

FOHBC Reno Expo Best Bottle Show Ever!

RENO



EXPO



• Dealer and Early Buyer stampede on opening day!

Let's hear from some of the players!

By Ferdinand Meyer V



Over the years I've attended a large number of Club Bottle Shows, National Shows, and Expo's, and I need to say that the Reno 2012 Expo was absolutely fantastic and probably the best all-around show I've ever attended!

Mike Polak

It did not seem appropriate for the Federation or more specifically myself to write an article about the show so I simply sent out some questions to a group of folks I know and asked for their comments. I have to admit, I expected to receive many complaints and notes about how it could have been better. When I started receiving these comments, I honestly said to my wife Elizabeth, "you have got to read these comments!" All I can say is Wow!

I want you all to understand that these have not been edited and I have not removed things I did not like. This is real. This makes me so proud. Again, thanks to the FOHBC, Marty Hall (show chairman), Richard Siri (show co-chairman), Stacy Siri (helped in any way possible), Tom Phillips (FOHBC Conventions Director) and our outgoing FOHBC President, Gene Bradberry. Great job! I would also like to say Thanks to Norman C. Heckler & Company for sponsoring the Shootout event that was received so well and Scott Selenak, our first ever, professional show photographer!

Now for the comments!

Bruce Silva (Jacksonville, Oregon): Rrrreno! I've been attending the Reno show since 1970. It's one of those time / date stamps that I look forward to every year. Back in the day, the convention center (such as it was) was located waaaay south of Reno proper. The MGM Grand sprouted out of the desert, part way and a little south, between Reno and Sparks, in 1978. We used to marvel at its size as we

lumbered through the center of old Reno, down South Virginia, and out into the desert south of town toward the convention center. It was in the middle of nowhere, had a gravel parking lot, and tumbleweeds blowing alongside the building. Funny thing, it's still in the same spot, but bears no resemblance to its former self. And what was the middle of nowhere is now the middle of south Reno. Times change, places change. Progress? (I don't think so...)

Fast forward to 2012. This year, the Reno Show hosted Expo 2012 at what was the MGM Grand; now the Grand Sierra Resort and Casino. I come from meager beginnings and places like the Grand Sierra can be a bit intimidating to an old country boy who's not used to grid lock, anything over a couple of stories high, and glitz and glimmer every where you look. And so, we arrived Thursday to get a lay of the land and figure out what lay on the horizon for us. And that's where the good stuff started.



• Grand Sierra Resort and Casino

Here's my story; and I'm stickin' to it!

1) Setup: Talk about a walk in the park! A freight elevator

that you could drive a Greyhound bus into! And rolling carts, courtesy of the Grand Sierra, that could hold the contents of not one, but two, loaded pickups. I was already smilin' from ear to ear.

2) The Grand Ballroom (heart and soul of the show): Easy access from the ground floor via an escalator, just a hop skip and a jump from the entrance, carpet, twenty-foot-high ceilings, padded chairs, a bullzillion square foot room, draped sales tables (that were in good repair and didn't collapse once the sales racks were up), displays up the whazoo, and room to spread out galore. Who could ask for more? OK, maybe color corrected lighting around the 5500 kelvin, but beggars can't be choosers!

3) Showtime: Exceptionally well organized. Everything went off like clockwork. Sure the neck veins throbbing visibly in Marty's and Rich Siri's necks were visible proof that they were dedicated to making things flow smoothly in terms of both dealer and displayer setup. But the planning paid off in spades. Great job, guys!

4) Crunch time (opening the floodgates): Again, advance planning paid off. Twelve noon - everyone out of the Grand Ballroom. 1 p.m., it looked like a cattle chute outside the entrance to the sales display. The presence of uniformed security guards sent a message and no "gate crashers" made their way in uninvited.

5) Showtime (the nitty gritty): more awesome glass was present than I can ever recall seeing in one place in my 45+ years in the hobby. And the beauty was that both displays and sales tables were adorned with great "stuff." Both west and east were equally represented. Killer western whiskies, bitters, cures, sodas, plus any and everything else that came in glass were present. And from the east; historical flasks, foods, figural bitters, poisons and on and on. Totally breathtaking!

6) Attendance: Both Friday and Saturday were absolutely jam-packed with folks. Sunday started off strong but, as is typical with any show on the last day, things slowed as the clock ticked on.

