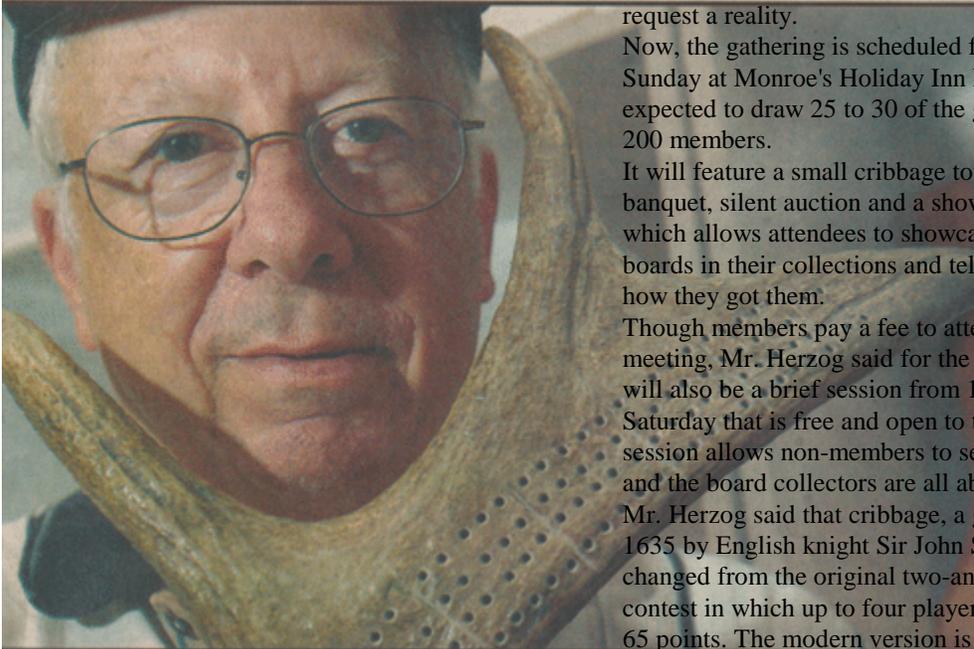


## Happenings Jim Herzog

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### Rockwood man bringing the national cribbage board collector's show to Monroe this weekend



- Evening News photos by KIM BRENT

## CRIBBAGE

James Herzog of Rockwood has a vast collection of cribbage boards that are made from such materials as a deer antler.

James B. Herzog's love affair with cribbage and the card game's peg board scorecards has sparked a number of unique happenings since the Rockwood resident first played the game nearly 50 years ago.

After being given his first wooden cribbage board in 1957, he's searched souvenir shops and antique markets around the country to collect the scorecard slats. His basement now holds his extensive collection of more than 800 boards, which range wildly in size, shape and oddity. He's also persistently played the once-popular game and, in turn, recruited his wife, six children

and 16 grandchildren to pick it up as local senior centers and card-playing groups dropped it from their calendars.

But his latest feat - attracting a national cribbage convention to Monroe - may be the most remarkable.

Mr. Herzog appealed several years ago to the Cribbage Board Collectors Society, of which he is an original member, to hold its sixth annual convention here. He teamed up with several other cribbage enthusiasts across the state to make the request a reality.

Now, the gathering is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday at Monroe's Holiday Inn Express and is expected to draw 25 to 30 of the group's roughly 200 members.

It will feature a small cribbage tournament, banquet, silent auction and a show and tell, which allows attendees to showcase the best boards in their collections and tell the stories of how they got them.

Though members pay a fee to attend the yearly meeting, Mr. Herzog said for the first time there will also be a brief session from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday that is free and open to the public. The session allows non-members to see what cribbage and the board collectors are all about.

Mr. Herzog said that cribbage, a game started in 1635 by English knight Sir John Suckling, has changed from the original two-and, five-card contest in which up to four players try to rack up 65 points. The modern version is a six-card format that aims at 121 points

"It's really a mathematical game," he said. "As you get more experienced, it takes a lot of strategy. The cards are a big part, but knowing what to do is more important."

