



FOHBC PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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It is early Sunday morning and I sit here reflecting at Timoleon's Diner in quaint Keene, New Hampshire while drinking some coffee to warm me up (it is 45 degrees outside, chilly for a Texan). The Yankee Bottle Show starts here shortly and will be a fun conclusion to a long weekend of bottle events that started out with a gathering at Federation members Mark and Annie Vuono's in Stamford, Connecticut on Friday and included the Heckler Columbus Day Hayfield event in Woodstock Valley, Connecticut yesterday. I am thinking that this was the exact spot, two years ago today, that the great Feldmann story that I retell in this issue of Bottles and Extras, got its wings. I hope you enjoy the article and pictures. John and Sheila are wonderful people that represent the foundation and cornerstone of our great hobby.

What a whirlwind of events since our great EXPO in late July in Reno, Nevada. Every time I think of this event, I am reminded of how grateful I am, and we all should be, of Marty Hall, Richard Siri, the Reno Bottle Club and the legions of helpers that pulled off this mega event. Marty even reported a strong financial success that demonstrates yet again, that our organization is getting stronger and marching forward. The 2013 FOHBC National in Manchester, New Hampshire next year is progressing smoothly with a majority of the tables already being sold. Lexington, Kentucky will be our location for the 2014 National, so make your plans here, too. You can get information for both events by visiting our website, FOHBC.org. Tom Phillips, our Conventions Director, was even in the southeast this week looking at venues for the 2015 National. It was not too long ago that we were much more short-sighted. Now with this advance planning and public announcements, we can stake our claim on a date that will help other show chairmen decide when to hold their events. As an aside, did you know that there were nine bottle shows this weekend, including one across the pond? Our hobby is so strong. I see the glimmer of change even with our shows. Let's promote more and grow our hobby. Bring people to the shows. Bottles, glass and positive change are contagious.

Federation membership is also drastically up which is excit-

ing. We will be announcing a major new membership drive later this month that uses a 2,000-member target. We are nearing 1,200 members now. So if you are a member, stay with us, if you're undecided, please join! There are so many exciting things planned. Our magazine, Bottles and Extras, is undergoing a major face lift, we have a new web site, by the time you read this, we will be 1,000 members plus on our FOHBC facebook page, the FOHBC Virtual Museum is moving forward (look for a major announcement soon) and we have just sent our first digital newsletter to a large audience of people. The new Federation, your FOHBC.

We need new blood and persons to carry the torch. I will be reaching out to some of our membership for pictures of your bottles, assistance on the web site, articles and stories for Bottles and Extras, the web site, the newsletter and help on the Virtual Museum. If you would like to volunteer, in any area, it would be very much welcomed and appreciated.

You will also notice a new section in the front of Bottles and Extras called Letters to the Editor. I am not sure why this was not there in some form or another before but we really want to hear your stories and ideas and how we can do things better. You can send an e-mail, write a letter or call any board member, including myself at any time. Our contact information is in this magazine and on the web site.

In the January/February 2013 issue of Bottles and Extras, we will be starting a two-page Regional Overview section where we will highlight incoming information from the four regions that make up the Federation (northeast, southern, midwest and western). If you have material please forward to your Regional Director. If you visit the web site or received our newsletter, you will see that Regional News is now appearing in a different and more refreshing format in these venues too.

We are only as strong as our weakest link. I use this expression often in business and in my general conversations with people. Keep an open mind, be positive, and try to help, give constructive criticism and move forward. Smile and someone will smile back to you. Listen and you will hear a story. Step forward and tell a story. Look at your collection and find that missing bottle or link. This is what it is all about. Our best asset is all of our great members.

I am also looking forward to the great 49er Bottle Show in Old Town Auburn, California in December. We usually go to the Festival of Lights parade each year after the show. We love it because the horses, dogs, goats, people and trucks all are adorned with lights for Christmas. Remember, a show is so much better if you make it an experience. While you are at a show, visit a collection, go to a museum, have dinner with a bottle friend, go on a dig etc. There are so many things you can do to stay connected with our great hobby. Make it a multi-dimensional experience. Happy autumn and winter.