

All signs pointed to success at Morphy's \$2.4M Automobilia, Petroliana & Railroadiana Auction

Exceptional rarity and near-flawless condition drove prices above high estimate on many lots

DENVER, PENNSYLVANIA, USA, April 14, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Trains, planes and automobiles were on the minds of bidders who brought their A-game to Morphy's big March 29-30 Automobilia, Petroliana & Railroadiana auction. The colorful 1,498-lot sale featured rare, fresh-to-the-market examples of signage, gas pumps, globes and other service station equipment from motoring's golden era. The two-day grand total came to a hefty \$2.4 million.

Not surprisingly, the top lot of the sale was a Wesco Model 212 large-bodied [gasoline pump](#) with a clock face, brass nozzle and bevels; and three different Visiglas lenses at the top. With eye appeal to spare, the extremely rare pump had undergone a beautiful restoration, as evidenced in its vivid orange body and image of Hancock Gasoline's strutting "Cock O' The Walk" mascot. Possibly the first such pump ever to be offered at auction, it attracted 23 bids before settling well above estimate at \$38,400.

The allure of neon, combined with faultless condition, led to a brilliant result for a [Buick](#) Authorized Valve In Head porcelain sign in complete, original condition. Each of its sides was graded a strong 9.0+, with the auction catalog's condition report noting a "super-clean field free of chipping or wear." It captured an above-estimate winning bid of \$27,600.

While the Ford Edsel may not have clicked with consumers when it made its debut in 1957, dealership signs for the short-lived car designed for "the younger executive" have been hot collectibles for many years. Automobilia fans jumped at the chance to bid on a rare and outstanding Edsel Automobiles double-sided porcelain neon dealership sign in green and white with a large "E" dot logo. Measuring 127 inches long and TAC-authenticated, it opened

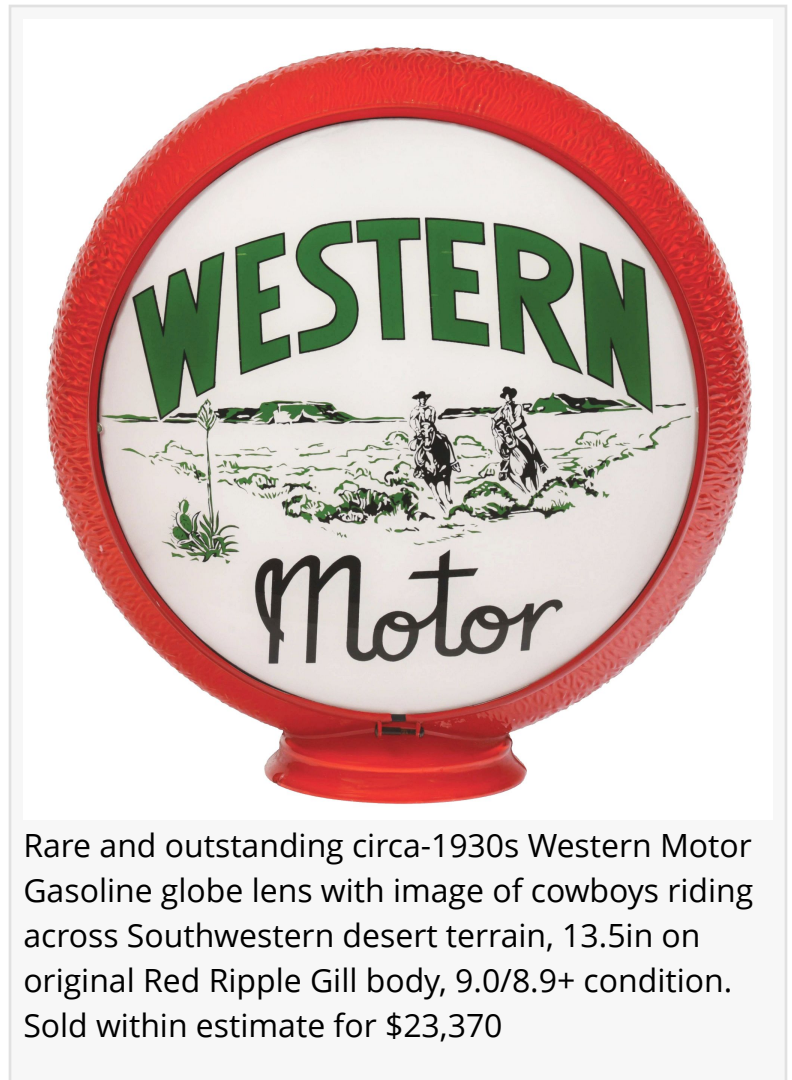


Extremely scarce and beautiful West Coast Equipment Company Model #212 gas pump made by Wesco and professionally restored in Hancock Gasoline livery. Sold for \$38,400 against an estimate of \$15,000-\$30,000

at \$10,000 and settled within its estimate range at \$24,000.

“It’s ironic that, in its day, an Edsel could be purchased for the equivalent of what this sign sold for, with plenty of change left over,” said Morphy’s Automobilia & Petroliana department head John Mihovetz. [When they debuted, Edsels could be purchased for as little as \$2,484, which would be approximately \$21,730 in today’s money.]

