

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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I just returned from the Jackson, Miss. show where Alice and I had a wonderful time! Southern hospitality can't be beat...add in craziness about bottles and there's no more enthusiastic group of people.

I was discussing rare bottles, and bottles in general, with a collector, noting that I had visited the archives of the Corning Museum of Glass to determine the cost of making a mold back in the 1880s. I deduced that even the rarest bot-

tles were made in minimum batches of 300 to recoup the initial investment. So, when a bottle is considered a one of a kind (excluding rare colors), there must be more waiting to be discovered. The first bottles Warner, for example, produced with Craig (original Dr. Craig Kidney Cure strap-sided bottle) was produced for only three months. It is quite rare...maybe 20 or 25 are known. So, we agreed that even though we have lots of great bottles in our collections, there are still a lot to be discovered.

On the other hand, based on all the information I have gathered about Warner's advertising campaigns and financial expenditures, he would have produced millions of Kidney & Liver Cure bottles, which is why they are so plentiful. Those bottles are out there unless excess bottles from short runs were sent back for cullet.

The sodas that are embossed "This bottle is never sold" often ended up in outhouses and rivers to avoid fines for having them in a person's possession, as explained in Tod von Mechow's article "Registering Bottles" in the July-August 2023 issue of AB&GC.

Now that younger collectors, like Brandon DeWolfe's two sons (one was pictured digging on a now-famous Jan-Feb 2023 AB&GC cover), are digging privies in earnest and doing deeper searches through other venues, our hobby is seeing an infusion of more really good bottles. Like many older collectors, I tended to dig surface dumps and never really got into privies, wells, and cisterns.

The Jackson show had a nice mix of old bottles, ACL sodas and advertising, and other items including signs, Civil War memorabilia, and antiques. Attendance was great, with some collectors interested in bottles and others who came for the other collectibles but enjoyed looking at all the old bottles. There were younger collectors who were starting to show greater interest in collecting bottles. Great news for our hobby!

Attendees and dealers were excited to get a free copy of our AB&GC "January 2024 Moxie issue" that we were handing out to introduce them to the FOHBC and to increase membership in the Federation. I think we will see 10-12 new members and some renewals from previous members. Fortunately, Federation membership is an easy sell when they see what they get for \$40!

All the fabulous table posters announcing Houston 24 drew lots of

attention and we handed out Expo packets, reminding people to make their reservations early.

Houston 24 is really shaping up to be a once-in-a-lifetime event. Our Nation's history in glass will be on display in a not-to-be-missed venue. The Houston Museum of Natural Science adds so much to our event and will enthrall the whole family for days.

The FOHBC Houston 24 Antique Bottle and Glass Show & Sale and displays are being presented in a unique format in seven rooms on the main floor of the historic Hotel ZaZa. In the final planning stages, the Saturday evening Bayou City Sunset Auction, conducted by Crowded House Auctions (Martin Van Zant and "Balsam" Bill Granger), will bring in an entirely new dimension as auction items will be online for one week before the live auction event. Check out updated information on page 11 of this issue or our Hou24 event page at FOHBC.org. Please consider consigning something interesting to this eclectic auction. There are little to no seller consignment fees to FOHBC members and all auction profits go directly to the FOHBC.

The Hou24 Mix & Mingle cocktail party and Dinosaurs Banquet will include the presentation of club and member awards so be sure to send in those entries. See page 47 of this issue or FOHBC.org for details. We will also honor those members we have lost in the past year. Please make your banquet reservations soon for this catered event in the HMNS Morian Hall of Paleontology.

Our January webinar featured Dann Lewis presenting the collection of the late John Wolf, and it was very well-attended. Dann treasures this amazing collection given to him by John. If you missed the online Zoom presentation, it is well worth viewing on our website. Consult FOHBC.org for the complete schedule of upcoming monthly seminars. Attending an online presentation allows you to ask questions and participate in the dialogue during the Question and Answer period at the end.

The FOHBC board still needs help in a couple of areas. Merchandise Director could be a fun and exciting position for the right person. Is that you? And if you're great at Public Relations, we have a spot for you. Throw your hat into the ring now if you want to be part of the fantastic team assembled to lead this organization. Committee members are also needed. Please get in touch with me to find out where help is needed.

I'll be representing the Federation at the Kalamazoo, Rochester, Mansfield and the Chattanooga North Georgia show again this year, so if you're there, please be sure to stop by and say hello. I've sure been enjoying seeing so many of you at the shows and appreciate the warm welcome I received from the show chairs.

For fun, I tried something new at the Jackson show noted previously. Bill Mitchell could not attend due to health issues, so I escorted him through the show via Facetime! He ended up buying eight bottles and got to say hello to several dealers he has known for many years. Hopefully, he will be able to attend in person again soon, and I'll have my old bottle buddy by my side. After all, one of the best parts of bottle collecting is the friends we make.

