# The CCI-USA News Chess Collectors International

#### IN THIS ISSUE:

Get ready and make your reservations! The **thirteenth biennial CCI convention** will take place in beautiful Florida in April 30 through May 4, 2008. Check details on page 2 and mark your calendars.

The **fifth Western Hemisphere CCI meeting** took place in beautiful San Francisco in May 25-27, 2007 and was a great success. About 70 CCI members attended two-and-a-half days packed with exhibits, lectures, visits of local collections, social time and a lot of fun. Complete (and entertaining) coverage on pages 4-5 followed by many photos from the various events on page 6.

About 28 members, including delegations from Germany, England and USA attended the September 2007 meeting of the **Italian French** section of CCI. Hosted by Patrice Plain from France, Several photos from the event on page 7.

Amongst the features of our recent Western Hemisphere meeting of CCI in San Francisco, were chess sets by **"contemporary western artists**". Two of our long time CCI members, Laura Sturtz and Douglas Downs, had prominent displays of their work at our meeting. We are proud to provide you with pictures of their chess sets and a bit of their background on pages 8-14.

A long-time CCI member and creator of the Walt Disney Cargo chess set, **Ralph Kent**, has recently has died in Kissimmee, FL at age 68. A tribute to the Disney "imagineer" and "legend" can be found on page 15.

The second part of the **Dr. Jean-Claude Cholet** Collection of Chess Sets will be sold on 30th October 2007 at Christie's. Check details and other announcements on page 2.

**Pieces Wanted**. Check this feature in the Classified Ad section. Perhaps you have the one special chess piece that another CCI member needs to make a set complete.

All this and more are only a few of the benefits of being a CCI member. To make sure that you do not miss out on notices of all these important chess collecting publications and activities, **keep your membership in CCI current** promptly send your dues to your local treasurer. **Western Hemisphere** members, your \$50 dues for 2007 membership are now overdue! It is time to send your 2008 dues. Please mail your check to **Bill Fordney at 106 East Greenbriar Dr., York, PA 17407-1014** 

#### CHESS LINKS:

Interesting collections and chess related information could be found at the following. Note that most also provide additional, related links to many additional chess collections.

CCI International - www.chesscollectors.com CCI France - <u>www.ccifrance.com</u> CCI Italy - <u>www.cci-italia.it</u> Garrick Coleman – <u>www.antiquechess.co.uk</u> Virtual chess - www.xs4all.nl/~chess01 Gene Zelazny - <u>www.zelazny.com</u> Jon Crumiller - www.crumiller.com/jon.htm Remi & Israel Raphaelli – <u>www.ogdir.com/chess</u>

#### UNDER CONSTRUCTION:

Frank Camaratta – <u>www.chessantiques.com</u> Remi & Israel Raphaelli – <u>www.eosef.com/GSC</u>

The future and quality of this publication depends on your contributions. Send comments, notes, reports, articles, photos, stories, websites, etc. via email to Floyd Sarisohn at <u>lichess@aol.com</u> or Israel Raphaelli at <u>chess@ogdir.com</u>.



# Vol. 2007 issue II

### CHESS COLLECTORS INTERNATIONAL RETURNS TO ITS BIRTHPLACE.

In 1984, Dr. George Dean invited a group of about 30 international chess set collectors to Florida to exchange information about their esoteric hobby. From this meeting, Chess Collectors International was born. Since that time we have conducted International Conventions every even year in such cities as London; Munich; New York; Paris; St. Petersburg; Washington D.C.; Vienna; Florence; Philadelphia; Madrid; Berlin and for 2008 we return to Florida.

The U.S.A. members of CCI will host our 13th biennial CCI Convention in Boca Raton, Florida, from April 30 to May 4, 2008. We will be headquartered at the Marriott Hotel in Boca Raton, Florida where we have been successful in arranging a very favorable rate of \$119 per night during our convention.

