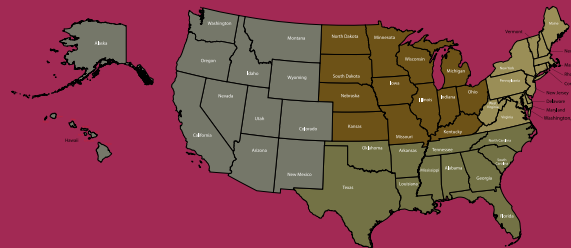


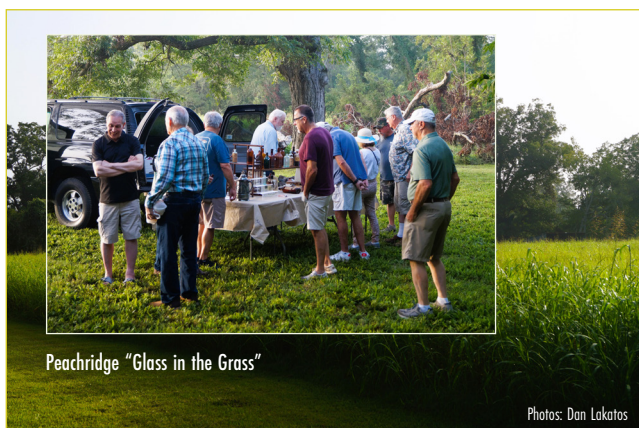
# FOHBC REGIONAL NEWS

Please visit [FOHBC.org](http://FOHBC.org) for expanded coverage.



## Northeast Region [Charlie Martin, Jr., Director]

WOW!! The Houston 24 Bottle Expo has come and gone, but the experience of a lifetime will live on in my memories and conversations for years to come. My wife, Jane, and I were quite fortunate to be able to attend this spectacular event, which contained events within events. It was a non-stop activity, from the Peachridge “Glass in the Grass” hosted by **Elizabeth and Ferdinand Meyer** at their home just outside of Houston to the closing moments of the Expo on the 4th of August.



Peachridge “Glass in the Grass”

Photos: Dan Lakatos

The **Houston Museum of Natural Science** curated the two marvelous bottle exhibitions and we doubt that we will see another professional presentation like it again. Words fall short when describing those two bottle displays’ magnificence, beauty, and splendor. **Hotel ZaZa**, in the Houston Museum District, was as advertised and then some! A special hello goes out to all the new friends Jane and I met from Alabama, Oklahoma, South Carolina, and Washington, to mention a few. If you missed this event, rest assured that our magazine’s November–December issue will thoroughly review the Houston 24 Expo.

Sadly, I must report on the death of long-time collector/dealer **Ron Tetrault** of New Bedford, Massachusetts. Ron was a much-loved and respected local dealer in the Northeast region and beyond for many decades. Even in his later years, when driving was difficult for him, his wife Deanne would get behind the wheel of their van and drive. That enabled Ron to do what he most enjoyed, after family and friends, get wonderful antique bottles into the hands of fellow collectors. Ron rarely missed a bottle show in New York, Maine, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. Even when he could not set up at a show due to health-related issues, he attended as a customer supporting the local club hosting the event. All will deeply miss his support. Ron was known for his humor, ever-present smile, and willingness to help a collector add that special bottle to their collection. Ron and Deanne were long-time **Little Rhody Antique Bottle Club** members. He will be remembered fondly by those individuals whose lives he touched with his kindness and

generosity. Rest in peace, my friend.

The apex of the antique bottle show season for the Northeast Region has been and continues to be the year’s Fall season—particularly September and October. During this time of year, you can count on attending a bottle show almost every weekend. Many of these shows, hosted by the same antique bottle clubs for many, many decades, are well known to local collectors. It is time for those of you who want to experience the fall foliage provided by Mother Nature to travel to our region. You will enjoy the wonder of this natural beauty coupled with the excitement of so many antique bottle shows. Please see the Show Calendar in this issue or on [FOHBC.org](http://FOHBC.org) to begin making your travel plans for this Fall. Until next time, happy bottle collecting.

