

Morphy's Mar. 21-23 auction rolls out Part II of Bobby Knudsen automobilia, petroliana & soda pop advertising collection

Unprecedented offering of gas and oil signs includes many entries that are the best of all known examples and among very few of their type known to exist

DENVER, PENNSYLVANIA, USA, March 13, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On March 21-23, Morphy's will continue the exciting year-long adventure of auctioning the Bobby Knudsen Jr Collection of World-Class Automotive, Gas & Oil and Soda Pop Advertising. The series debuted to rave reviews on September 30 of last year and continues this month with Part II of Bobby's collection anchoring the sale on day one and additional select consignments following on days two and three. It's going to be a high-octane event of more than 1,600 lots, enough to ensure that every bidder has a great chance of landing something special from a highly pedigreed source.



The Knudsen collection, which was amassed over a 33-year period, is distinguished by its rare, authentic examples in spectacular condition. John Mihovetz, Head of Morphy's Automobilia & Petroliana Department, was instrumental in guiding the legendary collection to auction and cataloging its contents. "A good 90% of Bobby's collection is in 9.0 condition or better, which is an astonishing feat to achieve in antique and vintage gas and oil advertising. Even his rarest signs are in beautiful shape," Mihovetz said. "Collectors who came to the preview before last September's sale were left speechless by what they saw. It's going to be the same for Part II." Per Bobby Knudsen's instructions, all items from his collection will be offered without reserve.

A top prize in the sale is a circa-1940s [Smith-O-Lene Aviation Brand Gasoline](#) porcelain service station sign. The double-sided 48-inch-diameter round sign with a gorgeous airplane graphic at its center was issued by WD Smith & Son of Texarkana, Texas, to regional outlets in Texas and Arkansas. It is the highest-graded example of the few known to exist, earning a 9.75+ rating for each of its sides. Before joining the Knudsen collection, this coveted sign was part of the storied Kyle Moore collection. Who will add their name to its illustrious line of provenance on auction day? Quite likely it will be someone bidding in the \$100,000-\$200,000 range.

Co-starring at the top of the Knudsen collection alongside the ultra-rare Smith-O-Lene sign is a [Mohawk Gasoline “down feather” double-sided porcelain service station sign](#). It bears the iconic image of a Native American with the feathers in his braided hair worn in a down position, hence the “down feather” description that denotes a pre-1925 production. Later Mohawk advertising showed the subject with feathers in an upright position. Measuring 27¼ inches in diameter, it is one of only four known examples of the earliest porcelain advertising used by the historic California brand. Exceptionally fine on both sides, it comes to auction with a \$100,000-\$200,000 estimate.

Native American iconography is also central to an extremely rare and visually compelling Wasatch Gasoline (Lake City, Utah) double-sided porcelain service station sign. Believed to be one of only two surviving signs of its type in the 48-inch-diameter size, it is the only one ever to appear at auction. It is expected to attract a winning bid of \$75,000-\$150,000.

Making it a trifecta, the finest known example of a double-sided porcelain Idaho Chief Gasoline sign ever to come to auction displays vivid colors and the image of a Native American chief in a full bonnet. This circa 1940s sign is huge, measuring 72 inches in diameter. A visual knockout whose sides are graded 9.0/8.75+ respectively, it is estimated at \$50,000-\$90,000.

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John Mihovetz, Morphy Auctions Automobilia & Petroliana Department Head

A rare and outstanding circa-1930s Oilzum Motor Oils & Lubricants (Worcester, Mass.) porcelain curb sign is double sided and features the image of their capped and goggled mascot “Oswald the Driver.” It displays crisp, bright colors, retains its original base, and gets superlative marks for condition, graded 9.75 on Side 1 and 9.5+ on Side 2.



Rare and outstanding Oilzum Motor Oils & Lubricants porcelain curb sign, double-sided with ‘Oswald the Driver’ image, circa 1930s. Estimate \$50,000-\$100,000

Bidding paddles will be airborne for this sign because, as John Mihovetz observed, "It simply cannot be improved upon." Estimate \$50,000-\$100,000

Extolling the freedom and unique culture of the western United States, a 48-inch Frontier Gasoline (Denver, Colo.) "Rarin' To Go" double-sided porcelain sign is emblazoned with the image of a cowboy on his rearing horse, with his hat raised high in the air. Dated 1954, it is one of only a handful of its type known to exist. Bidding is expected to reach \$50,000-\$100,000.