For the first time we are also coordinating our Convention with the Seniors USA Chess Tournament sponsored by the US Chess Federation. Included in our Convention plans will also be a trip to the US Chess Hall of Fame and Samole Chess Museum in Miami. This is the only public Museum in the world dedicated exclusively to the game of Chess. There will be several chess set displays; our usual "chess fair", seminars and hopefully a chess set auction.

More information and registration forms will be mailed to every CCI member in early December 2007. Put the dates on your calendar now for our biggest and best Convention ever.

If you have suggestions for our program or displays, send them by email to Floyd Sarisohn at Lichess@aol.com

## **CHESS AUCTIONS**

The second part of the Dr. Jean-Claude Cholet Collection of Chess Sets will be sold on 30th October 2007 at Christie's South Kensington. It will be incorporated into the Decorative Objects and Furniture sale, which is part of The Interior sales.

There are 83 lots in the sale, most to be sold with no-reserve. The sale will be available to view on the website and bidding on-line available at www.christies.com (sale code 5198 - lots 704 - 752, and lots 794 - 827).

The sale will open to public viewing on Saturday 27th Oct (10am - 4 pm) Sunday 28th Oct (10am - 4 pm) Monday 29th Oct (9am - 7:30 pm) Tuesday 30th Oct (9am and selective viewing throughout sale, which starts at 10:30am)

Please contact Pippa Green, Specialist, Works of Art & Furniture 00 44 207 389 2760 pgreen@christies.com for further information.□

#### Ancient Chess and the Modern World

We arose early on Thursday, May 24th to leave at 6 AM for JFK airport.

We had already reserved parking on the Internet. At the Bronx-Whitestone Bridge we held our little box against the window. The computer in the gate, identifying a friend, raised the barrier. Its fellow computers in the car drove us through. At the airport a pleasant young woman showed us how to present our sheet with 6 capital letters on it. This computer, evidentially a more literary type, popped out our boarding passes. Lord knows how many computers guided us across the mountains and over water as we made our beautiful approach to San Francisco.

The Palace Hotel is conveniently located in town. When European royalty visited they were surely given large keys attached to small boards. Now we were handed plastic cards which after some trials we inserted in the slot correctly and entered.

No porter carried our luggage: we wheeled it ourselves. Hope was glad to find that we could open the windows.

It being Thursday, no CCI members were visible. We headed immediately for the Museum of Modern Art where a show of Picasso and his influence on American artists was in session. The computer had already warned the Museum of our intent to visit and vouched for our financial reliability. For a snack afterward we were pleased with an old fashioned touch. We were given a number which we displayed on our table by which the waiter identified our order.

Friday was registration. It's always fun to get the bag and the assorted maps, brochures, texts and box of chess imprinted tissues. This year's gift of a backpack has already been commandeered by two grandchildren. In the morning we visited the superb Asian Museum. We bought the catalog and put it on the shelf with those of the Prado, Louvre, Uffizi and other sites of CCI meetings. As soon as we have a chance we intend to look them over. In the afternoon we stayed around the hotel for the pleasurable time of greeting old friends that we see so seldom. The CCI meeting began officially with a dinner at Gordon Biersch Restaurant. The Committee decided that it was really too far for some of us old parties to walk and hired a bus.

Saturday was stupendous day. First I must mention the breakfast, a spectacular display at a stunning price. Starbucks must have checked it out because they put in a shop at the corner where we took our subsequent breakfasts. The lectures were of outstanding quality. Here too, we users of color slides were delighted to see the speed and versatility of the computer driven digitals. Richard Benjamin opened the session with comprehensive viewing of his very varied collection of postcards. We could never have shown so many cards in so many areas using slides. Coleen Schafroth, author of "The Art of Chess" and director of the Marvhill Museum in Goldendale. Washington, followed. This museum is unique in having a substantial display of chess sets on permanent exhibition. Many of the sets have been donated by CCI members. The computer world came into its own in a scholarly presentation by Israel Raphaelli on the mechanics of building a chess web site. Dr. Joseph Wagner spoke on the Beauty of Chess Sets. He included the famed Carl Faberge set which actually now belongs to CCI founder Dr.George Dean. Floyd Sarisohn,



### FIFTH WESTERN HEMISPHERE CCI MEETING, MAY 25-27, 2007

our editor and organizer sans pareil, explained how to identify Japanese sets and showed porcelain sets from his extensive collection.