## Western Region [Eric McGuire, Director]

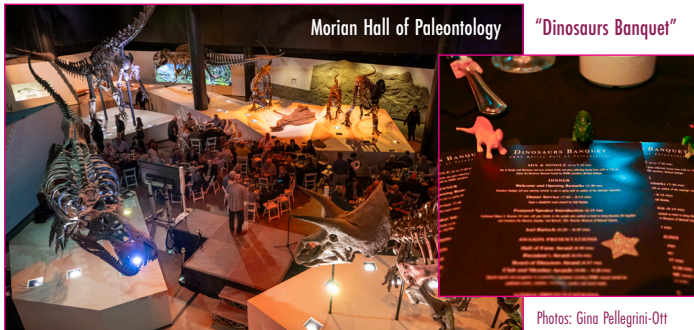
The **Houston 24** event dominated the Western Region activity. The Expo will be discussed at length in this and the following issue of *AB&GC*. I will reserve comments as much as possible, except for a few personal experiences. However, I do need to give special recognition to the ever-tireless **Ferdinand Meyer**, many of his family members, as well as the Federation board and the many volunteers, who put together an “experience” that will be well remembered for many years. Houston 24 was not just your typical bottle show/sale. Driven by Ferdinand’s inspiration, guidance, and expertise, the show was, as noted above, an EXPERIENCE.

Houston 24 began with the wonderful open house of Ferdinand and Elizabeth Meyer’s home, Peachridge. This amazing gesture of Southern hospitality was met by a number of attendees who were awed by the special gardens of unusual succulents—a rare sight in itself. Ferd’s amazing collection of bottles, primarily bitters, was a riot of color, placed in front of sunlit windows. Collections of multi-generational antiques were also present in the Meyers’ personal “museum.” What a wonderful opening for a national bottle and glass event, even with the ever-present southern heat and humidity. As a native Californian, I just had to “deal with it.”



Photo: Dan Lakatos

Left to Right. Big-time bitters collectors Jerry Forbes (Big Sur, Ca.), Stephen Hubbell (Gig Harbor, Wash.) and Bill Taylor (Wausau, Wisconsin) catch up on the news at the Meyer Peachridge open house.



Photos: Gina Pellegrini-Ott

“Ground Zero” of the H24 antique bottle show and sale was located at Hotel ZaZa, a refurbished 1926 structure adjoining Houston’s famous Museum District. Bottle collectors literally took over the hotel, and I still wonder what went through the minds of those non-collectors who were also staying there. One must remember that of the roughly 36 million residents in the United States, only a relative few have taken to collecting old bottles. I suppose the other guests just tolerated our quirkiness, even though, from my perspective, they don’t know what they are missing.

The complexity and timing of all the events, which should be known to all Federation members by now, made it challenging to execute seamlessly, but I witnessed no major issues.

A highlight for me was the amazing dinner in the HMNS Hall of Paleontology, among the largest collections of dinosaur skeletons I have ever seen. My wife and I literally had dinner with a Triceratops skeleton, some 65 million years old. Now, that is something I will always remember. And the dinner fare went far beyond anything I have experienced at a large group event. Surpassing any traditional hotel banquet, I expect I will experience nothing like it again. Once more, thank you, Ferdinand, for your inspirational expertise.

### Southern Region [Tom Lines, Director]

**Charlie Livingston** is a familiar name to many of us throughout the South. He hails from Tampa, Florida. He’s been collecting

2024 Suncoast Antique Bottle Collectors Assoc. Show & Sale in Tampa. Left to Right: Charlie Livingston (SABCA), George Dueben (Show Chair), Richard King (SABCA President), Michael Seeliger (FOHBC President)



Photo: Alice Seeliger

since he was 12; he’s now 66. Both he and his wife Lorraine are retired, so he has plenty of time for his hobby—or I should say hobbies. Best known for his black glass collection, including many early seals, he also collects local memorabilia, Native American artifacts, cigar jars, and associated industry-related go-withs.

I found it interesting that Charlie started digging at the invitation of his sixth-grade teacher in Tampa. Both excited, he and his dad loaded up and went digging. The dump was a turn-of-the-century dump that produced hundreds of bottles of all types plus local stenciled jugs. He said there were several feet of fill on top of the dump because it was a low swampy area, so they dug in the muck! My hat’s off to him for his continued interest in the hobby after that.

But the story gets even better. Charlie’s house was built on one of the old city dumps. Can you imagine being able to dig bottles in your own yard? Wow! He said their yard produced about 2,000 bottles! His wife’s parents lived nearby, and their house was also on the dump, so he got to dig there, too. Even more bottles were found. At a nearby construction site on the dump site, he obtained permission for the **Tampa Bottle Club** to dig there for two weeks without interference from the construction folks. How nice is that!

Charlie collected for years before he started setting up at shows as a dealer. He went to the shows to look and buy before that. He said his first show as a dealer was quite rewarding, providing enough funds to start acquiring things that really interested him. In his early years of going after black glass, a local collector invited him to buy his black glass collection and provided easy terms for Charlie to do so.

