

A DREAM COME TRUE

FROM VINTAGE BEANIES TO RARE TRADING CARDS, COLLECTOR FULFILLS A FANTASY

BY JACQUELINE GREENWOOD

To many, the possibility of owning the Ty #1 Bear® is pure fantasy. With the bear reaching a high of \$20,200 on eBay last spring, this Beanie Baby® definitely is not for play.

But for Scott Miller, the founder and owner of Apogee Software Ltd. (best known for the “shoot ‘em up” computer video game Duke Nukem) this is not a fantasy — it’s reality. In fact, he’s the proud owner of four #1 Bears, 14 Billionaire®

Bears, seven Peanut® the Royal Blue Elephants, a 1997 Employee Bear®, at least one each of all the Old and New Face®

Teddies, as well as many other highly collectible Beanies.

However, this enviable collection of Beanies still wasn’t enough for Miller. His new favorite game is cards — as in Ty Beanie Babies Collector’s Cards®. With the attitude of video-action hero Duke

Nukem at the start of each game, one can imagine Miller proclaiming “Let’s Rock!” as he plunged into collecting Ty cards.



MILLER'S GROWING BEANIE BABY COLLECTION INCLUDES 14 BILLIONAIRE BEARS, 1997 EMPLOYEE BEAR, ALL THE NEW FACE TEDDIES AND FOUR #1 BEARS.

It all began in early March 1999, when he discovered Ty Collector's Cards while shopping for Beanie Babies on the Internet.

"I was looking for a Peanut the Royal Blue Elephant Beanie Baby on eBay and noticed something odd, a silver Peanut the Royal Blue Elephant Collector's Card," Miller says.

He searched eBay for "Ty Cards" and ended up buying about 10 silver Peanut cards before he discovered a gold one.

"When I saw that the gold card was numbered and only 150 existed, I was

prized Beanie, a #1 Bear 3/253," he says. "By my thinking, the #1 Bear is the most valuable Beanie in the world not owned by a Ty employee, since Ty Warner himself owns the first #1 Bear and another employee owns the number 2 #1 Bear—and she [Ty employee] isn't a seller, I've heard."

Miller spends about 45 minutes a day monitoring Internet auction sites.

"I've got my search methodology down to a science, so that a few key searches will reveal all the things I'm interested in," he says. "A key search fea-

"I ONLY BUY CARDS
WITH THE INTENT TO
KEEP THEM FOR YEARS
AS A LONG-TERM AND
FUN INVESTMENT,"

— SCOTT MILLER

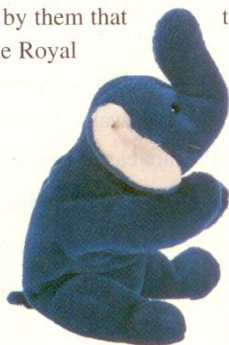
immediately intrigued," Miller says. "When something is numbered, it is more difficult to fake and easier to validate."

He became so captivated by them that he bought 12 gold Peanut the Royal Blue Elephant cards.

Searching for the Rarest

Since then, Miller has started collecting other rare gold cards and autographed cards from both Series I and II. His most prized card is a gold #1 Bear Series II card, numbered 3/34.

"This matches the number of my most-



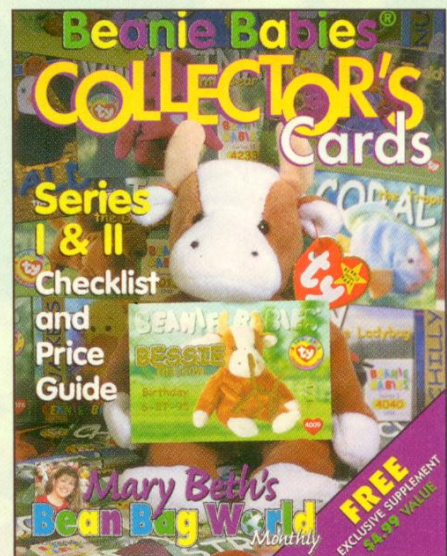
ture that's extremely helpful on eBay, for example, is setting a minimum price, which I typically set at \$100. This filters out all the low-value gold cards."

He tries to buy gold cards of high-value Beanies (for instance, Peanut the Royal Blue Elephant, #1 Bear and Billionaire Bear) and the first card in any series (such as the 1/150 for the gold Radar® card, which he owns).

Daily Work

When asked if he has any secrets or tips for being a successful card collector, Miller says, "You need to monitor the auction sites everyday and vary your

SERIES III CARDS ON THE WAY!