Neon sign collectors are in for a treat with two signs, in particular. One of the category's highlights is a very rare 60-inch-diameter porcelain neon sign for Cadillac Service. It is actually two single-sided signs mounted back-to-back on what appears to be the original can, and its neon glows brilliantly throughout each side. In near-flawless condition, it is estimated at \$50,000-\$100,000. The second neon entry worthy of special mention is a circa-1920s [Polly Gasoline](#) (Los Angeles, Calif.) single-sided porcelain service station sign featuring the company's iconic parrot mascot on her perch. This 72-inch-long beauty is on many a collector's wish list, so it will take more than crackers to take it home. Graded 8.5+, it is estimated at \$40,000-\$70,000.

Gas pump globe collectors will find plenty of temptations at this auction. An extremely rare and exceptional Pioneer Gasoline (Minneapolis, Minn.) single-globe gas pump lens featuring the image of Native American sighting a passing wagon train is graded 9.0. Highly desirable, it could achieve a winning bid in the vicinity of \$15,000-\$25,000. A similar estimate has been placed on a Kunz Gasoline (Minneapolis, Minn.) "Best for the North" single-globe gas pump lens with an unusual high-profile metal body. One of few known examples and graded 8.5+, it will cross the auction block with a \$15,000-\$25,000 estimate.

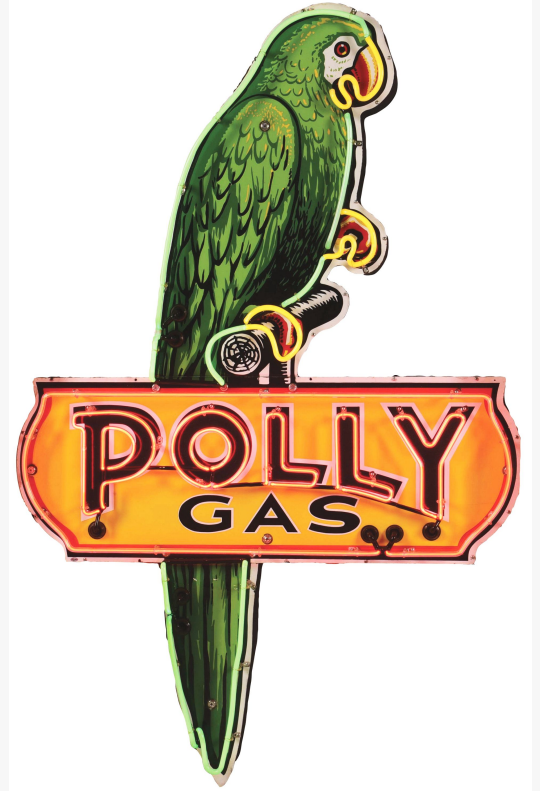
Morphy's March 21-23, 2023 Automobilia, Petroliana & Railroadiana Auction will be held live at Morphy's gallery, 2000 N. Reading Rd., Denver, PA 17517, starting each day at 9 a.m. Eastern Time. Part II of the Bobby Knudsen Jr collection will be auctioned on Day 1, with no reserve on



Mohawk Gasoline 'down feather' double-sided porcelain service station sign with iconic Native American image, 27¼in diameter. One of only four known examples of its type. Estimate \$100,000-\$200,000

any of the items. All forms of bidding will be available, including absentee, phone and live via the Internet through Morphy Live. For questions about any item in the auction, to reserve a phone line or leave an absentee bid, call 877-968-8880 or email info@morphyauctions.com. Visit Morphy's online at www.morphyauctions.com.

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Rare circa-1920s Polly Gasoline single-sided porcelain neon service station sign showing iconic parrot mascot on perch. Estimate \$40,000-\$70,000



Extremely rare and exceptional Pioneer Gasoline single-globe gas pump lens with image of Native American sighting a passing wagon train.
Estimate \$15,000-\$25,000

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