Charlie and his brother Craig now travel to virtually all of the Florida shows, plus shows in Mobile, Alabama, and Columbia, South Carolina. Of course, his local Tampa/St. Pete show is one of his best. This year’s show was quite productive, as he acquired a mixed collection of flasks, bitters, and other early bottles from a local collector’s estate that he had never known about. Surprises like that are always welcomed!

So what else does Charlie like to do—in one word, “travel”! He and Lorraine went to Portugal, Spain, and London earlier this year. Next year, they are planning on doing the FOHBC Reno 25 National Convention and spending an extra week or so in advance of the show to see some Western sites, including Yosemite National Park (my all-time favorite park).

Other Southern Happenings. With Houston 24 just over, many Southerners were found there. As an Alabamian, I only spotted three other fellow collectors from there. I was most impressed





Martin Van Zant holding an Old Sachems barrel with Jim Hagenbuch and Bill Granger looking on.

and delighted that my friend Rick Ciralli came down from the Northeast to set up his wares. Plus, several West Coast dealers were present. One local family with their children included a precocious young lady. I asked what she collected, and her response floored me. She said she has yet to collect any bottles. So I asked why. She said she dug bottles and had a shelf of the different things she dug but insisted she didn't collect; she just had them. So cute!

**Jake Smith** hosted his **9th Annual Antique Bottle & Glass Show** at the Munford Civic Center this past weekend. Though historically held in Lincoln, Alabama, the facility notified him three weeks before the show that the usual building had to be closed due to a leaky roof. Jake was able to scramble and get the Munford location within just a few days. He called the dealers and spread the word about the venue change. As it turned out, it was a very successful show, with lots of public streaming through and buying things! Congratulations, Jake, for a job well done!

That's all, folks! Please send me news of your local happenings so it can be included in the next Southern Region report. Tom Lines, [Bluecrab1949@Hotmail.com](mailto:Bluecrab1949@Hotmail.com) or 205.410.2191.

### Midwest Region [Henry Hecker, Director]

If you could not attend **Houston 24**, you missed one of the greatest assemblages of rare and beautiful glass ever to be viewed in one place. The early American flasks, figural bitters, blown dining vessels, and barber bottles were breathtaking and expertly curated for display at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Two beautiful coffee table books memorializing the exhibits are available from the FOHBC, and I highly recommend them. The rest of Houston 24 will be extensively covered, but I wanted to plug these two gorgeous books.

Previously, I have mentioned the aging of collectors in the hobby, as in many fields of collecting, and how to get "fresh blood" into clubs and shows. This trend was again starkly evident in the dealers and show crowd. I want to challenge the Midwest Region to send me ideas on how your clubs attract new members and, most importantly, how you reach the population under 25 years of age. It is easy to dismiss the situation as unsalvageable:

The young are mostly minimalists and are satisfied with expe-

riences rather than material objects.

Socializing in clubs has been replaced by (impersonal) social media.

Financial challenges have shrunk disposable income.

History is no longer a priority in schools; thus, appreciation has waned.

Digging is hard work, and site access is being squeezed by liability and state restrictions on amateur archeology.

Those are just some of the issues. But we cannot give up, as it would be a great loss if our collections ended up at thrift shops or, heaven forbid, glass recycling centers!

Personally, I am not that fatalistic, but the FOHBC does need to develop an action plan to better understand the motivations to collect and join and to assure the sustainability of the hobby.

Locally here in Wisconsin, another disconcerting trend is part of the contemporary approach in museum science to tell stories using much fewer artifacts and rely more on audio-visual, and interactive technology. The new State Museum in Madison will allow more space for artifacts, but the organizers and designers are touting the technology, not the collections. The new Milwaukee Public Museum, no longer a ward of the County who can no longer afford it, will be greatly compressed in a new facility significantly smaller than the current building dating back to 1962. While there is an impressive public relations campaign by the current board of MPM to hype the new facility, which still needs to be fully funded, the PR rings a little hollow. The current designers are holding hard to a decision not to re-create the "Streets of Old Milwaukee" and "European Village" in the new museum. The former allowed visitors to walk through several streets filled with recreations of a general store, drug store, saloon, photography studio, butcher shop, blacksmith, theater, and homes accurately depicting the use of relics of old Milwaukee. The latter set of exhibits explained settlement and immigration to the area in visual and hands-on terms. Every survey has shown that these two exhibits are overwhelmingly the most popular among all age groups and have been for decades.

On my wife's and my trip to Texas, we visited the *Arabia* Steamboat Museum in Kansas City, the First Americans Museum in Oklahoma City, and the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Refreshingly, these three museums all have the right balance of artifacts and flashy technologies to tell the stories. We want to be educated about the backstories (of course), but we also want to see the old stuff!



Arabia Steamboat Museum in Kansas City, Missouri.

