokens (2 for \$3.00) and back issues of "small talk" (\$2.00 @) All of these items include shipping and handling.

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Abracadabra Bob will appear!

4/4 - 4/5:
International Collectible Expo
Meadowlands Convention Center
Secaucus, NJ

4/10 - 4/12:
"The Sound of Hummels"
Rosemont/O'Hare Expo Center
Rosemont, IL

4/24: (2 & 7 pm)
Present Peddler
10220 SW Nimbus Av. rm K-10
Portland, OR 97223

4/25: (11 am & 2 pm)
Kathi's Import Chalet
3971 S. Broadway
Englewood, CO 80110

4/26: (2 pm)
Howell Gift Gallery
949 Lomas Sante Fe Dr.
Solana Beach, CA 92075

5/8: (2 & 7 pm)
Happy Pasttime
1800 Farmenter St., #102
Middleton, WI 53562

5/9: (11 am & 2 pm)
European Imports
Oak Mill Mall
Niles, IL 60648

5/10: (2 pm)
Carol's Gifts & Collectibles
125 South Van Buren
Nashville, IN 47448

5/22: (2 & 7 pm)
Canal Town Country Store
Greece Town Mall
Rochester, NY 14626

5/23: (11 am & 2 pm)
Lauchnors Gifts & Collectibles
7150 Hamilton Blvd RT 22
Trexlerstown, PA 18087

5/24: (2 pm)
Little Elegance
1214 Willowbrook Mall
Wayne, NJ 07470

6/13 - 6/14:
Hummel Expo '92 - Dayton, OH
Miller's Gift Gallery
(513) 456-4151

6/20: (11 am & 2 pm)
Carol's
17601 S. Pioneer Blvd.
Artesia, CA 90701

7/17 - 7/18:
International Collectible Expo
Century Center
South Bend, IN

miniaturely yours,

Wally
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Jacqui

CLUB OLSZEWSKI, INC. BYLAWS

Article I - Name

The name of this club shall be Club Olszewski, Inc.

Article II - Purpose

The purpose of this club is to inform members on the life and miniature figurines of Robert W. Olszewski.

Article III - Membership

Section 1. Club Olszewski membership shall be limited to those having subscribed to the stated purposes of the club.

Section 2. All club members must be individual members in good standing according to bylaw dues. However, their spouses may join for an additional fee.

Article IV - Officers

The officers of this club shall be: President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary.

Article V - Dues

Section 1. Annual dues of members shall be \$12.50, which members pay upon admission.

Section 2. For an additional \$5.00 a year, a member can enroll his/her spouse.

Article VI - Meetings

Meetings shall be determined as to government regulations regarding non-profit organizations.

Article VII - Parliamentary Authority

All meetings of this club shall be governed by parliamentary law.

Article VIII - Amendment

These bylaws may be amended at any meeting of this club by the affirmative vote of a majority.