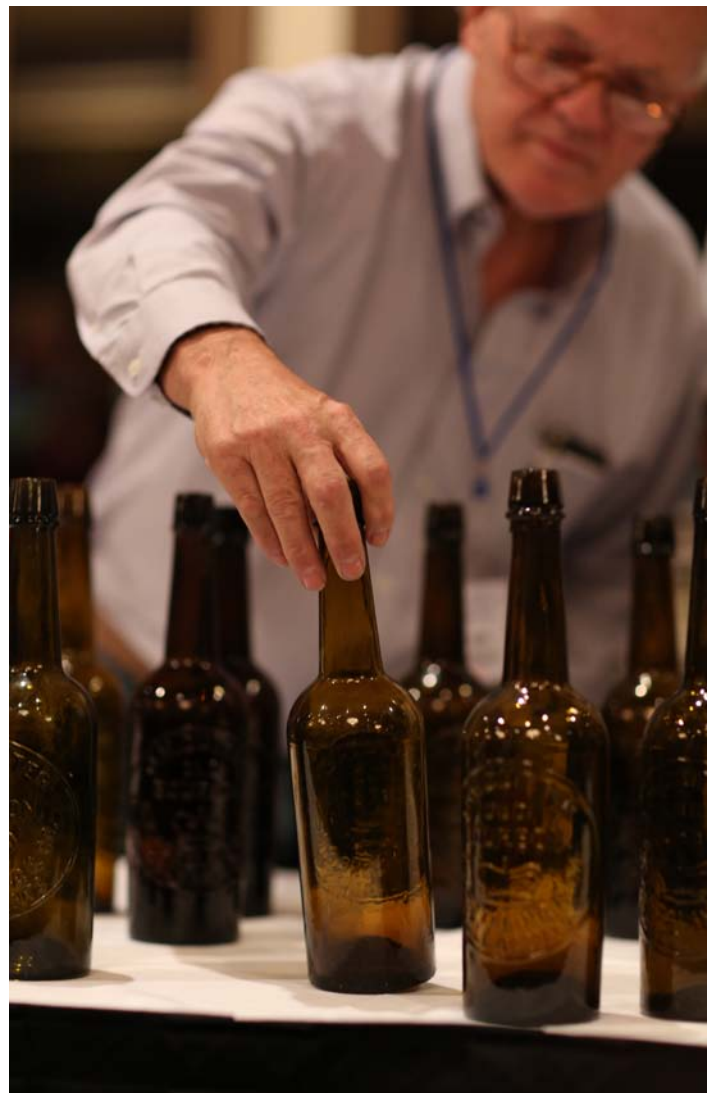
7) Tear down and load out: Ditto Item #1.

8) High Points: a massive array of quality glass was present. Both east and west were equally represented. The displays were out of this world. If you were in a buying mode, both quality, quantity and fair prices were around every corner. The Shootout was a blast; great Drakes, Circle Cutters and inks - something for everyone. Seminars - again, something for everyone.

And yet, there was the one burr under the saddle that

continues to plague every show these days, no matter how much security is present or no matter how vigilant the dealers are; THEFT. I've got my own feelings on the matter and personally think that the "code of the west" oughta still be enforced. The heck with "politically correct." I guess that just don't cut it in the 21st century. It oughta... And yet, with the quantity of killer glass present, coupled with the sheer volume of folks packing the aisles, it could have been a heckuva lot worse. Still, one theft is one too many!

Overall impression: I've always loved the Reno Show. But 2012 was, as Denaveauz and Maison named their top shelf whiskey, the Crème De La Crème! The organization was great. The weather was great. The facility was great. We enjoyed great food, great beer, great whiskey, and great entertainment (thanks daughter Megan for the Ron White tickets!). We spent nearly four full days enjoying the company of the great friends and fellow collectors that we've gotten to know over the years. Who could ask for more! In a nutshell, The show was over the top! A sincere thanks to all that were responsible for a weekend that one and all will hold dear to their hearts. Simply awesome!



• Ralph Hollibaugh judging the JH Cutter Whiskey's

I learned how to have a shootout with killer glass bullets and still remain friends. That shootout was great, we need more of these kind of events, which create a ton of enthusiasm and interest. This shootout was so great that we had a hard time holding back the crowd and by the time it was over camera flashes blinded me! I couldn't believe all the excitement at that event and the glass was unreal.

Lou Lambert



• Incredibly gorgeous arrangement of EC&M insulators displayed by Dennis Bray

Dwayne Anthony (Highland, California) representing ICON (Insulator Collectors On the Net): Since all of you graciously put up with all my pre-show Reno Expo announcements, I thought the most I could do is provide a brief post-show report, now that the Big Show has come and gone.

I have to start off by first saying it was great seeing so many insulator collectors in attendance at a bottle show. There were times when we had so many insulator collectors congregating and visiting at my sales table that I actually felt I was at an insulator national show! Even though the overall insulator offerings were minimal compared to the endless supply of bottles and other go-withs scattered across the huge room, every insulator collector that I spoke with said they were having a great time at the show.

As promised, I took a grouping of quality insulators some that had not been previously offered that were specifically set-aside for the Expo. I was pleasantly surprised throughout the three days of the show by the tremendous insulator interest that was present. One very close friend said his insulator sales far exceeded that of any recent insulator show! His best single insulator sale went to a new collector who was attending his first show of any kind. This new collector was told by a friend of his that he had seen an advertisement for an 'insulator show' in Reno, so he

decided to check it out.

Lou Hall seemed to be constantly busy at the National Insulator Association (NIA) table, discussing insulators and handing out freebies. Bill & Jill Meier were enjoying a little vacation away from the humid heat of the east in trade for the dry heat of Nevada. They were frequently seen at their table offering a bottle auction results book and online package. Don Briel was present offering his latest insulator price guide. There were two attractive female models seen walking the aisles handing out bottle-related advertising, so Don also decided to hire them to pass out his insulator price guide advertising cards.

There were three exhibits featuring insulators. Denny Bray had his jaw-dropping EC&M exhibit set up with great historical materials surrounding it. Colin Jung had a really eye-catching CD 102 CGI exhibit, complete with a handout. My exhibit contained a mixture of swirled bottles, fruit jars and insulators.

Even though his display didn't contain insulators, I also want to give honorable mention to longtime insulator collector Dave Hall for his impressive exhibit of EG Booze bottles. I was a little disappointed that there was little in the way of insulators added to the Gazebo open display, but two EC&Ms did share the shelves with some super rare bottles.