A round Signal Gasoline double-sided porcelain sign with a traffic-signal graphic, yellow lettering and red trim was especially desirable because of its 45-inch size. “Most signs with this particular motif against a black background are 72 inches in diameter. To display it would take up quite a lot of wall space. For that reason alone, some collectors prefer the smaller, more manageable size,” Mihovetz said. With sides graded 8.25+/8.0+, the sign easily outdistanced its \$6,000-\$12,000 estimate, coming to a full stop at \$21,600.



Rare and outstanding circa-1930s Western Motor Gasoline globe lens with image of cowboys riding across Southwestern desert terrain, 13.5in on original Red Ripple Gill body, 9.0/8.9+ condition. Sold within estimate for \$23,370

Bidders who chased a circa-1940s RPM Motor Oil “A Knockout For Winter” sign, with an image of Donald Duck punching at a snowman, faced crossover competition from Disney collectors. Originally designed for use as a taxi cab spare tire insert sign, it had survived the past 60 years with no apologies needed for condition. Graded a strong 8.9+, with outstanding color and high gloss overall, it came to auction with a suggested \$2,500-\$4,500 estimate but rose through the bidding ranks to close at a remarkable \$18,000.

“

It’s ironic that, in its day, an Edsel could be purchased for the equivalent of what the Edsel sign in our auction sold for, with plenty of change left over.”

John Mihovetz, Morphy Auctions Automobilia & Petroliana Department Head

A bevy of vintage gas pump globes, 143 in all, included such rare beauties as an original circa-1930s [Western Motor Gasoline](#) globe lens with the image of cowboys

riding horses across a Southwestern landscape. An important aspect of the globe was its original red ripple Gill body, which serves as the ideal framework for the art. Mihovetz said he could only

recall “one or two other instances of this globe design with a red ripple body appearing at auction.” With sides graded 9.0/8.9+, respectively, the example presented by Morphy’s led its category, selling within estimate for \$23,370.

Another favorite was a stunning 1930s Gilmore Gasoline Red Lion globe with the image of a ferocious red lion charging in full stride. Over the past decade, very few globes of this particular type have appeared at auction. The one offered by Morphy’s was recognized for its exceptional 9.0 condition and commanded a winning bid of \$20,910. Also from the animal world, a rare and outstanding 1930s Husky Ethyl Gasoline globe with an image of the company’s husky dog mascot was described as new/old stock in 9.75+ condition. It easily surpassed expectations to “sit and stay” at \$18,450. The lion and dog were joined by a 1930s Hancock “Cock O’ The Walk” globe, whose rooster mascot charmed an above-estimate \$10,455 from bidders.

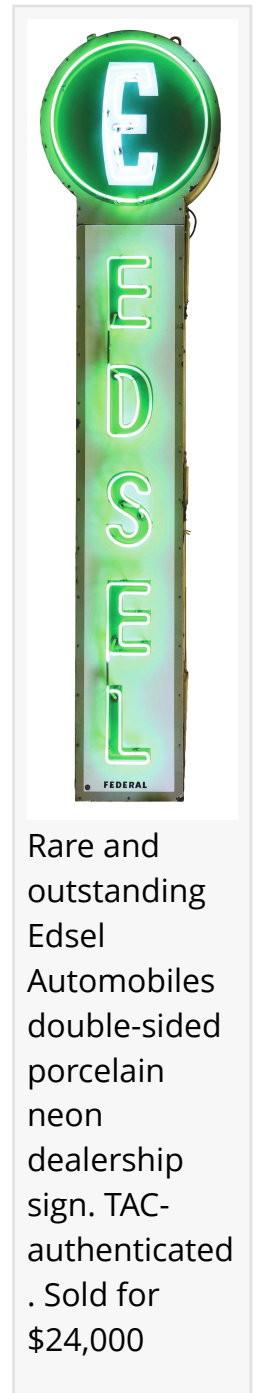
Morphy’s railroad yard was packed with 400 lots of tempting rarities from a major central Ohio private collection plus advanced collections from Southern California and Montana. The fine array of train-related items included locomotive number plates, signs from legendary railroad lines, train stations and depots; signals, whistles, fire alarms, bells, locks, lamps, headlights and two dozen desirable railroad lanterns, many with colored-glass lenses.

Some railroad lots sold for many times their pre-sale estimates. One top performer was a Crosby bronze three-chime factory steam whistle that measures 40½ inches high by 13 inches in diameter. Only a few dozen in this size were ever produced by Crosby, and of those, very few survived. With a broad \$2,000-\$15,000 estimate to guide them, collectors jumped at the chance to own the rare whistle, bidding it to \$17,220.

A richly hued red and gold cast-iron Pennsylvania Railroad station sign emblazoned “OZONE PARK” attracted 31 bids before ending its bidding run at \$11,070 against a pre-sale estimate of \$1,000-\$4,000. Another lot that defied expectations was a cast-iron Union Switch & Signal clockwork signal with a four-lens Peter Gray oil-burning switch lamp mounted to its top. Marked YNH&HRRT and cataloged with a \$1,000-\$5,000 estimate, it sold for \$13,530.

To discuss consigning a collection or single item to a future Morphy Auctions Automobilia, Petroliana & Railroadiana sale, confidentially and without obligation, call 877-968-8880 or email info@morphyauctions.com. Visit Morphy’s online: www.morphyauctions.com.

Dan Morphy
Morphy Auctions
+1 877-968-8880



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info@morphyauctions.com

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