

# At Summertime Auctions, Ice Cream A Hot Ticket

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**ELIZABETHTOWN** (Lancaster Co.) — If you find yourself at a benefit auction on a warm day, follow the sound of steady chugging and the sight of the smokey furl from an antique engine.

Amidst the crowd gathered around the machine will be a silver canister brimming with ice cream manufactured by the agi-

frosty level needed for ice cream.

The engine churns the canister for 15-25 minutes. "When the engine stalls or the belt slips off," said Sam, the ice cream is done. "Anyone that makes homemade ice cream will know when it's finished because you can hardly turn it," he said. Timing is important, said Grace, since once the top is open it is difficult to re-close, so the ice cream must be



Sam and Grace Gish are joined by grandchildren Tom, 13; Nathan, 12; Aaron, 10; Zach, 8; Maddie, 6; and Caleb, 7, in front of an antique engine the couple uses to make homemade ice cream.



Grace hands out ice cream to eager customers.

tating action from the engine.

Also at the engine will be Sam and Grace Gish, serving dips of the gallons of ice cream they will scoop out during the event. They are joined by Sam's brother Eugene and Eugene's friend Anna Swartz in most of their ice cream making efforts.

During the day, they will make many gallons of their famous concoction (Grace altered the recipe originally from Ohio) that is crowned with Grace's homemade strawberry and black raspberry toppings.

### Milk The Main Ingredient

One batch includes a gallon and a half of milk, besides pudding, white and brown sugar, cream, and eggs. For the black raspberry variety, black raspberry syrup is added in place of milk. The couple creates chocolate ice cream with chocolate milk and chocolate pudding.

Besides these standard flavors, however, they have sold an alternative variety, according to Grace. During one event, Grace's cousin Clair Burkhart took what he thought to be black raspberry syrup from the refrigerator and used red beet juice in an entire batch of ice cream.

"People ate the whole thing," said Grace. "They just laughed and thought it was funny. It doesn't seem to matter how you make it. People will just eat homemade ice cream."

Even while she was fine tuning the recipe, said Grace, and came up with a few less-than-perfect batches, she always seemed to someone who would eat it.

All of the ingredients go into the canister, which is surrounded by 45 pounds of ice and 10 pounds of salt "and enough water to get it started," said Sam. The ice and salt bring the ingredients' temperature down to the

ready for consumption when the top comes off.

"Sam just knows when it is done," said Grace. The secret, he said, is waiting until the ice cream is stiff enough, and to make sure the mixture is sufficiently surrounded by salt.

**“It doesn't seem to matter how you make it. People will just eat homemade ice cream.”**

Grace Gish

In the garden Grace raises the black raspberries and strawberries that make the toppings. "I always run out of that," she said.

### Ohio Relief Sale

Their participation began when Sam noticed an Amishman

making homemade ice cream at the relief sale in Ohio.

The man came in to teach them the art of making ice cream with antique engines at the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) relief sale in Pennsylvania. After he came for two years, the Gishes purchased their own rig and began making ice cream for other events, as well.

One aspect that attracted the couple to the process was the engines. "The interest first was in these old engines," Grace said. "My husbands collected old engines and didn't have anything to do with them" until he and Eu-

gene were at the Ohio sale and saw that they were making ice cream with the engines, she said. "It really started with the engines — the engines were the hobby."

The couple, former dairy farmers, were also attracted to the

home farm. Although Sam still enjoys collecting engines, he has sold the ice cream rig to Eugene. Sam functions as the "mechanic that keeps it going," said Grace, and the couples work together to make ice cream for several functions. Kraybill Mennonite Sale Organizers of the sale at Kraybill Mennonite School were eager to incorporate the novelty ice cream making process into their sale day, so the Gishes began making ice cream for that event 17 years ago.

During the day they will make 20 batches — at five gallons of ice cream per batch. Each batch serves 60-70 people, estimates Sam.

Of their five children, four graduated from the school. They also have six grandchildren enrolled at the school, four grandchildren who have graduated, and four who will attend the school.

In addition to the Kraybill sale, they also make ice cream for Lancaster's Make-A-Wish Foundation on Mother's Day, besides Pennsylvania's MCC Relief Sale. At the MCC sale in two days they make 40-45 batches.

The Elizabethtown Fair, conducted in August, is warm enough for Eugene to average nine batches of ice cream a day for six days, according to Sam.



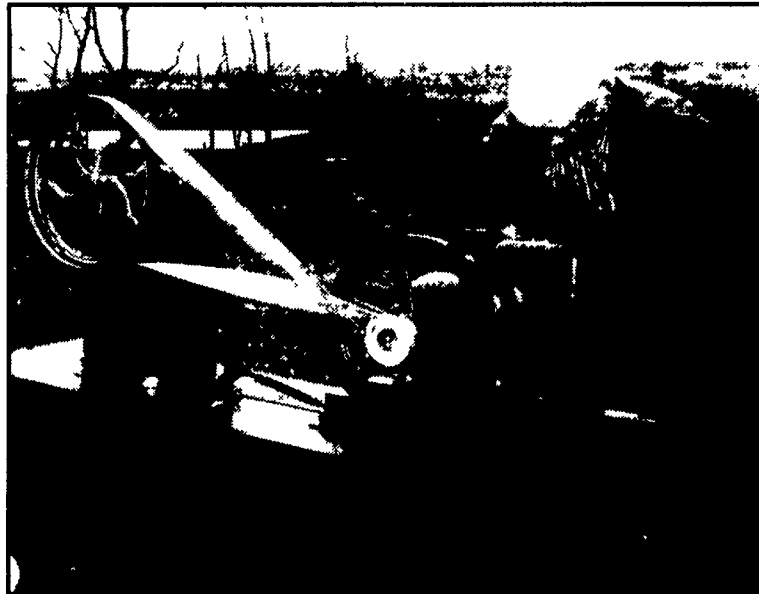
Maddie Gish approves of her grandmother's homemade strawberry topping.

Eugene also makes ice cream for other numerous nonprofit events during the summer.

The Gishes make ice cream for the senior citizen's group at their church each summer, besides the church's Bible school and family get-togethers. When they sell the ice cream at commercial events such as Falmouth goat races, proceeds go to the church.

The couple enjoys meeting people at the events, said Sam. "Everyone is friendly — it's everyone's social hour."

Several sizes of ice cream freezers, from two- to ten-quart sizes, sit around the Gish home, which they use for smaller-sized batches of ice cream for their own use.



Sam Gish takes care of the mechanical workings of the antique engines.

possibility of promoting milk products, since "we were pretty much involved in dairy farming and dairy farmers like to promote milk," said Sam. They milked 70 cows on 130 acres before they went into trucking. Their son now lives on the nearby

**MOUNT JOY** (Lancaster Co.) — Kraybill Mennonite School's 25th Annual Benefit Auction will be conducted May 10 and 11 at the school, Kraybill Church and Gibble Road, Mount Joy. The festivities begin on Friday with a craft show, lawn and garden show, and southern style pig roast, along with an antique and collectibles auction. On Saturday the craft show reopens and the auction, which includes quilts, goods and services by local and national businesses, and outdoor items such as mulch, plants, garden tools. For more information call (717) 653-5236 or click on check [kraybillmennonite.org/auction](http://kraybillmennonite.org/auction).

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