There were several seminars, most related to bottle collecting, but Denny Bray presented a very informative and detailed PowerPoint presentation on EC&M insulators. Denny covered every aspect of fact and theory regarding the company's history and presented the many documented areas of EC&M usage. I was pleased to have the opportunity to provide a seminar on altered glass, using the many samples from the NIA Altered Insulators Exhibit as examples. I stressed to the audience that bottles, fruit jars and other similar glass collectibles can suffer the same outcome as the altered insulators presented in the seminar, so I think a few eyes were opened. A number of insulator walk-ins appeared, including a Chester/US Tel, EC&Ms, a castle and others. A repaired cobalt Cal Elec Works was seen on one table and several bottle dealers had a nice selection of insulators, several of which were sold over the course of the show.

This was a super show overall and it was clearly evident the show host, Marty Hall, worked very hard to make it all happen. The show didn't go off without a hitch or two, but that should be expected with a show of this size. Unfortunately, there were several bottles reported stolen, one of which was on my sales table. Even with that one negative personal experience, I would still rate the show as a huge positive success. I appreciate all of you that attended from the insulator community for showing your support. I have great memories of my first FOHBC Expo that was held in Las Vegas, Nevada, back in 1988. The 2012 Expo was equally impressive and the same great memories will live on.



• Lou Lambert at the West Coast Digging seminar

Lou Lambert (Santa Rosa, California): We had anticipated this show for almost a year but had no idea what to expect. The venue was a pleasant surprise and was just perfect. All aspects of this show were definitely well planned and for the most part came off without a hitch. It was bottle nirvana! It was also the "who's who" of bottle collecting where I met folks in person that I have known for years on the Internet. Awesome displays of beautiful glass bottles like we have


never seen. Then there was the banquet, with an awesome display of food, drink and treats.



• Tom Quinn speaks to a standing room only crowd

I learned how to dig with a really good seminar by Tom Quinn. I learned how to have a shoot-out with killer glass bullets and still remain friends. That shootout was great, we need more of these kind of events, which create a ton of enthusiasm and interest. This shootout was so great that we had a hard time holding back the crowd and by the time it was over camera flashes blinded me! I couldn't believe all the excitement at that event and the glass was unreal. More food and drink, too. We also got to meet the "Most Interesting Man In The World" in the cocktail lounge.

We owe a great deal of thanks to all those who contributed in making this a huge success. I would especially like to thank Marty Hall for all of his hard work and time he dedicated in making this huge event a success. Without him, it wouldn't have happened. There was also the Siri's, who gave countless hours of their time in preparation and setup. A big thanks to Jeff Wichmann for his continuing support to clubs with his more than generous donations, Norman Heckler for his sponsored "shoot-out" event that was the highlight of our trip. Then there's this guy from Texas, that without him, the hobby wouldn't be what it is today. A big thank you, Ferdinand, for all the time, support and positive energy you've brought to the hobby and the direction you've taken it.



And don't forget the many beauties in the backlit gazebo display. There were dozens of one-of-a-kind vessels in that display, and it was almost more than one could absorb.

Steve Ketcham

• The famous Northwestern Bottle Club Gazebo

GAZEBO DISPLAY
FURNISHED BY
NORTHWESTERN
BOTTLE COLLECTORS
ASSOCIATION
SANTA ROSA, CA

Warren Friedrich (Grass Valley, California): Many of the advanced western glass collectors were able to add a significant new addition to their collection over the two-and-a-half-day show. Ken Edward purchased a beautiful Lacour's Sarsapariphère Bitters (variant 2) in a dense bluish-green color, Steve Hubble acquired a California Wine Bitters in a stunning olive-yellow color, Max Bell acquired a Cundurango Bitters in a citron color, John O'Neill purchased a New Almaden California Vichy Water in a forest green color. Dale Mlasko acquired a bluish-green Dr. Henley's Wild Grape Root IXL Bitters (variant 2), Bob Franconi purchased an aqua-colored Dr. Wonser's U.S.A. Indian Root Bitters, Jerry Forbes bought an amber-colored Dr. Wonser's U.S.A. Indian Root Bitters and a green Dr. Renz's Herb Bitters (variant 1). Richard Siri acquired a Yerba Buena Bitters in the rare aqua coloration. Roger Terry added another Lacour's Sarsapariphère Bitters (variant 1) in dark amber to his collection. I was able to snag a light yellow-green Lacour's Sarsapariphère Bitters (variant 1). Don Dwyer added both a Bennett's Wild Cherry Bitters and a Mack's Sarsaparilla Bitters to his collection.



• Banquet speaker & Hall of Famer Warren Friedrich

Bottles seen for sale: Both Bryant's Stomach Bitters variants, along with a green Catawba Wine Bitters and a Mill's Bitters A.M. Gilman Sole Proprietor. Four Rosenbaum's Bitters N.B. Jacobs & Co San Francisco in greens and ambers (variant 1) were observed for sale! Three large lettered Dr. Renz's Herb Bitters were seen, two in yellow-green and one dark amber. Two small lettered Dr.

Renz's, one in green, the other in amber found new homes during the show.

Dennis Rogers (Upland, California): Great show! I was extremely impressed with the size of the show hall and the amount of space behind our sales tables. Had my best sales ever for a bottle show, and some nice response to my cigar and tobacco jar display. Great to see old friends, and meet new ones, some from far away. Congratulations to Marty, Richard, and all the rest of those responsible for this show!



