

Searching for John Parsley Paperweights:  
from TEXAS PAPERWEIGHT COLLECTORS NEWSLETTER

You may have read or heard about the creation of the new non-profit, Great Lakes Paperweights, Inc., established by the children of the John Parsley family. Joan Parsley, the younger daughter of John Parsley, wrote an extensive article for the January 1, 2019 PCA Newsletter. In the article Joan states that this non-profit is established to preserve the rich history, legacy and enjoyment of fine glass paperweights through education and interaction with Midwest museums as well as work with galleries, collectors, glass artists and the general public. By way of its first initiative, Great Lakes Paperweights, Inc., has announced the *John Parsley Legacy Project*. The Legacy Project offers a speaker and PowerPoint on the life of paperweight artist John Parsley. The development of a book and exhibit are also in the planning.

We all can help with this. PCATX members who have the privilege of owning a John Parsley paperweight, should let Joan know how you knew her father, share your memories, provide a picture or description of your paperweight including any information you have about its provenance, including place of purchase and your memories of that event. With your help, the work of John Parsley, a highly respected and wonderful paperweight artist, can be fully documented. Please contact Director Joan Parsley at Great Lakes Paperweights, Inc., 157 N. 87<sup>th</sup> Street, Milwaukee, WI. 53226. Her email is joan.parsley@gmail.com. The organization assures anonymity of the collectors' names without permission.

John Parsley paperweights are highly sought after. John was born in 1916 and lived in the Kentucky and West Virginia coal mining areas of this country. He worked as a chemist, engineer, and teacher and also volunteered at Wheaton Village. Over the years he made glass animals, birds, little vases, and pieces for family and friends. In the 1980's, he pursued glass paperweight making with intensity, refining his skills and generating several "firsts" in glass paperweight-making techniques. He is known for his precision in crafting paperweights with extreme attention to detail as well as his keen sense of arrangement and use of color. Most of his paperweights are small in size and signed with a blue or green "P". They are perfect. My favorites are the flora lampworked bouquets, but if I were given a choice of two or more to choose from, I admit I would have a very difficult decision to make. I love every John Parsley paperweight I see.

John died in 2009, but not before working collaboratively with a few other great artists like Gordon Smith and Peter McDougall (Perthshire) to create wonderful works of art. You can see John Parsley paperweights at the Corning Museum of Glass, the Toronto Museum, the Museum of American Glass at Wheaton Village, and the Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass. To learn more, please consult the **Annual Bulletin of the Paperweight Collectors' Association, 1990** to read and view photos in the article "John Parsley – Artist of Vision, Creator of Jewels" authored by Joan Parsley with Gay LeCleire Taylor.