Speaking of porcelain sets, a bus took us to the delightful home of Bob Bloch Their house stands on a steep hill where you park with wheels turned into the curb. Bob has always specialized in porcelain sets. He says that buying from afar as he generally must do, he can judge quality better in porcelain. We were treated to drinks and delicious canapes as we moved from floor to floor. Bob has one of the few sets of the type given to Russia by Nixon (Cybis). His chess collection is supplemented



by a fine collection of walking sticks. (We don't say 'canes')

Half the group having been at the Mechanics Institute, the group at the Bloch's now traded places and visited this building which houses what is now the oldest chess club in the USA. It takes its origin from the time of the gold rush. We were shown the chess library and the spacious playing room. Marty Levitin played a game with our host and Israel and I played one. I treated the opening too casually and soon

Israel won a pawn. It required his capturing with his queen which then became target along with an attack on his king. At the critical point Caissa, the goddess of chess, offered a well hidden resource. Israel showed that computers are not his only skill and found the saving line, winning the game. One of the pleasures of our ancient game is the post



game analysis. In this the loser is able to claim that the game was actually won and only his failure to move the pieces onto the correct squares thwarted what should have been their destiny.

That evening we had our banquet in the hotel. We, the Levenes, sat with Leland and Judy Levy The Levitins came along and joined us. Would you believe that the next person sit down with us was Jim Lee When Frank Mancuso came over we told him he was one letter away from sitting at our table. The feature of the



evening was a sensational dance performed by four acrobats in two dragon costumes, arranged by Judy Levy.

The chess fair on Sunday offered quite a few original sets by SF artists. Two were by artists whose works are in Lee Levy's collection. The artist was present. We bought a Royal Dalton set from Tony Raynes from the UK and an intriguing piece from Oscar D'Empaire from Venezuela. At the same time there was fine exhibition of sets from the Lee, Dinsmore and Levy collections. A superb Asian set from the Lee collection caught our eye.

> A bus took us to the Bay where we took the fascinating tour of the harbor with a view of Alcatraz and the colony of cormorants that inhabit the islands. A superb luncheon featuring crabs at the San Franciscan Crab restaurant at Fisherman's Wharf brought this most enjoyable meeting to a close.

# FIFTH WESTERN HEMISPHERE CCI MEETING, MAY 25-27, 2007 SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA - Photo Gallery



# CCI CONGRESS FRANCE-ITALY September 2007





Co-coordinator Max D"angelis from



Teures pardenoton Af Glov four celles. The host, Patrice Plain from France

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The Italian delegation



Anna Timochtchouk from Russia and Hope Levene from the USA

# Douglas Downs - Biography

Born and raised in California, he graduated from Whittier College in 1967 and enrolled in Claremont Graduate School to study art. In 1969-70 he moved to Tempe where he was a teaching assistant at Arizona State University in the Art Department. In 1970-71 Downs worked as a craftsman at an art bronze foundry. Since 1971, he has been a full-time professional sculptor. He lives with his wife Anne on the Monterey Peninsula.

Downs's sculptures have been presented to King Karl Gustav XVI and Queen Silvia of Sweden by the Nordic Heritage Museum. Four of his sculptures were presented to King Don Juan Carlos and Queen Donna Sofia of Spain by the Executive Officer of the Bank of America. In 1991, the Sister City Committee of Los Angeles presented the Mayor of St. Petersburg, Russia with a sculpture by Downs.