• American Bottle Auctions Display

Jeff Wichmann | American Bottle Auctions (Sacramento, California): I just want to say how moved I was by the care people showed when I had a problem with my wrist and had to visit the local hospital. I was also taken aback by the numerous, and I mean hundreds of people who came up to me and personally either wished the best for me and or our auction. We spent a lot of time and energy preparing and then losing an entire day, which made me feel like a loser. The response I felt from the wonderful people who attended and traveled that far will be something I'll never forget. It made me feel like a winner. It truly made me remember why this hobby is so great; it's the people. Marty Hall, Richard, Ferdinand and Eliz and all the speakers and other terrific people who made it happen should be commended for an event that still brings tears to my eyes. Thank you all.

Dennis Bray (Hanford, California): With the hassles I went through to prepare just a seminar and display, I really can't imagine what Marty Hall and his Reno crew and Richard Siri, Ferd Meyer and the FOHBC team must have gone through to make an Expo of this size come together so well. Great job, 2012 Expo Team!!! Thank you!

Scott Selenak - Show Photographer (Los Angeles, California): Where to begin... my first bottle show, The 2012 FOHBC Expo in Reno, Nevada. I was told it would be quite

a first-time experience and it was indeed. Having a very light understanding of the bottle collecting world from my step-mom, Pam Selenak, I was immediately interested when she requested that I photograph the Reno Expo for the Federation. While I didn't know a whole lot about bottles, I did know that hers were beautiful subjects to shoot, and that there were going to be some of the most famous and rare bottles in the country for me to photograph.

Knowing that this was the first time the Federation has had a photographer (professional) cover their event, I wanted to make sure I was able to capture the focus and the spirit of the event in its entirety. There were so many events and things to do over this three-day-weekend! I started with the bottle seminars Friday morning and was blown away by the amount of knowledge and expertise being shared by and within the bottle community. The lectures really seemed like a great way to encourage this hobby to grow.

I really picked up an interest in the art of bottle digging and all the research, history, preparation, and skill required to accomplish a safe and successful dig. The show opened with a bang! The huge crowd flowed through the doors giving me an endless river of people to photograph as I tried to capture the scale of the Expo. I spent most of the first day capturing some of the "heavy-hitters" of the bottle world being displayed in some of the most beautiful displays I could imagine by some of the country's top bottle collectors. The early-lookers really got to see the *crème de la crème* of the bottles on display at the 2012 Expo.

After a quick wardrobe change and some fresh batteries for my camera, I was off to the FOHBC Awards Banquet. The cocktail hour gave everyone a nice chance to mingle and unwind a bit after a whirlwind of a day at the Expo. As the catering staff unveiled the evening's meal, people began to take their seats as we set in on the generous spread. Finally, a chance to sit down! No one likes getting their picture taken while chewing, so I was able to take a break myself and partake in the dinner. As the night moved forward the banquet hall was filled with the sounds of applause as the Federation awarded its members with recognition for their hard work and efforts of the past year. In addition, the keynote speaker, Warren Friedrich, revealed the fascinating history of the San Francisco Glass Houses. After the banquet, I managed to make a little time to lose some money in the casino because, hey, it is Reno!

Day two... Wow! There was so much action my camera couldn't stop firing. Saturday's focus was getting good coverage of each of the hundreds of booths and displays at the Expo, and capturing the sense of fascination and wonder in the faces of the general public on their first day of admittance. It was a great day of meeting interesting, and friendly





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Scott Selenak (FOHBC Show Photographer)

people eager to help with their knowledge of the bottle world. With thirty pounds of camera gear hanging off my body, it was one long day physically, and an even longer day mentally taking in all the new information while trying to stay on task of commemorating the great event.

As the chaos of the morning started to die down, the anticipation for the evening's Bottle Shootout started to ramp up. The participation in the shootout was amazing! I was surprised that after only a short time learning about this hobby that I was starting to see the attributes that made these bottles so unique. It was really educational to see them pitted against one another and get a sense of what made a particular bottle stand out. And, boy, did it give me some of the best photo opportunities I've ever had. We're seriously talking about some of the best bottles in the country!

To some Sunday is a day of rest, but you would not get that impression from this crowd. The last day of the Expo slowed down a bit, but was a day for good buys and big awards. Impressive plaques and giant ribbons were awarded, but played second fiddle to the beautiful and unique displays they were attached to. The pace of the day allowed me to capture some time-lapse sequences that really turned out well in showing the sense of space in the expansive expo hall. Three days, and three thousand pictures went by in a flash! I cannot easily summarize this event as every time I start to think of one facet, I could begin yet another paragraph. The weekend was filled with education, fun, and a lot of hard work. I would like to individually thank all of the people who made this event such a memorable experience, but for the sake of time and my memory, I extend my deepest gratitude to the FOHBC, it's board of directors, its members and all the dealers and collectors at the Expo. [FOHBC: Thank you Scott!!!]

I hope to extend my knowledge in the world of antique bottle collecting as well as my skills in capturing inspirational images of such interesting and unique artifacts at future events. See you all soon!

Steve Ketcham (Edina, Minnesota): After a great weekend, it was hard to leave Reno. I wish every bottle collector could have been there to enjoy the many wonderful displays featuring rare and wonderful bitters, whiskies, pickles and foods, miniatures, pot lids, hair bottles, cigar and tobacco jars, Hutchinson's, Heinz bottles, Nevada rarities, and so much more. The eye-popping colors seen within the pickle and food display, and in the tobacco and cigar jar display, were by themselves worth the trip to Reno. And don't forget the many beauties in the backlit gazebo display. There were dozens of one-of-a-kind vessels in that display, and it was almost more than one could absorb.

