

FOHBC

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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This year sure has been off to an interesting start. In only a few weeks' time our entire way of life has been turned upside down. Many, if not all of us, have experienced some life changes during this COVID19 global pandemic. My heart goes out to all of those who have experienced health issues or major economic distress. These are trying times and I hope our FOHBC community stays healthy and safe. I would encourage everyone to take this time to reflect on the great relationships you have with family and friends.

This pandemic has also forced a major change in the hobby with many shows cancelling along with local live auctions, flea markets, and sales. Some shows have rescheduled for later in the year, so I have high hopes that we will have a very intense and productive second half. The FOHBC VM board has responded to the pandemic by opening up the FOHBC Virtual Museum to free admission for a limited time. I recently saw a very nice green Pike's Peak flask added. I have also been seeing regular updates that the whiskey gallery is currently ramping up. Keep in mind that this effort takes a lot of time. Alan DeMaison and Ferdinand Meyer V have been putting in many hours to add items. Galleries will continue to grow and new ones will be opening in the coming months. Continue to check back for more exciting glass.

We also realize that many of you are likely wondering about the status of our Reno 2020 National Antique Bottle Show & Expo happening in late July / early August. At this time, we plan to move forward with the event. Richard Siri has been keeping a pulse on the local schedules and other events. Please make your hotel reservations and table reservations soon if you plan to attend. The hotel has a very flexible cancellation policy and is working with our organization closely to monitor the status of the event as we get closer. Please keep in mind that your health and safety is of the upmost importance and we will make more announcements as the dates draw near. I know I am personally looking forward to the ability to travel again and get to a great show! I hope many of you are as well.

The FOHBC has also experienced some additional impacts from the current pandemic. The FOHBC board has agreed to delay the officer elections by one year. This means the elections will take place in August of next year. We have many opportunities to serve on the board. If you are interested in serving the organization, please reach out to Val Berry. Existing officers that will not be serving another term on the board will have successfully completed their term at the conclusion of the Reno 2020 Expo. Some new officers may then be appointed by the serving President to board positions until the elections next year. I felt this was very important to communicate to our membership.

This year has been exceptionally trying for our family as well. I continue to battle health issues that have recently peaked again, we had to say goodbye to our 17 year old furry family member, and as I write this, my father-in-law is in the hospital slowly recovering from a dangerous multi-week battle with influenza and pneumonia. This is all in addition to the lifestyle changes we have had to adapt to during this pandemic. However, the most tragic and quite frankly horrific news came less than a week ago.

I am sure most of you have heard and are aware of the devastating news that we have lost a true icon in the hobby. Legendary historical flask collector, Mark Vuono passed away as a result of a senseless act of violence. Mark touched so many lives in a positive way and was one of the biggest advocates for our great hobby that I have ever come to know. I write this all with a very heavy heart as Mark and I were great friends and talked regularly. I feel obligated not to write too much in this letter as many tributes are currently being composed for publication. Jim Bender is working on a tribute for *Bottles and Extras*, another tribute will be published in *Antique Bottle and Glass Collector* magazine, and many tributes have already been posted to the Facebook group "In memory of Mark Vuono" created by good friend Rick Ciralli. Mark was inducted into the FOHBC Hall of Fame along with his late father Charles Vuono in 2017. My heart is broken for Mark's family and all of those that have gotten to know Mark through the years.

I want to take this time during a great trial and disruption of our way of life to encourage everyone to love a little more, be more forgiving, be more kind, and cherish the friendships that we have. You never know what someone else is going through. We are blessed in so many ways and now is the time to help others when they need it most. I hope each and every one reading this stays safe, stays healthy, and has a great year ahead.

As always, I look forward to serving you!