Collectors throughout the world include: Former Presidents Reagan, Nixon and Carter; Ann Landers, actress Zoe Caldwell, & famous glass-maker Charise Daum. His chess set, Mongols vs. Medieval Europeans was purchased by the Long Island Chess Museum. It was also featured in the Bruce Lee film, "Game of Death."

#### **Art Associations:**

Carmel Art Association since 1981, has also served on its Board of Directors Miniature Artists of America- Elected Artist Member since 1996

#### Awards - partial listing:

1984 – 1<sup>st</sup> Prize for Sculpture, 10<sup>th</sup> Annual National Miniature Show, NM
1985 – Col. Archibald King Memorial Award for Best Sculpture, 52<sup>nd</sup> International Exhibition, Washington, DC
1987 – Juror's Choice Award, 9<sup>th</sup> Annual International Show, Billings, MT
1989 & 90 – 1<sup>st</sup> Prize for Sculpture, 56th & 57<sup>th</sup> Annual International Exhibition of Miniature Painters & Sculptors, Washington, DC
1993 – Best Artwork with a Western Theme, 15<sup>th</sup> Annual International Show, MT
1993 – 1<sup>st</sup> Prize for Sculpture, 19<sup>th</sup> Annual National Miniature Show, NM
1994 & 95 – 1<sup>st</sup> Prize for Sculpture, 61<sup>st</sup> & 62<sup>nd</sup> Miniature Exhibition, Washington, DC
2001 – 1<sup>st</sup> Prize for Sculpture, 18<sup>th</sup> Annual N. American Miniature Show, Baltimore
2002 – Members' Choice Award, 19<sup>th</sup> Annual N. American Miniature Show, Baltimore
2004 – Worldwide Exhibition of Fine Arts in Miniature, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC

#### **Books:**

American Artists of Renown 1981-82

Who's Who in American Art - since 1986

California Art Review; Survey of the State's Leading Artists, 1988

2000 Outstanding Artists & Designers of the 20th Century, 1999

Biographical Encyclopedia of American Painters, Sculptors & Engravers of the United States from

## **Casting Douglas Downs's Sculptures: The Lost-Wax Process**



Molten bronze poured into ceramic shells

The lost-wax method of bronze casting is the amazing process that turns wax into bronze!

Because of its tensile strength, durability, and the wide possibilities of finishes available to the artist, bronze has been used as THE art metal for more than 5000 years. Originally composed of copper with a small amount of tin—nowadays, bronze used for art casting also contains silicon, and traces of magnesium, iron, and lead.

I carve my original sculptures in wax; in order to create a limited edition of bronze sculptures, I take my original waxes and make molds from them. Every sculpture in each edition begins life as a wax being poured into molds. The mold material is so sensitive that it will pick up every detail I sculpted in the original.

I heat the wax to 180 degrees and pour it into the molds. After allowing it to harden, I remove the wax models. Then I carve away the seam lines. Next, the wax models go to the foundry where wax cups are attached to act as gates for the molten bronze.

The models are covered with several layers of ceramic slurry gradually built up to form a shell approximately 1/4 of an inch thick. Then they are heated, which fires the shell and melts out the wax so that bronze can be poured into the empty shells.

A crucible containing molten bronze is removed from the blast furnace and 2000-degree bronze is poured into the ceramic shell. Casting temperatures are critical, since missing the right temperature can ruin the sculpture.

The shell is carefully broken away to reveal the bronze inside. (Every shell is lost as well as every wax.)

I take the raw castings to my shop and finish the bronze by re-sculpting areas where the gates were attached. For this purpose I use high speed air grinders and drills of various sizes. After the finishing is complete, I sandblast with a very fine sand which cleans the sculpture without decreasing the detail.