The bounty continued as we all searched for that special



• Steve Ketcham receiving a Banquet award plaque

piece among the countless treasures found on over 300 sales tables. I cannot imagine anyone left the show without a new gem to add to the collection.

As if the displays and sales tables weren't enough, we were also treated to great seminars on Friday morning. The many presenters are to be commended for their efforts and thanked for the time it took to prepare and share their valuable information.

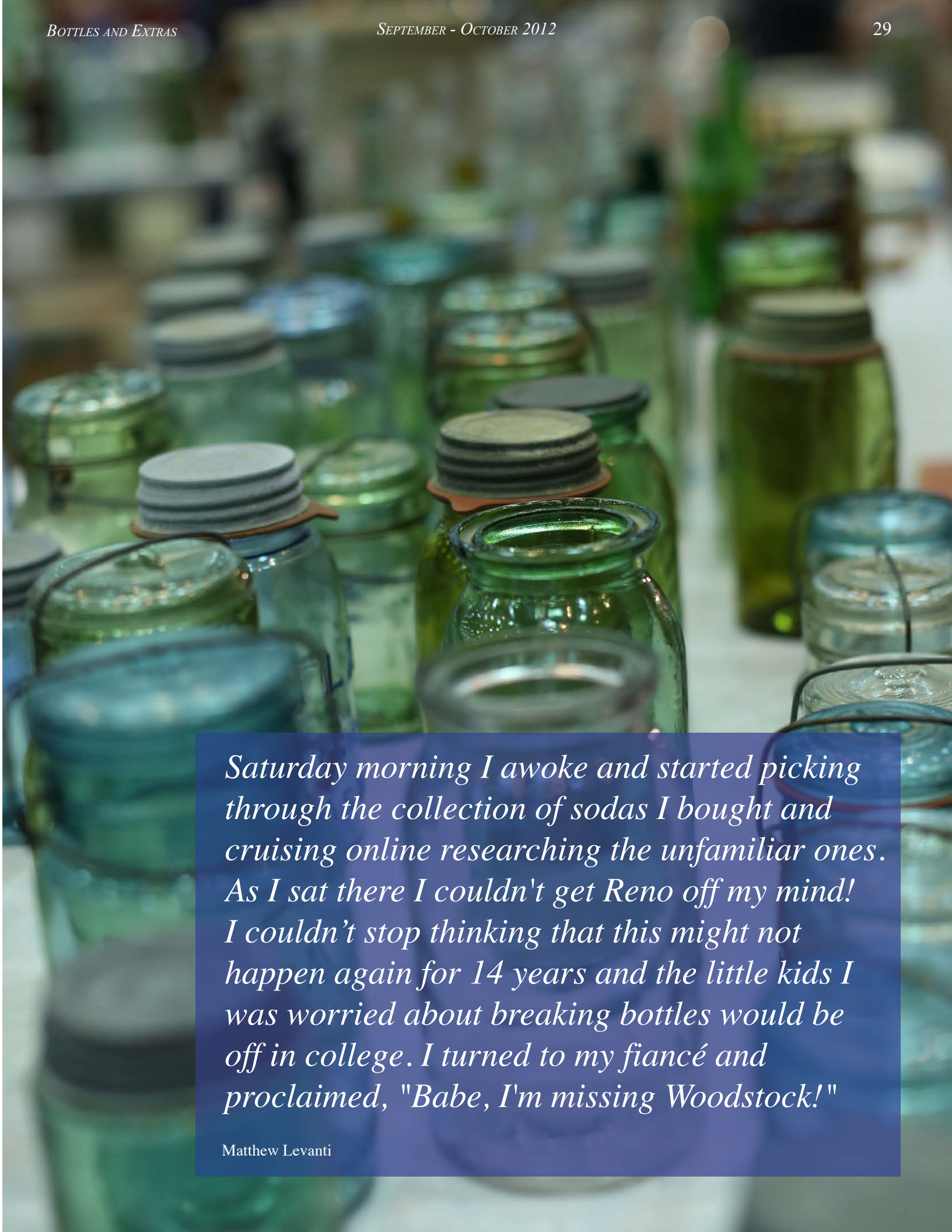
And let's not forget the pleasure of connecting with old and new friends as we shopped the show or sat at our sales tables. Several of us were lucky enough to visit the fabulous western-themed collection of bottles and artifacts at the home of a Reno resident, and we were awed.

Thanks to the Hecklers for their sponsorship of the "Drakes, Whiskey and Umbrella Ink Shootout." It was a nice chance to see even more great bottles and to spend more time chatting with friends. Jeff Wichmann and American Bottle Auctions should also be recognized for the generous door prizes.

Kudos also to the Federation officers who were so present and available during the event. One could always find a friendly individual at the FOHBC table eager to help out or answer a question.

Finally, special recognition to Marty Hall, The Siri family and the Reno Antique Bottle Club for the many hours of toil they spent on our behalf. We are in their debt.

Randy Selenak (Orange, California): It is hard to find a place to start. This is only the second Expo that I've attended but the only word I can think of to describe it is "unbelievable." After watching Pam put together the Pomona show, I can't imagine the time and sacrifices that

A photograph of numerous green glass bottles, some with metal caps, arranged on a table. The bottles are in various stages of focus, with some in the foreground being sharp and others in the background being blurred. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the glass and the metallic sheen of the caps.

