

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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We are well into a very active bottle show season. This Fall I attended a couple of great shows: Nashville and Chicago. At the Nashville show, we had a great Federation presence and I had the opportunity to talk to many seasoned and new collectors. It was an easy sell to have them take our latest AB&GC magazine and listen to what the Federation has to offer.

The Houston 24 Info Packet is a terrific way to have all out information in one handout. I witnessed lots of interest in the Nashville event. The more I see how the special exhibits are coming together, the more I realize it will be an event of a lifetime. This is really a family event with so much for everyone, not just bottle collectors. The Museum and activities that will surround this Expo make this a vacation that just so happens to have a great bottle show to attend also.

The Chicago Show was also well-attended, and I had the opportunity to discuss Federation benefits with many collectors. I am always surprised when members do not fully use the Virtual Museum or Auction Price Report. If you need any help learning how to access and navigate these tremendous resources, just let me know and I will be happy to walk you through it.

Alice and I plan to attend the Jackson, Mississippi, Tampa, Florida, and Chattanooga shows and I hope to attend the Rochester, New York, and Mansfield, Ohio shows. Though I would like to attend the Baltimore show, I will rely on other Board members to represent the Federation at that one.

Our webinars (online seminars) are getting a life of their own. The most recent one, presented by Joe Gourd and John Kemler, was a delightful look at unusual trade cards. We had a record number of attendees! Recorded webinars are posted on our website FOHBC.org.

Dann Louis and I are putting together a webinar featuring John Wolf's collection. Dann is also writing a Cure book based on John's collection. If you have pictures of John and his bottles, please let me know so that we can add them to our webinar.

Keep an eye on our webinar schedule to see other upcoming topics. The well-documented photos and historical information from our presenters, along with questions and comments from attendees, are building on the wealth of knowledge we are saving for future generations.

In the absence of a National Convention in 2023, we did not have January – February 2024

an annual membership meeting. There were no issues requiring a membership vote. Hopefully, through this magazine which serves as the official publication of the Federation, my President's letters, the Board meeting minutes that are published on our website, and my communications with many of you at shows, by phone, and through emails, we are fulfilling the purpose of the annual meeting to keep you aware of Federation activities. We will have a membership meeting at Houston 24. There are items requiring membership approval including bylaws updates/revisions, and the election of Board of Director members for the 2024-2026 term.

Our bylaws revision proposal, including rationale for changes, will include updated guidelines regarding the use of on-line meetings and electronic communications, a streamlined board and duties of each position, and guidelines for the new initiatives that have been implemented since the last revision. You will receive this information well before the annual membership meeting.

The list of nominated candidates is on page 6. All current board members, a truly dynamic group, have agreed to join me for another go 'round. They also encourage anyone who would like to nominate themselves for one of the positions to put their hat in the ring. If we have multiple candidates for any position, we will have an election run-off for that position. Otherwise, a single vote will be cast for the entire slate.

Covid-19 had a significant impact on the activities of the Federation. The FOHBC Member and Club Contests have not been held for several years...we just couldn't get it off the back burner. We apologize to those who submitted entries in the various categories. We intend to make up for this with the announcement of the 2024 Awards winners at Houston 24. Please see page 57 for contest rules and note that we have changed the criteria to include previously submitted entries for consideration. Information on how to submit entries is also on our website where you can download the appropriate forms. At FOHBC.org, select FOHBC Club Contests under the Members heading.

I'll close with a reminder to make your hotel and table reservations for Houston 24 now! As of December 1, more than one-third of the rooms in our event block at Hotel ZaZa have been reserved. Check out the event promotional packet you received with the last issue of AB&GC and additional information on FOHBC.org.

Though much of the work of the Board of Directors happens behind the scenes, we are always open to ideas and suggestions...and concerns. Please don't hesitate to let one of us know your thoughts on how we're doing. A strong Federation needs interested, involved members. We're all just an email away.

I hope 2024 brings you fun, adventure, and that special piece you've been searching for.

