

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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*Here We Go...* We're in the final stretch toward Houston 24. I've been sharing the FOHBC and Houston 24 message at shows in Chattanooga, Kalamazoo, Minneapolis, Rochester, Mansfield and Saratoga. We've brought in lots of new or renewal memberships and Houston 24 is on most people's radar as I encourage them not to pass up this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I can feel the excitement building (es-

pecially when someone gets to hold the blue Drake's Plantation Bitters commemorative bottle at the last couple shows).

*Inviting Feedback...* I'm finding that conversations go several ways: people have made their Houston 24 plans realizing what a great time they will have; those who are undecided change their minds once I point out all they will miss; and those who think it's too expensive begin to understand how much they will get for their money and decide to make it a family vacation. And then there's the old-time bottle collectors who think Houston 24 may be even better than St. Louis in 1976!

*Get your Glass in the Grass...* Houston 24 kicks off Wednesday morning, July 31 with "Glass in the Grass," an "out-of-your-trunk" sale under the pecan trees at the Meyer residence in Brookshire. Who knows what will show up, but surely there will be treasures to be discovered. Catch a quick bite from Luchi & Joey's breakfast taco truck and we'll be out of there before the Texas heat arrives in the afternoon. (You may need a jacket for the rest of the events indoors as Houston boasts the best air conditioning in the country.) Brookshire is about an hour away from the Exhibition site and we'll be offering some transportation both ways.

*Taking Care of Business...* First thing Thursday morning in Houston, get your early admission pass, dealer packet, souvenir program and banquet tickets. Then prepare to be wowed at the Open House with full access to the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Special Exhibits and tours of Hermann Park and the Museum District.

*Prepare to Be Awestruck...* Spend the rest of the day taking in all the Museum has to offer. The Museum and Joel Bartsch are underwriting much of Houston 24 and the artistry of their displays will inspire the whole family. You will have full access to the Museum through Monday. Trust me, allow plenty of time to visit everything: fantastic minerals and gems, a butterfly dome, King Tut's Tomb recreated, dinosaurs, early American artifacts, and so much more.

At 1:00, special features, American Antique Glass Masterpieces  
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es and the Wilber & Gugliotti Barber Bottle collections, and the commemorative books featuring these exhibits, will be unveiled. You'll get your first look at the "Three Blue Bitters Bottles" together again. I plan to spend some time listening to personal stories by past owners of these three gems.

*Fun, Food & Friendly Competition...* A Texas Hold 'em Antique Bottle & Glass competition and cocktail reception is Thursday evening. Enjoy catered hors d'oeuvres and cash bar followed by a spirited comparison of glass in three different categories.

*Meet & Eat for Members...* Attend the FOHBC membership breakfast meeting early Friday morning to vote on proposed by-laws revisions and board positions and get an update on Federation activities and plans. We are setting the course for the next few years with plans to get the Auction Price Report updated; implement a new, enhanced website; and continue increasing our membership. Come hungry...members will enjoy a full, catered breakfast to fuel an activity-filled day.

*Seminars, Ribbons, Early Admission, Mix & Mingle, Dinosaurs & Dining, Oh My!...* Fill up the rest of the morning with excellent seminars. Then prepare for the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony just before 1:00 and the beginning of Early Admission to the FOHBC Houston 24 National Antique Bottle and Glass Exposition, evening Cocktail Mix & Mingle and the Federation "Dinosaur Banquet." (Picture sitting under T-Rex or a brontosaurus looking over your shoulder...low color-enhanced lighting adds to the ambiance.)

*Bring it On!...* Saturday, 9 am sharp, dealers welcome the public. A bargain entrance fee of \$5 gets everyone into the Expo and Museum! Displays will draw lots of attention and a chance to vote on your favorite. Seminars, youth activities, raffles, merchandise sales, and virtual museum imaging will keep the place hopping until the Bayou City Sunset Auction takes center stage with pre-auction viewing at 5:30. I have my eye on a couple items!

*Rinse & Repeat...* Tuck away those items you bought at the auction and enjoy Sunday at the Expo (til 3 pm). Check out the displays, Museum, and special exhibits. Take some time to visit with other collectors and plan your Monday Museum visit available until 6 pm.

*Pre-Expo Parting Thoughts...* The Hotel ZaZa room rate is looking pretty attractive at this point having experienced room rates of \$170+ over the last few months. Digging is making a comeback (that ship has sailed for me) and new tools are making it easier. Stories shared are stories saved, we're on Webinar #14. The Federation needs you...your input, your support, and your involvement. Enthusiasm is contagious—I hope you've caught mine!

What more can I say? See you in Houston!

