

Ray Burgess Coca-Cola and soda pop advertising collection a refreshing addition to Bertoia's May 19-20 auction

100-lot selection encompasses signage, vending machines, soda fountain dispensers, thermometers, serving trays, coolers, and both Smith-Miller and Metalcraft Coca-Cola trucks



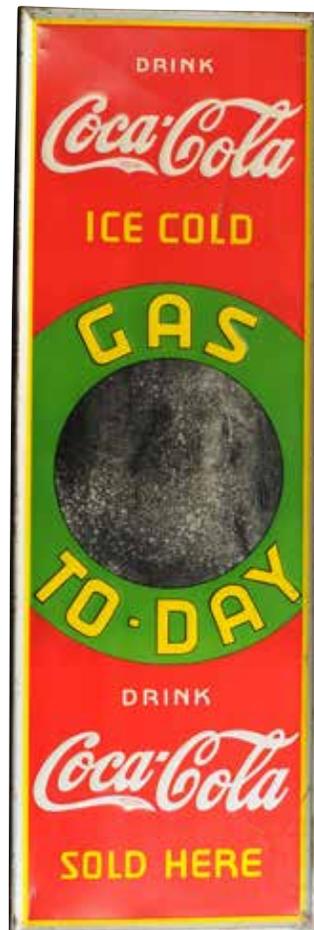
VINELAND, N.J. – Who doesn't love an ice-cold Coke? Ever since the original formula for Coca-Cola was concocted as a tonic in 1886 by Atlanta pharmacist John Pemberton, Americans have enjoyed "the pause that refreshes." At the same time, the vast selection of signage, premiums, coolers and other brightly colored items produced by the globally recognized brand has provided collectors with a hobby that can last a lifetime. One of the indefatigable collectors who made it a lifetime pursuit was Ray Burgess (1929-2021).

A Michigan native and former US Marine, Ray founded both Raymond Excavating and Burgess Contracting, businesses that kept him interested and involved until he finally retired at age 82. With more time on their hands for leisure pursuits, Ray and his beloved wife Dorothy then found themselves in the enviable position to travel, spend balmy winters in Florida, and collect more of the things that brought them joy. Together, they amassed an enviable "fleet" of classic cars, as well as antique transportation toys, petroliana and items advertising Coca-Cola and other soft drink brands.

Ray's beautiful assemblage of Coca-Cola, soft drink and soda fountain memorabilia is a featured highlight of Bertoia's May 19-20 Annual Spring Auction. More than 100 lots will be offered, ranging from Coke signs and vending machines to soda fountain dispensers and serving trays – all touting the world's most famous soft drink.

Signage plays an important role in the Burgess collection, and there are some excellent Coke adverts from which to choose. Two of the most attractive Coca-Cola signs are a 54 by 18-inch tin-litho "Gas To-Day" vertical example estimated at \$2,000-\$3,000, and a double-sided porcelain Coke sign with each side depicting a soda dispenser. Dated 1941, the 25 by 26.5-inch sign is estimated at \$1,500-\$3,000.

A double-sided porcelain "Drink Coca-Cola" fountain service sign is dated 1934 and was made by the Tennessee Enamel Mfg. Co. A seldom-encountered sign measuring 25 by 23 inches, it carries a \$1,500-\$3,000 estimate. And for something a bit different, there's a light-up sign that urges the spectator to "Drink Coca-Cola in Bottles." Measuring 19.5 by 9.5 inches, it has a \$350-\$700 estimate.

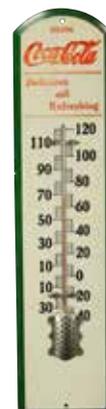


An enormous 53-inch-high porcelain door push, made in Canada, is emblazoned with the message "Come in, Have a Coca-Cola." It has a super-clean, glass-like surface and is ready to dazzle bidders as it crosses the auction block with a \$1,000-\$1,500 estimate. Also from Canada, a hard-to-find green version of a 1939 Coca-Cola thermometer is expected to reach \$1,000-\$2,000.

Several outstanding Coke vending machines are found in the Burgess collection. They include: a Vendo (Kansas City) Model 44 10-cent machine, \$1,000-\$2,000; an F L Jacobs (Indianapolis) dome-top, coin-operated dispensing machine with a front opening and side dispensing panel, \$1,000-\$1,500; and a Vendorlator 10-cent counter-top vending machine complete with keys to access the front money slot, \$750-\$1,500. A Glasco pre-mix ballpark vendor with a spring-loaded cup dispenser is estimated at \$900-\$1,800.

A delightful little cross-over collectible is the 1939 salesman's sample soft drink cooler estimated at \$1,500-\$3,000. It is so complete and realistically detailed, it even retains the original flip books attached to lid's underside, plus the insulation samples.

Soda fountain dispensers will be ready to serve collectors, as well. One of the standouts is a hexagonal Coca-Cola dispenser with "5 cents" and "Drink Coca-Cola" shown on all six sides. It is estimated at \$2,000-\$3,000. A Vernors Ginger Ale dispenser embossed with the message "Look it's Cold, Verners" and outfitted with a marquee/thermometer and pressure gauge is similarly estimated \$2,000-\$3,000. The sale also includes three different Vernors Ginger Ale tin signs, one featuring Art Deco styling with dancing elves in a magical forest. Each of the three is estimated at \$500-\$750.





Coca-Cola trucks include a 1979 Smith-Miller with six plastic cases of Coke bottles, \$500-\$900; and a 12.5-inch Metalcraft streamline model with battery-operated headlights, \$1,200-\$1,600.

Bertoia's May 19-20, 2022 Annual Spring Auction will take place at the company's gallery located at 2141 DeMarco Drive, Vineland, NJ 08360. Live attendance is limited and by reservation only. In-gallery previews are by appointment only. Bid absentee, by phone, or live online through [Bertoia Live](#) or [LiveAuctioneers](#). For additional information, to reserve a seat at the gallery, or to make an appointment to preview the collection, please call 856-692-1881, email toys@bertoiiauctions.com or visit Bertoia's online: www.bertoiaauctions.com.

