

# FOHBC

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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One of the more interesting persons that I have met along the way is Federation member Ken Previtali. He is candid, creative, smart and also the "Ginger Ale Man." You may remember his great, award-winning display at the 2013 FOHBC National Antique Bottle Show in Manchester, New Hampshire. Anyway, Ken advised me when I started writing President's Messages to use "we" as much as possible, as this is not about "me." Yes, did I say Ken was candid? Of course Ken is right. There is a much bigger picture and as my mom used to say, "the earth does not revolve around me." Well, Ken, I think about your advice each issue, but I'm going to pass a little to the left because I need to get this in print and off my chest.

[May 26, 2016] Within the last President's Message (*BOTTLE and EXTRAS* May-June 2016), I closed the first paragraph with "I also love what I do and I am addicted to antique bottles and glass. That helps keep me on schedule and gets me through the rough spots and bumps in the road." Little did I know that my comments would become prophetic as on Monday, April 18th (Elizabeth's birthday), we were hit with catastrophic rain and flooding in the Houston area. It made national news, schools were closed for a week, and our county, along with 10 others, were declared Federal Disaster Zones with National Guard and sheriff's boat rescues. This was crazy, as Houston typically gets 50 inches of rain a year, so we are used to water, just not 17 inches or so in one day, on our property and within our house. Unfortunately, we had a flash flood from the north, as Bessie's Creek to our east flooded. This has never happened before as old-timers from the area told us.

With rain all Sunday night, we already knew by watching the news that Houston was shut down on Monday, so we stayed at the house instead of driving to my studio in the city. Around mid-afternoon, we heard Cooper, our Great Pyrenees, barking loudly outside, as if warning us. I ran out the back door and saw the water coming rather fast. I tell you, I had not seen that before and the rest was a blur for us. I think I will write an article about this event in a future *BOTTLES and EXTRAS* issue because, I am not kidding, we had bottles floating in our house and I have the pictures! I will, however, let you know that Elizabeth and I are fine, our seven dogs are doing well and our five cats have managed to stay dry. It's been five weeks now and we are in the middle of major restorations and renovations. We (myself) packed close to a 1,000 bottles and went to higher ground, as we are all living upstairs! I mean, who would take in this Meyer family insanity as houseguests, certainly no family or friend or hotel. We thank you all that have expressed concern and reached out with best wishes and we do not hold it against you if you did not offer to house this zoo that has become our life.

Flash Forward Breaking News: It is now Thursday, June 2, and my first

day back to the studio in downtown Houston. Why my first day back? Well, it happened again on Saturday, May 28, 2016, my birthday this time, as the Brazos River breached! Another 500-year event, according to NOAA. The water came from the opposite direction from before and it was much worse than the first event.

The day started out normally and was terrifically sunny. I was starting the grill as our daughter and grandchildren were coming over. Elizabeth was out buying steaks and such when I noticed water coming from the woods and moving backwards, or north. Running to the front of our property, I could see there was a breach and that it was happening again. Areas north of us around Brenham, Texas (Blue Bell ice cream country) received 20 inches of rain the previous day. We only received 3 inches or so. All that water moved to the Brazos River and upstream dams apparently, were opened.

I quickly called Elizabeth and she rushed back, just making it up our long dirt drive before the path closed with rising water. To make a long story short, we buttoned up again, moved upstairs and have been living there since that Saturday. As we were under renovation, we have no toilets, running water, appliances and short supply of everything else. We do have power, Internet, air conditioning and one refrigerator the contractor is leaving in until the last possible moment before we get another. Thank goodness!

Again, they wanted to boat rescue our clan, but we stayed put for many reasons, as you might imagine. Fortunately, there aren't any more birthdays in the forecast, but more rain is coming. We are looking at this like a big life adventure. For example, every morning and evening this past five days, we (8 dogs this time as we had a house guest) swam from the house to the front gate. Actually, I waded in chest-deep water and the dogs swam in "V" geese formation. When we reach the elevated road it is still under about 6" of running water. We then walk north and get to a stretch of higher ground we see horses, goats, llamas, cows... all being rescued. Unreal scenes. Snakes galore, too, as water moccasins are seen frequently swimming by. The dogs are real glad (as us) to see higher ground, if you know what I mean.

I post this for awareness and apologize for the lack of e-mail and phone calls to all who have reached out. This has been a very trying period in our lives. Stay dry, enjoy your summer. I realize many of you bottle collectors are in Mother Nature's way in some way or another. Make sure you have insurance and your priorities straight. Be safe. There is a much bigger picture.

Now let's quickly move to the west coast. By the time you get this issue, we will be only five or so weeks from the FOHBC 2016 Sacramento National Antique Bottle Convention & Expo that so many of us have planned for so long and eagerly await. There's going to be some super glass there! Can't wait. Now, over to the east coast where Team Springfield is working almost daily on components for the FOHBC 2017 Springfield National Antique Bottle Convention & Expo. The 2018 team is even working to prepare for their event as they have developed a logo and early marketing material for the FOHBC 2018 Cleveland National Antique Bottle Convention & Expo. You can catch an early preview on Page 12.

Visit the FOHBC.org web site as the latest FOHBC news is always posted. See you soon!