The game uses a regular 52-card deck and adds together hand combinations to compile the score, which is marked with pegs on the block scorecards.

But aside from playing, it's the scorecards that are the most fun for Mr. Herzog

Among his collection, he said he has cribbage boards ranging in size from a massive marble-topped concrete bench that is fashioned into a scorecard to a 3-inch long metal container that fits in one's hand.

He also has boards made of countless materials, including ivory elephant tusks, swordfish bones and a walrus jaw. His collection contains slats shaped like lighthouses, slot machines, outrigger canoes, states and, yes, even one made from a toilet seat.

He paid almost \$200 for one board, though rare

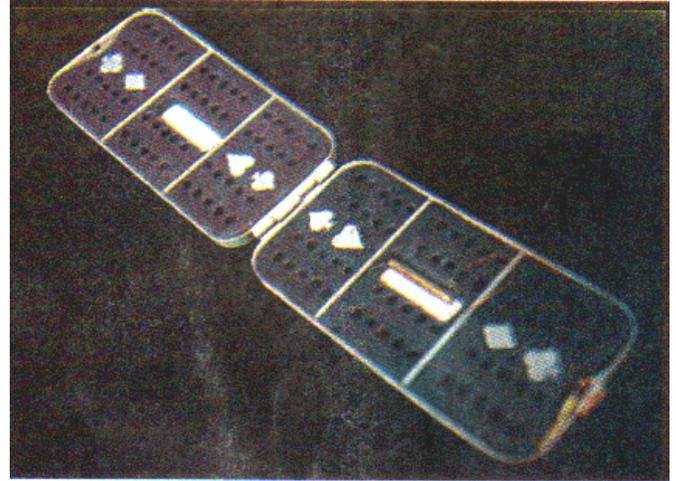
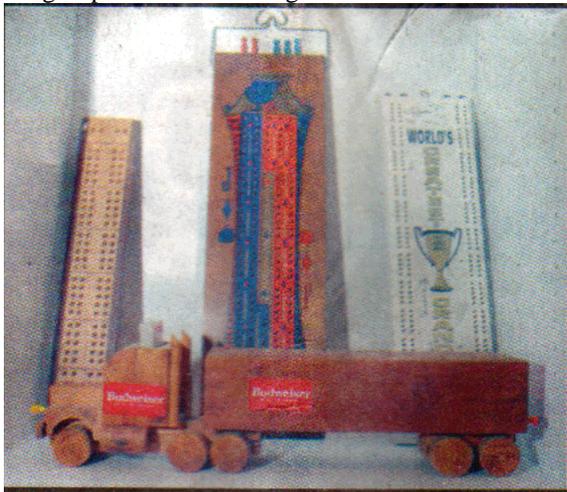
pieces can fetch thousands of dollars, he said. The boards have come from every corner of the United States, from gift shops in Hawaii to a furniture store in Massachusetts. And several of his most treasured are gifts from relatives that were either hand-made or bought on vacation trips.

But the longtime cribbage fanatic said he has not attempted to craft one himself.

"The hunt is part of the fun," he said.

And, as the convention kicks off, members of the society - like Mr. Herzog - will bring their prize pieces to show off and to share.

The gatherings usually spark interest to a particularly rare or good-looking board, though the group also names the ugliest board as well.



**Among the more than 800 cribbage boards Mr. Herzog has collected are boards with themes, such as a Reno-inspired one (middle photo), and a minia-ture flip-lid board.**

**IF YOU GO ...**

**What:** Cribbage Board Collectors Society sixth annual convention

**When:** Saturday and Sunday

**Where:** Holiday Inn Express, 1225 N. Dixie Hwy.

**For the public:** Displays and demonstra-tions about cribbage and cribbage boards from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday.