

FOHBC REGIONAL NEWS

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Northeast Region [Charlie Martin, Jr., Director]

On September 15, 2024, the **Merrimac Valley Antique Bottle Club (MVABC)** held its **49th Annual Bottle Show and Sale** at the Elk's Lodge in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. This was the second year at their new location, and by all

accounts, this new venue and setting has worked exceptionally well for the bottle club. The day was bright, clear and quite comfortable for mid September in New England. According to show chair and club president **Kevin Cantrell**, attendance was greater than the previous year. All 57 eight-foot tables were sold. There was steady traffic at the sales tables throughout the morning, with 24 early shoppers plunking down \$20 to shop before the general public was let into the show at 9:00 am. Approximately 200 individuals paid admission. For the first time in many years, some dealers had to be turned away due to the sold-out status of the show. Kevin indicated that next year will be the club's "Golden Anniversary (50th) Show and Sale," with dealer space possibly available both indoors as well as outside in a sheltered area on the Elk Lodge's property. In speaking with bottle dealers, they seemed quite pleased with the steady customer activity throughout the entire morning of the show. Likewise, customers were equally pleased with the new additions they added to their collection.

Tom Karapantso, chair of the **Greater Buffalo Bottle Collectors Association (GBBCA)**, submitted the following report from their **25th Anniversary Show** held on September 15, 2024 at the Polish Falcons Club in Depew, New York. *"Perfect weather, no Bills game, and an outstanding job by president and co-chair **Peter Jablonski** on advertising led to a great attendance considered the best ever. Paid attendance was 233 people, plus 12 free admissions for children." Seventy-one dealers and helpers at tables and seven club volunteers brought the total to 323 attendees for the show.*

*"Advertising signs were placed at major routes, at flea markets, and western New York antique co-ops. Thanks to Peter, the Buffalo News ran a 3/4 page article on our show with color photos. The Buffalo News also posted an excellent video on our club show on its website two days before the event. The video was shot in Peter's home, where he explained what a person could expect to find at our show to buy, using items from his collection. The article (and video, according to **Bob Johnston**, a club member) was a great boost to our attendance. **Vince Martonis** carried show flyers to various antique shops, libraries, his speaking events, stores, and co-ops, (while) each club member was challenged to post at least two flyers in their neighborhoods.*

"At least nine children whose parents were first-time attendees

*were spotted carrying bottles from the free kid's bottle table. Hopefully, we lit the bottle collecting bug in all of them. All the printed copies of our award-winning show newsletter, edited by **Craig Means**, were taken by show-goers. The club raffle was a success. High ticket sellers were **Joe Guerra**, with 160 sold, and **Dave Potter**, with 140 sold. **Trader Mike**, a dealer, donated a beer advertising clock as an extra prize, which club member **Mark Warne** won. This sold-out show of 58 tables saw six new dealers." Dealer comments made to Tom during and after the show were quite positive, and many indicated that they wished to return in 2025. Tom thanked all the club members, the many hands not named, who volunteered to do the combined jobs to make this a successful show.*

I want to thank those bottle clubs in the Northeast Region that included me in their email list when sending out their club's newsletter. It is quite interesting to read about the efforts that volunteers contribute, day in and day out, to help support their club's activities and, ultimately, the great hobby of antique bottle collecting. My hat goes off for all of your great work! If other clubs have electronic newsletters, whether you are in the Northeast Region or another region of the country, I would love to receive your club's newsletter as well. Sharing is one of the wonderful benefits of our hobby.

By the time you read this report, all of the bottle shows in the New England area of the Northeast Region will have occurred for 2024. Although these reports are printed here after they occur, it is critically important to review their success and to continue to see how these shows are doing in the whole scheme of things relating to our hobby. Remember, information about each show is important! Accordingly, I am open to suggestions, ideas, and recommendations on how I can serve you better as readers and contributors to this column! Please take a moment to reflect upon how the Northeast Region report can be improved and forward what you consider will make our report more relevant and exciting. Thank you kindly for your consideration. Until next time, good bottle hunting!



Midwest Region [Henry Hecker, Director]

As I wrote this, I received texts from two friends cleaning up their Florida properties in the wake of tropical storm Milton. Both families are without power but safe. With all the attention we devote to our collecting passions, these disasters bring us back to the reality of

life and its priorities.

The **1st Chicago Bottle Club** newsletter, *The Midwest Bottled News*, reports on their work to celebrate the club's 50th anniversary.



sary with another new commemorative bottle. It is a Hutchinson design, and the maker had to fabricate a special lip tool. This challenge sounds very similar to the one presented when making FOHBC's cobalt Drake's Plantation Bitters bottles.

The **Midwest Antique Fruit Jar and Bottle Club** newsletter, *Glass Chatter*, reports a presentation on Pluto Water and the remarkable number of advertising go-withs the company put out—even a wood-shafted golf club! In addition, a large collection of bottle caps was pictured. I have been noticing the increased amount of attention bottle caps have been getting at shows and eBay. Check out the "Crown Cap Collectors Society International" website, bottlecapclub.org. You will be amazed at the variety and breadth of collecting options. We should try to bring this club's membership into the FOHBC fold. For someone running out of space again, I envy bottle cap collectors for their efficient use of space.