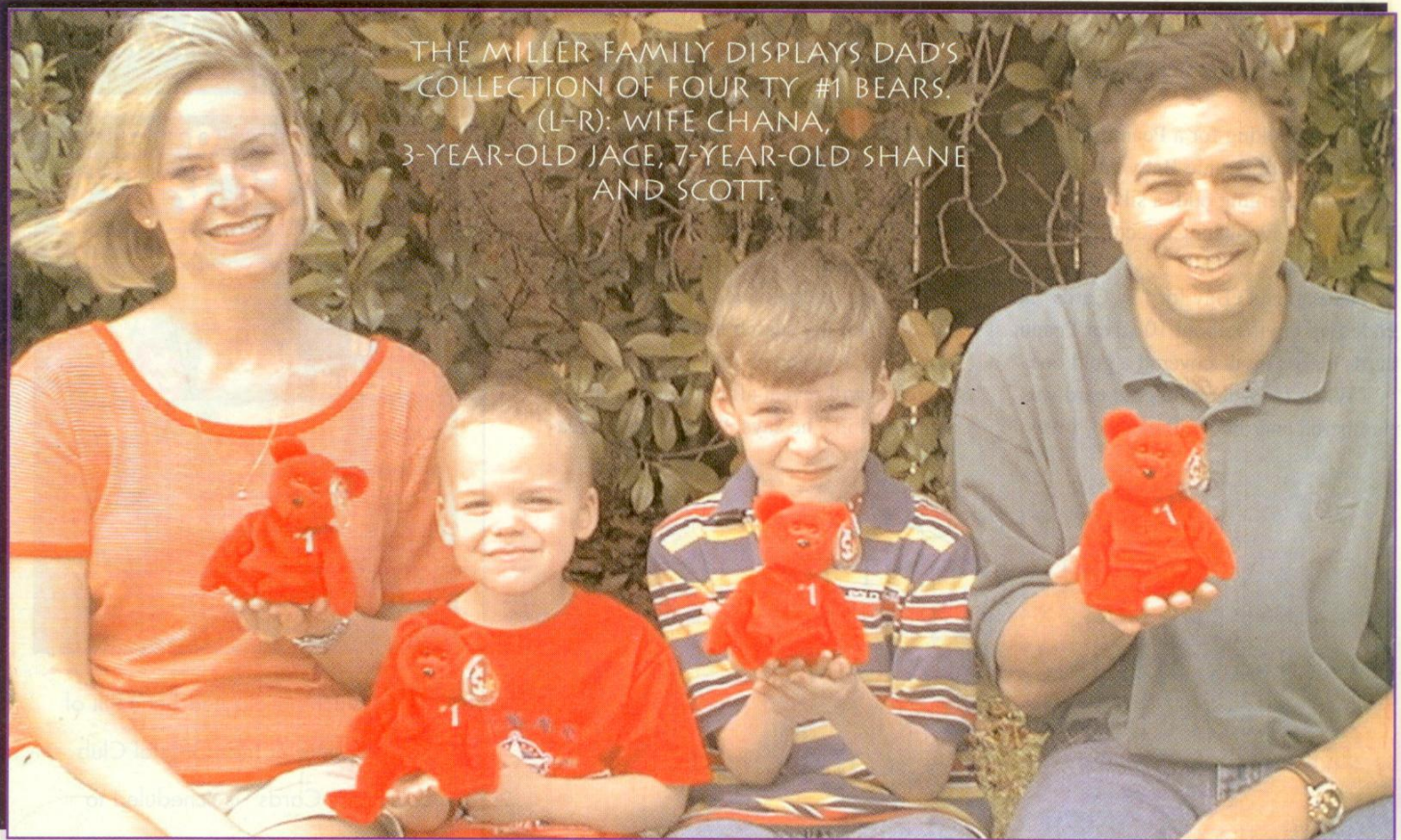


The much-anticipated Series III of the Ty Beanie Babies Official Club Collector's Cards® is scheduled to reach stores by mid-August.

At press time, no other details were available. But stay tuned for more information in the September issue of *Bean Bag World*.

In the meantime, check out this issue's free 32-page supplement (a \$4.99 value) on the Series I and Series II Collector's Cards. The special supplement provides an overview of the Collector's Cards craze, market trends, each card's secondary-market value, and photos of almost every card.

THE MILLER FAMILY DISPLAYS DAD'S COLLECTION OF FOUR TY #1 BEARS.
(L-R): WIFE CHANA, 3-YEAR-OLD JACE, 7-YEAR-OLD SHANE AND SCOTT.



search words slightly so that you do not let a key card slip through the cracks.”

He rarely bids on an item, except in the last 15 seconds.



ONE OF MILLER'S #1 BEARS IS THE THIRD OF 253 MADE.

“I prefer not to bump up the price of an item with a needless bidding war hours or days before the auction closes,” Miller says.

Despite his collection's volume, Miller has not sold or traded any of his cards.

“I only buy them with the intent to keep them for years as a long-term and fun investment,” Miller says. “My two sons, ‘Straight-A’ Shane, 7, and ‘Do it my way’ Jace, 3, do collect all the cards, and I’ve been helping them out.”

In the meantime, Miller remains confident about the Ty Collector's Card market.

“I think it's a much, much safer market

than the fraught-with-fakes Beanie market,” he says. “I’m so tired of buying fake Beanies and having to have the transaction reversed that I’m all but staying away from retired, high-value Beanies in the future. Plus, cards are easier to store.”

At work, Miller is developing a big-budget Duke Nukem movie. But with how he spends his free time, perhaps it is not sinister aliens that fill his dreams at night but the quest for another Collector's Card.

Visit Miller on eBay at

members.ebay.com/aboutme/DukeNukem/. ♥