Saturday morning I awoke and started picking through the collection of sodas I bought and cruising online researching the unfamiliar ones. As I sat there I couldn't get Reno off my mind! I couldn't stop thinking that this might not happen again for 14 years and the little kids I was worried about breaking bottles would be off in college. I turned to my fiancé and proclaimed, "Babe, I'm missing Woodstock!"

Matthew Levanti

Marty Hall and Richard Siri had to endure to pull off this fantastic event. I think the venue couldn't have been more perfect. It was so great having the entire event under one roof and not having to drive all over, like it was at York. York was my first Expo and although it was pretty awesome, Reno's Expo blew it away.

The room that the show was held in was probably the best I've ever experienced of any show I've ever attended. The table setups, wide aisles, carpeting etc. made it a wonderful experience. If I had to name any faults at all, it would probably be the lighting. Although the hall was very well lit, the lighting distorted the true color of the bottles I was looking at. I made several trips outside into the sunlight to check out the true colors.



• Louie Pellegrini and his Peoples Choice award

The displays were mind-blowing. I'm glad I didn't have to judge which one was the best. The seminars were quite a learning experience for me. The only thing that disappointed me was having multiple seminars going on at the same time so I couldn't learn from all of them. Ferdinand's seminar was great along with Tom Quinn's. It seemed to me that Tom's was the most heavily attended. As far as the shootout goes, what can I say except that the Federation, the Reno club and Norman C. Heckler really put together a winner. I hope this is a tradition that will be included in all future national/Expo shows. The food, socializing, and bottle works of art were just the best. Ferdinand did an awesome job of emceeing the event. For any future shootouts, it would be nice if it could be designed so that everyone could stay seated in order to see the bottles better, then have photo ops after the contest.



• Cigar & Tobacco Jars Display by Dennis Rogers

This was the first time I have been to The Grand Sierra resort. I thought the rooms were fantastic and the restaurants were great. I know I'm probably rambling on and on but it's kind of hard to put something this big into perspective. I hope the Federation can put something together to acknowledge Marty and Richard for putting together such a magnificent show. This show turned out to be everything I hoped it would be. I also want to congratulate Ferdinand Meyer as the new Federation President. It was fun watching his excitement and enthusiasm. It was like contagious!

Max Bell (Auburn, California): This show was so exciting. Starting with seminars on Friday, the shootouts on Saturday and some of the best displays ever assembled. This type of education and displays make bottle collecting one of the most enjoyable hobbies. Some bottle shows in the west have had less attendance and become smaller each year. It is no longer about just trying to obtain bottles for your collection, but about collectors coming together to enjoy what others have learned about history. It is possible to bring new collectors to this hobby, just look at the enthusiasm generated by putting on a quality show. I can't thank Marty Hall enough for his long hours and perseverance in 1,000 last-minute details to pull off the Best show ever in the west!



We were also fascinated by the "verticality" of many of the sales tables and the use of shelving as a means of display. Most New England dealers show their wares in a table-top fashion and I found the Western displays to be more visually satisfying.

Jeff and Holly Noordsy



• Mike Polak with his commanding table presence

Mike Polak (Long Beach, California): Over the years I've attended a large number of club bottle shows, national shows and Expos, and I need to say that the Reno 2012 Expo was absolutely fantastic and probably the best all-around show I've ever attended. The entire organization of the event including the displays, seminars, banquet, the shoot-out (wild and a lot of fun!), and that excellent room/table layout will set the bar high for all future shows. Also, a big Thank You to all of the Reno Bottle Club members who were extremely helpful and were there for everyone throughout entire show, no matter what was going on. And the biggest Thank You has to go to Marty Hall. I'm not sure that everyone understands all of the hours of background work that happens before a show like this can happen and become the huge success that it was. Marty went beyond the call of duty and made it tough act for anyone to follow. One last note: It seemed to be a consensus between all the buyers and sellers that when Sunday rolled around, they didn't want the show to come to an end. It was just a super fun, all-around well-run show. Thanks to Marty and the entire Reno Bottle Club for a job well done!

Sheldon Baugh (Russellville, Kentucky): What a wonderful show! I thoroughly enjoyed everything about this show. It was great seeing many friends from the west as well as those from the east. This was one of the best in a long time for the high quality bottles on the top of tables and I made many good purchases. The dealers were eager to do business and were happy. Great seminars, banquet and shoot-out. I know that the west does shoot-outs often and several of us discussed the possibility of continuing this at subsequent shows. I can hardly wait for the FOHBC Manchester National next year. Congratulations to Tom Phillips and the show chairman and co-chairman, Marty Hall and Richard Siri, and all their helpers.

Steve Abbott (Gold River, California): As an ex-chairperson of the 49er bottle show in Auburn, I know how difficult it can be to put on a small show. I can barely

conceive of all of the problems involved in a large show. I was also a dealer and buyer. It was the best gross I've ever had, and I found the most treasures I've ever found in one show. If there were any hitches, I never heard about them. The FOHBC and Marty Hall and the Reno crew deserve a big bow from all of us for such a great experience.

Matthew Levanti (Placerville, California): With the big Western Expo just around the corner, I had sudden plans to travel to New England back in June, which financially left me without the means for a show table in Reno at the first National Expo since 1988! I made hasty plans to at least come up for the weekend and stay in the hotel, and flew off to Boston and a month-long stay out east. Well, the best-laid plans can fall through, and getting back to California it looked as if Reno was going to be out of the question. I had a small collection of western sodas to look at Friday night, my digging partner was no longer going at all and my fiancé and I didn't think it was going to be a good place for our wild but lovable kids. I still held on to one little shred of a chance I might be able to make it up for the day on Saturday, but with the sun setting out my window so did my hopes.



