

# FOHBC

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



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**A**s President of FOHBC, I would like to take this opportunity to address some comments that continue to be communicated to me. Our members, our board and I have no explanation as to why certain individuals feel the way they do, so please feel free to send us your comments so we can address them in hopes of alleviating your concerns.

At times, the little hairs on the back of my neck stand up when I hear someone say that the FOHBC is an elitist organization, but nothing could be farther from the truth. Most of our members are not born to wealthy families and I am fairly certain all of them have worked very hard to achieve everything they have earned in life. I am constantly amazed at how many of our board members continually give of themselves; many times at the expense of their families in terms of the time taken away from them. I can unequivocally state that our board is one of the hardest working, groups of committed individuals representing you and your region. They are a diverse group of people from all ages, backgrounds, occupations and interests. They are anything but elitist and this is my opinion after working with all of them for several years now. They are the most down to earth group of dedicated individuals you would ever want to work with who so generously give of their time to a hobby they love. I personally don't think badly of anyone just by the virtue that they may have been born into a circumstance of financial means. I doubt any of us pick our friends by what is in their bank account, or the size of their home, or the cars they drive, and if you do well then perhaps the problem does not lie with us but rather you. Many of us started out as bottle diggers and remain diggers to this day. We are in a sense amateur archaeologists.

I just turned sixty-four years of age at the end of August and I have had probably one of the most enjoyable digging years of my life, thanks to the relationships I have cultivated and the friends that I have made. We are happy for each other when we have the ability to save a bottle from the tractors treads or the claws of the excavator. We only dig with granted permission from the construction company or property owner, and we share our finds with those who helped us achieve any success we are fortunate to have. While much of this is on weekends or after hours, we still make sure to completely fill our holes and leave the site in a safe and restored condition, and if something fails at a later date,

we go back and rectify it. (Elitists certainly would never take the time to do this). The immense fun we have digging together is what creates great memories for a time when we can no longer dig due to our advanced age or physical restraints. To hold something in our hands that has not seen the light of day since the time of the Civil War is truly astounding. The anticipation of each and every bottle extracted from the privy is palpable.

We recently had the good fortune to dig a dump that was completely comprised of trash from the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire of 1906, recovering many treasures of common to rare glass and relics. Shortly thereafter a construction project provided additional opportunities that had a number of early privies that contained relatively few items, to some significant finds for our personal collections. I was thrilled to personally dig a Jackson's Napa Soda bottle that I did not have in my collection. I have exactly 89 unique and different mold variants of these bottles, so to dig one I did not have was nothing short of a small miracle. While not of much monetary value per-se, it was still something of importance to me. I had only seen one other prior to finding this one. It was a transitional bottle that went from a blob top to a crown top, but with an extended neck, not made in the bottle machine with a nice twists in the glass resulting from the extraction from the mold. That makes 90.

OK, enough about why we are the organization of the people, but elitist will never define us. Now onto the state of our hobby. It seems we all are feeling a little more comfortable coming out of what I like to call Covid hibernation with the vaccinations doing their work and decreasing the infections around us. I am not going to get on a political bandwagon, but I am not sure why vaccination ever became a political issue. I don't choose my friends based on vaccination or no vaccination, and neither does the virus. There is no denying that our shows have taken a severe hit due to this pandemic. The vaccination rate in San Mateo County where I live is over 90% and while there are some breakthrough infections, for the most part our hospitals are clear and open for business. Our state of California has some of the lowest infection rates in the country, and if we all want to get back to our shows again, then vaccination is the quickest way to get there. That's not a political or elitist viewpoint, it's a scientific one.

I know we are all looking forward to the Reno 2022 National Antique Bottle Show, next August. It's really going to be an outstanding event, so make your plans now to what might possibly be the best show in the past ten years. The pent-up demand should bring all sorts of things out of the closets, garages, barns and attics. I hope all of you are continuing to stay healthy and wish you the best in your collecting efforts. Also I want to put in a plug for the Virtual Museum, whose contributors are doing an outstanding job. If you have not had the opportunity to go in and look at all of the new additions to the museum, you are really missing out on some of the best glass photography I have ever seen. Do yourself a favor and jump on line to the Virtual Museum and enjoy the experience. I know you will be glad you did.