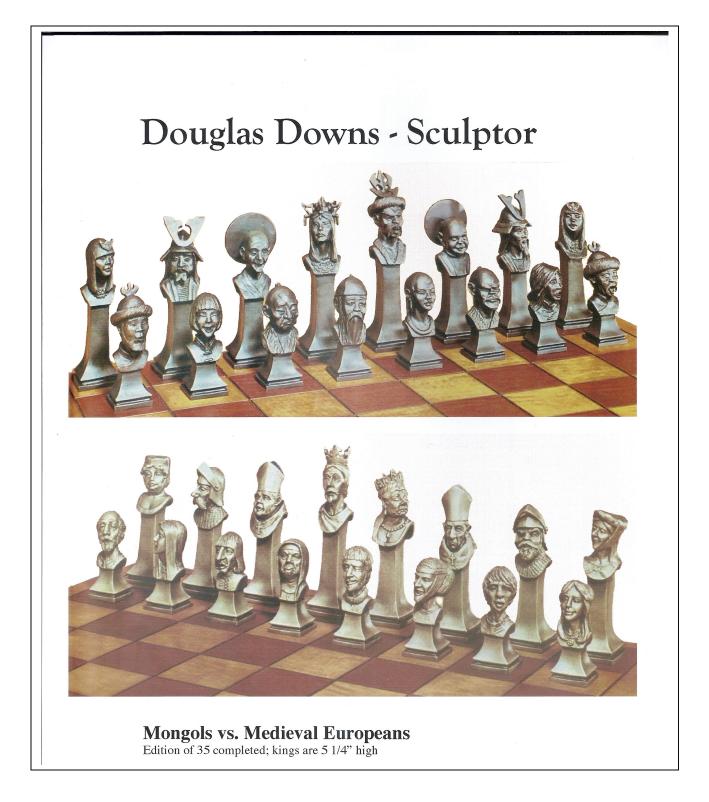
Then I apply a chemical patinas, which react with the surface of the bronze to create a permanent change in color. Last, I apply a protective coating of paste wax.



And at last, the finished work!



The bronze sculptures, glowing orange, begin to cool inside their shells



# Douglas Downs - Sculptor



In portraying the differences between the East and West of the 19th century--I made square bases for the wellmannered Easterners. Their knights are bridled horses; their castles, an English saddle and a sidesaddle.



The free-wheeling Westerners are on round bases, their knights are unbridled mustangs, and the castles are the Vaquero saddle and the stockman's saddle--home to the cowboy.

# East vs. the Wild West

The Western king is a shifty-eyed gambler and the queen, a fun-loving woman who runs a saloon or something less reputable; in contrast to the respectable Eastern king and queen who uphold Victorian standards.

I based the pawns on the 7 deadly sins--lust, pride, gluttony, sloth, greed, envy and anger; and I added fear.

chess set limited to 35 bronzes kings are 5" high



Douglas Downs can be contacted at 408 Alder Sr, Pacific Grove, CA 93950, or via his site at www.douglasdowns.com. □

#### CONTEMPORARY WESTERN ARTIST: LAURA STURTZ

Artist Laura Sturtz has been creating her inventive chess sets since about 1990. She is a multi-faceted artist working in a variety of materials and genres. Her work includes sculpture in ceramic, wood, or metal, jewelry, painting, and drawing. As well as creating her own work, she teaches art classes at Austin Community College and the Art School of the Austin Museum of Art.

Her work is included in international collections and she has received several awards for her chess sets. She regularly participates in exhibitions, showing her chess sets and other artwork. She has displayed her work at a few of the CCI conventions. In the exhibition 'Materials Hard and Soft' in 2006, her Sea-Life Chess Set received a juror's award from Lloyd Herman, founding director of the Smithsonian Institution's Renwick Gallery.

Her chess designs are made from a variety of materials in primarily 3 unique series although a few of her designs defy categorization.