• Swirled Bottles, Jars & Insulators - Dwayne Anthony

Saturday morning I awoke and started picking through the collection of sodas I bought and cruising on line researching the unfamiliar ones. As I sat there I couldn't get Reno off my mind! I couldn't stop thinking that this might not happen again for 14 years and the little kids I was worried about breaking bottles would be off in college. I turned to my fiancé' and proclaimed, "Babe, I'm missing Woodstock!" So, at the last minute, we threw together some plans to visit with her father in Dayton, (45 minutes from Reno), which would afford me a few hours to hit the show.

I walked onto the show floor at about 3 p.m., with the show closing at 5 p.m. I didn't see all the tables and I only got to say "hi" to a few old friends and acquaintances and barely managed to pick a few bottles to take home! I wish I had been able to make it for the whole weekend and spend some time with friends I haven't been able to see in quite some time. With the seminars, displays and everything going on, it was bottle collector's heaven. I didn't have time to stay for the shootout but, boy, does Norm throw a Heck of a party! As the whiskey bottles came out it was time for me to leave, I hesitantly said some good-byes and made my way out the door. As walked past the blinking lights and cocktail waitresses on the casino floor, I thought to myself, "For all I missed, I sure did see a lot." Someday when I'm old and gray, I will tell the grandkids that I was there! In summary, if you can only make it for a few hours, kids, make sure you do so! A few hours can be a wonderful time you just don't want to miss!



• Banquet audience during Western Glass Houses talk

Dale Santos (Foresthill, California): It was a pleasure attending the FOHBC Expo held in Reno, Nevada. The facilities were first class. What a delight to meet up with old friends and to make new friends. Nice wide aisles insured a enjoyable experience while walking around the dealers' room. The Shootouts were very entertaining indeed! I was able to acquire two nice demijohns. Barbara and I had a wonderful time. Thank you to all who worked so hard to put this show on.

Rick Simi (Downieville, California): Fellow members and collectors, I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the Reno Expo. It was really fun visiting with old friends and making new ones. A big thank you to all the folks that took the time to put together the seminars that were presented on Friday morning. Due to the tight scheduling, I was not able to attend all the seminars I wanted to. I learned a lot from both of the seminars I attended and appreciate all the time the presenters spent doing the hard research that most of the collectors blow off. If it wasn't for the folks that do the research and share their knowledge with other collectors nobody would know anything about the stuff we collect. Thanks for sharing your knowledge.

Tom Quinn (Benicia, California): Ferdinand, I just wanted to let you know that you and the FOHBC did a fantastic job presenting the Expo last weekend out West here! I have only heard positive after positive comment about the show and the facility. It was really exciting and fun to have another Expo on the West Coast after Las Vegas in 88! I've already expressed my gratitude to Marty and Richard as well.

Also, it was a pleasure to finally meet you in person, after almost daily reading your posts on Peachridge this past year (your website Rocks, by the way!!). I think we may have crossed paths at Auburn, not knowing who each other was, while I was setting-up my London Jockeys in the group display!

My "Bottle Digging in the West 2012" seminar was a great success, and very well received, thanks to your efforts of getting the word out on the internet, and Richard and Marty putting up additional signage prior. I counted over 80 people, with standing room only in the back of the room as well. There still is a lot of interest in the digging aspect of the hobby and I think I was able to successfully inspire some people to not give up hope and how to interface history and digging as a recipe for subterranean success!

I saw in your Expo "sneak peek photos", a picture of my snake "Salvadora" in the bottle. I had that on display during the seminar. I don't know if you heard the story or not on the circumstances surrounding the excavation of the bottle with the snake inside or not. It came out of the bottom of a circa 1880's-90's privy, stopper stuck in the neck preventing the formaldehyde from leaking out. The yard was where a very uncooperative tenant woman from El Salvador rented the house. It's fun to see that a picture of it wound up with the Expo pictures!

Lance Westfall (San Diego, California): A HUGE thank you to Marty Hall for pulling off the greatest magic show since David Blaine's levitation trickery! And a big thank

you to the key players in the FOHBC like Pam & Randy, the Siri's, and the Meyers who not only did so much for the success of the show, but continually infuse the hobby with such a high level of dedication and passion! Big Wins: Exceptional glass of all shapes, colors, and sizes! Fantastic speakers on well-selected topics, The Shootout was phenomenal, amazing Cutters, Drake's and Inks. The Displays.....Wow! I've never bought, sold and traded so much quality glass!

Suggestions for next big show: Better overhead lighting to view the glass on sales tables, 2 longer days instead of 3 shorter days (ex. 12-7 p.m. on Friday, 8 a.m. -7 p.m. on Saturday, no Sunday), Shootout on the evening of the first night so the participating bottles can be displayed the next day at the show. Any bottle thieves should be entered into a real Shootout where they can be pelted with crock beers & broken shards of glass. Overall, best show I have ever been to! Not sure if it will ever be duplicated!

Marty Hall (Reno, Nevada): I hope everyone enjoyed the show and found something nice to take home with them. We started this Expo almost 2 years ago when Richard Siri was the president of the FOHBC. We talked and he asked what I thought about hosting another big show in Reno; well, I couldn't say no. We worked countless hours to make this show run smoothly and to make it an unforgettable show for you. If there was one thing I could change, I would have added more security. Every year western shows have theft including Las Vegas, Auburn and Reno. I think we had multiple people working the show, and this totally bummed me out. I apologize to those who lost bottles. It's sad to think we have entered a new era that requires keeping your bottles behind a locked case. I hope you had fun and enjoyed Reno. Support your local clubs and the FOHBC!

