



# FOHBC PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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This Sunday morning, the customary fire (at least this year) is present in the fire place and I watch for the first hints of morning as I nurse my coffee. I sit here waiting for everyone else (wife, grandchildren, sleep-over friends and dogs) to wake up on this Sunday in late January. The troops did not have school this past Friday as Houston and surrounding areas were shut down with an ice storm. Like many of you, we have had a record-breaking, cold winter too. Yes, I am sure some of you are smiling as your coldness is hovering near zero and we shiver at 40 degrees. All I can say is, keep those bodies and bottles warm!

I wanted to take a moment and share a nice morning I had with two of my grandchildren as I 'home schooled' them on the weather day when they missed school. Our first class was "Antique Bottles 101." Nicolas (10 years old) and Isabella (9 years old) were taken on a field trip to various rooms of the house and told 'Bottle Stories.' I thought their attention would quickly wane but to my surprise and pleasure, they really enjoyed the talk and wanted more bottle classes when the first session was done. The really neat part was when I was reading some comments on some recent bottles on facebook, I noticed the children had 'liked' certain posts and even commented on a few bottles that they recognized. These children are so important to our future. Take some time out and share with the next generation of bottle collectors. If we do not plant the seeds, we will not have a crop.

Work on the Virtual Museum progresses on a number of levels such as fund-raising, design development and formation of a governing board. The concept still can be broken down into three major areas including the 3-dimensional creation of an experiential exterior and interior building space, site or museum navigation and bottle presentation. The bottle presentation would include three or so outstanding photographs, a bottle rotation element and a video. This part is interesting but a challenge as these bottles may not come to us. We may have to go to the bottles, within the collections or at a regional 'round-up' to conduct the filming and photography. Image quality and presentation consistency is paramount. It is the experience we are after to allow you to see and gather information on a specific piece.

We are even hoping to have our first 'filming' session at the 2014 Lexington National Bottle Show in August if we can work out the details. All this takes time, planning and of course money. The Federation wants to thank the many gift givers so far who have raised our total to \$12,858 as of this writing. You can see the bottle art and ways to give in an advertisement within this issue or online at the FOHBC web site. All givers are also recognized on the web site. Rome was not built in a day, nor is a museum in real life. This is a generational game-changer in the bottle world. We need your support, help, ideas, bottles and time if you would like to be part of this exciting project.

The other day, I joined a local bottle club from another region as I sometimes do to show my support and to follow some of the progressive ideas that the club is offering. In this case it was the Wisconsin Antique Advertising & Bottle Club. With the \$30 dues, which seems to be about average for some of the clubs I join, I was content on getting some value with their web site and newsletter.

I say this as our FOHBC annual dues is also \$30 and we are providing an abundance of value such as our 72-page Bottles and Extras, which is a monumental and time-consuming component. When you factor in printing costs, mailing and all of the administration, it is a big deal. Of course, we also have our web site, digital newsletter, virtual museum project, national show, resources, historical archives and other areas. I firmly believe that we need to look at these costs, our membership, getting new members and the future of our hobby and try to figure out a 'tiered' membership plan. Please let us know if you have any ideas. This is a great responsibility and your board members are looking at all of the options. We need to be responsible, deliver, unify and grow. We cannot do this without your support.

I would like to remind our members that you can access private and secure areas of our website for member names and collecting interest. You can also read past issues of Bottles and Extras and conduct research for information you may need. This is also a huge effort that is being put forth by the Federation as we have to index and digitize past issues leading back many years. Our hope is that sometime in the next year or two, that we will have all past issues in a readable format, cover to cover and have some type of master index where you can search and read any article that was ever published.

All this takes time. Your board members are volunteers. I sure hope that more of you will step forward with ideas and areas where you can help. I trust I will see many of you at the great Baltimore Antique Bottle Show, my home town.