In the 'abstract' series, the shapes of the chess pieces based on formal design elements, are also informed by design elements of a 'standard' Staunton set for easy recognition. The materials used in these sets include various metals which may be cast or fabricated, may include 'found' parts such as copper plumbing pieces, and may also include semi-precious gemstones, or be made of clay.

The painted series is very colorful and designs vary. Most sets have wood pieces and a wood board, but a couple of sets have a canvas board, allowing for portability. Patterns range from 'Southwest geometric' to 'psychedelic' to 'post-Jackson Pollock' and more.

Themes addressed in her 'representative' series have included: ocean life, football, the Southwest, bugs, hand gestures, and others. Most of these sets are limited-edition pieces.

With 32 individually created chess pieces, and a board that may be as complex as the chess pieces, the time Laura spends on developing a set can be extensive. Because of all her other activities, Laura makes a limited number of chess sets, sometimes only one or two sets per year. Her 'to do' list includes a number of 'themed' chess sets, sets with found objects, and other designs. She welcomes special orders and will engage in dialog to create a personalized custom set. Her football set was ordered as gift for a professional football player.

In addition to her set sets, some of her jewelry designs have a chess theme and include earrings, brooches, pendants, and cuff links.

Some of her chess sets and artwork can be viewed at her website: <u>www.io.com/twinck</u>. Her website is a 'work-in-progress' which she hopes to have completely re-done by the end of the summer. Her new address will be: <u>www.artist123.com</u>. You may contact her directly at: <u>twinck@io.com</u>, or 512-282-9480.





## LAURA STURTZ



#### CHESS COLLECTORS INTERNATIONAL 13th biennial CCI Convention

Where: Marriott Hotel, Boca Raton, Florida When: From April 30 to May 4, 2008.

Be There!!! (see page 2 for details)



Sadly, I learned of Ralph's death on the morning of 13 September 2007 from Floyd Sarisohn who asked if I would pen a tribute to him. Joan and I had the honor of meeting Ralph and his wife Linda on a RV trip some years ago. They visited with us in Kissimmee, FL where we were camping. Delightful folks indeed and a very special memory!

Interesting beginnings: By age 10, Ralph transformed the basement of his home into a giant mural of Disney characters ranging from Alice in Wonderland to Cinderella. Fixated on working for Disney, young Ralph sent a letter to Walt Disney, receiving a courteous reply.



A brief chronology of Ralph Kent:

- Born Ralph Kwiatkowski January 28, 1939 in Buffalo, NY—changed his name to Kent because folks could not pronounce his name!
- Attended the University of Buffalo Albright Art School.
- Joined US Army in 1960 where he illustrated military training aids and films.
- Hired by Disney to develop marketing materials for the Jungle Cruise, Enchanted Tiki Room, and more.
- In 1965 Ralph designed the first limited-edition Mickey Mouse watch for adults, which Walt presented to 25 of his top executives.
- In 1971 arrived in Florida.
- In 1979 became Director of Walt Disney Imagineering East overseeing Florida staff support for EPCOT Center and Tokyo Disneyland.
- In 1990 joined the Disney Design Group as a Corporate Trainer, mentoring new artists and creating an extensive reference collection of character model sheets.
- In 2004 Ralph was inducted as a Disney Legend!



Ralph designed a very attractive and large (3-inch pawns; 7-inch kings) Disney chess set. The designs (each a work of art) are incredible!! I am proud to own such a set with all 32 pieces autographed by him.

He also enjoyed woodworking, "I always wanted to be Geppetto" he said.□

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## WINE AND LIQUOR BOTTLES FOR CHESS SETS

Over the years many wine and liquor companies have made bottles or ceramic containers for their products, in the form of chess sets. Amongst the ones we know of are Old Crow, Garnier, Beneagles, Maggio, Vallo and Marie Brizard. Do you know of any others? Would you like to see pictures of these sets in a future issue of CCI-USA? If your response to either of these questions is YES, email your comments to Lichess@aol.com, or send hard copy pictures to Floyd Sarisohn at PO Box 166, Commack, New York 11725.