Jeff Burkhardt (Cedarburg, Wisconsin): Probably 80%+ from the west, the dealers and show-goers were wonderful. The best part was connecting with all the people in our hobby and making three new collector friends. I commend New Englanders, the Noordsy's, George's and David Olson, plus Dick Watson and Jack Stecher for coming the distance. I'm certain they enjoyed themselves and I suspect, added a valuable "Western-perspective" to their already immense volume of bottle knowledge. Disappointing that more Easterners didn't make it!

The seminars were super, finding Fred Holabird's on bottle values/trends and investing of particular interest. As always, I was right at home in Ferdinand Meyer's well-orchestrated Bitters seminar, with collector participation the "frosting on the cake"! Friday's Federation banquet was delicious (really), Warren Friedrich's presentation on

Western Glass History fascinating and round-table conversation delightful. Finally, I was honored to participate in Saturday night's "shootout" as a judge for the Drakes Plantation Bitters. A ton 'o fun; great bottles, great camaraderie and we didn't "clink" a one!

While I bought nothing of significance, I sold 3 good pieces and really enjoyed seeing the different (Western) bottles amidst a varied assortment of really interesting and qualitative tabletop collectables. The Western Bitters offered for sale were top-echelon and those displayed were absolutely the "Best of the West"! Specifically, Richard Siri's Green Dr. Wonsler's Indian Root Bitters, Bryant's Stomach Bitters cone and J.G. Frisch's California Bitters are "to die for"! Lastly, congrats to Steve Hubble on the killer green and whittled California Wine Bitters he went home with!

Jeff Noordsy (Vermont): Holly and I greatly enjoyed our trip to Reno and we are very thankful for the efforts of the Siri's, Marty Hall and the FOHBC. This was our first time attending a Western Show and we were struck by the numerous ways it differed from shows on the East Coast. Of immediate impact was the incredible breadth and number of displays. I was particularly impressed by Lou Pellegrini's pickles and sauces exhibit (an AMAZING collection) but it was just one of many impressive offerings. Also pleasing was the number of go-withs and advertising pieces offered for sale - sadly, we do not see much of this material in the East and it was refreshing to see the appreciation of this material among Western collectors. We were also fascinated by the "verticality" of many of the sales tables and the use of shelving as a means of display. Most New England dealers show their wares in a table-top fashion and I found the Western displays to be more visually satisfying.

Because of the restrictions placed upon us by air travel we did not have our usual inventory but we sold several items and I was particularly pleased with the half-dozen items we purchased.

Of the non-show related activities the shootout was a highlight and we would like to extend our thanks to the Hecklers for the complimentary food and drinks and to Ferdinand Meyer for organizing the event. It is my sincere hope that this type of event can be incorporated into future shows.

In the end however, it was seeing old friends (many of whom I had not visited with since Denver 2000) and putting faces to names with telephone and email acquaintances that was the highlight of the trip. Here's hoping some folks from the West will come to Manchester, New

Hampshire next year to celebrate the first FOHBC New England national show!

James Campiglia (Montana): Late response due to being out digging.... and still trying to find a good whole bottle. A superb show! Amazing amount of planning that we are all very thankful for to the many people who helped to make this a success and a fun show. Sales were great. I had the chance to see so many friends. I talked with collectors who I barely knew, or just knew the names of, and now know them better. Seeing a professional photographer around was real important as images of the fine collectors as well as the bottles will be captured now forever.

Everything was first class! We have a first class hobby unlike any other. When I arrived at the shoot-out now knowing what to expect I was amazed at there being so many collectors as well as food. A big thanks to Norman Heckler on this and his help in contributing to a West coast show. It was great to see so many from back East and throughout the country. I was happy to see a new bottle friend, Mr. James Bell from Australia come so far and bring such large bottles. We met at the Ohio show a year or so ago. So many familiar faces, so much fun and such amazing glass and color. I thought it was a dream.....This was a once in a lifetime event that will be hard to top! Every collector needs to hear about, see pictures of, etc. and attend the next Federation show whenever they can. I can't wait for the next one!

Mike Dolcini (Sacramento, California): The event was by far, the best we have attended and the facility was par excellence. My "puniness" did not prevent Jane and me from enjoying the entire experience. The displays were some of best we have ever seen and those who sacrificed their time and efforts to ensure that the experience was an extremely positive one, performed a tremendous job. The shootouts were a lot of fun and the collectors who participated entered some great bottles. What a hoot!

Lou Pellegrini (California): I have attended 1976, 1980, 1984, 1988 (I was chairman of that event put on by the Western Region) 2004, 2008 FOHBC Expo's. I have to say this 2012 event was one of the top three. Great job by Marty and Richard and all those who helped them. Thank You to those that voted for my display for People's Choice Award. It was my pleasure to share my collection at this great event.

Bill Ham (Lakeport, California): This was one of the best Expos ever with the very interesting and innovative "shoot-out". Richard, Beverly and Stacey Siri, Marty Hall and the gang that put the show on should be very proud of the tremendous accomplishment. This was a show that the

Federation can be very proud of.



• One of the many desserts at the Banquet



• Gorgeous bottles on every table!



*See you in Manchester,
NH next year!*

Ferdinand Meyer V, FOHBC President