## CORRECTION

In the last issue of CCI-USA we included a service announcement for collectors interested in chess on stamps. Note that the contact address for information was incorrect. Here is a reprint with the correct email contact:

Collectors interested in chess on stamps can join CSSU by contacting Ray Alexis at chessstuff911459@aol.com. They have a low annual subscription rates and publish a great quarterly entitled CHESSTAMP REVIEW, from which the above article was extracted.□



From: r.van.der.veur To: \* THE CHESS COLLECTORS \*

Our group member Alan Fersht (CPE1991) is going to publish this month his book Jaques Staunton chess sets 1849-1939 (A collectors guide). Read more about it in our group:

http://www.thechesscollectors.com.  $\Box$ 

## eOSEF

Build a web site to display your collection on the Internet - No programming, No complex process, No wait. Do it yourself, in minutes, easily and update anytime you want and from anywhere. All you need is a computer with access to the web and a browser to connect. A good digital camera will help with photos.

eOSEF will host your site, grant you a private web address of your choice and provide you with easy-to-use interface that enables editing site content and customizing it to your likings.

Go to <u>http://www.eosef.com</u> to learn more. Go to <u>http://www.eosef.com/gsc</u> to visit our own site (currently under construction).

For more details, send an email to Israel Raphaelli at <u>iraphaelli@eosef.com</u> and you can get your site up and running in no time. Discounted price for CCI members.

#### THE STORY OF THE KLEENEX BOXES by Bill Fordney

## The Story of the Kleenex Boxes

Once upon a time...last October...Peggy and I were shopping at our local Giant supermarket. As we turned into the paper goods aisle to buy some Kleenex, I noticed



a box with a chess motif. Of course, I immediately looked through all the boxes on the shelf to find any others and bought all that they had. The next morning I packed one and sent it to the Sarisohn's who, it turned out, had not seen one. (Imagine finding a chess related item that Floyd had not seen.)

A discussion followed about trying to get enough boxes to hand out at the Western Hemisphere meeting. Bernice Sarisohn called Kleenex to ask if we could buy a quantity of these boxes, only to be informed that they are shipped in a carton as part of an assortment, with only several chess boxes in each carton.

At this point the Fordney's searched through local stores in York, PA, while the Sarisohn's searched stores on Long Island. Our searches did not result in many boxes.

As it happens, I work part-time in a town in the Harrisburg, PA area. I mentioned our search to a lady I work with who said "This sounds like a project for my sister, who loves to do this kind of thing." Before I knew it my friend and her sister had visited Wal-Mart, Target, Giant Food stores, and Weis Markets in the Harrisburg area, in some cases actually opening cartons and removing the chess boxes from the assortment. The next week when I saw my co-worker she had over 70 of the boxes which she and her sister had found.

So...a big thank you to Sandy Brandt and her sister, Martha Hoffner for taking such an interest in CCI and helping with this project.



Now...the rest of the story. I packed the Kleenex boxes in a large carton and shipped it to our CCI member, Jim Lee, in Oakland, CA. Jim, in turn, brought the carton to the Palace Hotel the day before our meeting began. Whereupon, the Fordney's and the Sarisohn's completed the saga by putting the Kleenex boxes in the "goodie" bags. □

## **Unique Mammoth Ivory Chess Sets for Sale**

Unique chess sets, made of Mammoth Ivory are created by CCI member Oleg Raikis from Russia. The sets are for sale and members who are interested in them can contact him at <u>olegra@mega.ru</u> or view more details on his website <u>www.raikiscollection.com</u>. Members should inform him that they are members of CCI, to get the best price available.



## CLASSIFIED AD

Ads are free for CCI members and you are welcome to have an ad in more than one category. Ad rates for non-CCI members: full page \$120.00, half page \$60.00; quarter page \$30.00; business card \$15.00.