A recent, once-in-a-decade auction in Tipton, Michigan, was described in the **Metropolitan Detroit Antique Bottle Club** newsletter. An old collection of flasks, bitters, pontiled sodas, cobalt beers, and decorated stoneware came for sale. Held by Braun & Helmer Auctions, bidding was fast and furious, but deals could be made, as the rumor is that some power bidders ran out of money! The **Kalamazoo Antique Bottle Club** has already sent notices for its 44th annual show on April 5, 2025.



Southern Region [Tom Lines, Director]

It's hurricane season. Please keep our Florida collectors in your thoughts and prayers as they suffer from Milton's impact. Also, please keep all the coastal collectors around the Gulf of Mexico and the eastern seaboard in your prayers. Let's also pray for the survivors

of Helene up in the Asheville, North Carolina, area where flooding has ravaged.

It's fall show season here in the South, and the **11th Annual Fayette, Alabama Bottle Collectible Bottles & Antiques Show** in Fayette, Alabama, is this coming weekend. Later this month, on the 26th, the 200-table **Nashville Area Antique Bottle & Advertising Show** in Lebanon, Tennessee, is set and a sellout! On November 2, the **Robert Sledge Memorial Bottle & Advertising Show** will be held in Florence, Alabama, and two weeks later, on the 16th, the **Olde Guys Digging Club** will have its **7th Annual Mississippi Gulf Coast Antique Bottle Show**.

The **Richmond Area Bottle Collectors Assoc. 52nd Richmond Antique Bottle and Collectibles Show and Sale** was this past weekend. Looking into the new year, the **40th Annual Mississippi Antique Bottle, Advertising & Collectible Show** in

Jackson, Mississippi, will be Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend. A brand-new show is being promoted in Dothan, Alabama, in February.

How does being a boat builder, cattleman, black glass collector, 1934 Ford Coupe owner, show promoter, and dancing man all relate to this month's collector profile? Well, that at least partially describes **Jim Simmons** of Grand Bay, Alabama. At 81 years young, Jim has been digging and collecting since 1972, 52 years! (I will hit my 50th year next September!)

So what got him started—like many of us, digging! At first, he and his brother scratched around places here and there in southwest Mobile County. Jim mentioned it to his close friend and coworker **Ronnie Landry**, and they relentlessly pursued bottle digging in the old city dumps of Mobile. They quickly discovered that many local blacks were also digging but always selling their finds—many blacks and whites dug side by side in these old city dumps.

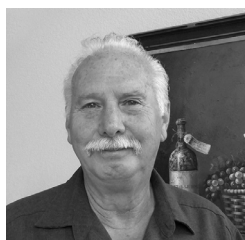
The **Mobile Bottle Collectors Club** also existed then but Jim and his buds weren't members. Among the club's charter members was **Dr. Phillips**. He and his contemporaries dug pontiled-bottle pits in the old downtown area. So, learning the ropes, Jim and Ronnie started doing the same thing. Jim said when they dug brick liners, they would leave the bricks for the black folks who gathered them up and sold them. But Jim said the blacks soon learned that the bottles were more valuable than the bricks and started on the pits themselves. And again, they always sold all they dug by day's end. (As an aside, a black digger named Russ(?) dug the only two known C. T. Bond historical flasks in a Mobile pit and sold them to **Elroy Webb**, who in turn sold one to Florida's **Judge MacKenzie** and the other to a local collector **Mac Wimmer**.) From then on, Jim stuck to pit digging. He also dug over in the older sections of New Orleans.

Jim's collecting focus was local Mobile whiskies...the older shoulder-embossed, black glass type. Though he dug lots of Mobile sodas, he never collected them, but others in his digging group did. He was also attracted to black glass seals and wide-mouth case gins. Jim's prize Mobile whiskey was the only known undamaged seal "S. Twelves" cylinder. He kept it for years before letting it go to another Mobile collector.

The original Mobile Club had quit having shows in the late 1970s but still met once a month for a covered dish dinner and fellowship. Jim and four or five other local digger-collectors attended one of the gatherings in 1982. They joined the club and wanted to revive the shows. The older members agreed with the stipulation that Jim had to chair the show. Thus began his multi-decade career as show chairman! Jim put on great 100+ table shows for at least the next three decades that drew dealers and collectors in from hundreds of miles away.

When Jim started the bottle hobby, he worked at a ship building company on the coast near his home in Grand Bay. When the company sold in 1995, he became a cattle rancher, which he still does. He told me that he recently bought a 1934 Ford Coupe so he could go to "Cruising the Coast" over in Mississippi dressed in a double-breasted suit with his honey. And now, for the grand finale, Jim and his sweetheart love to dance, so they go dancing every week, three times a week, for 2 to 3 hours at a time! That's almost 50 hours a month! I haven't danced that much in my whole life! Jim's a great collector. He's enjoyed many years in the hobby and many shows, and he's made many friends along the way. If you know him, you're blessed; if you don't, you should meet him next March at the Daphne, Alabama Show.

Western Region [Eric McGuire, Director]

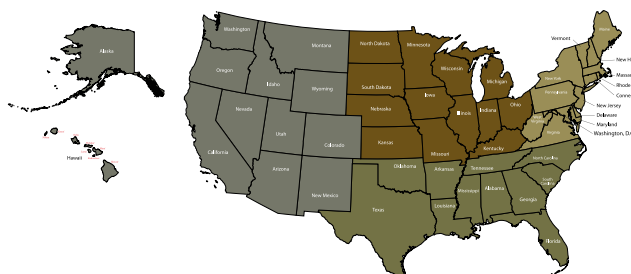


Aside from the once-in-a-lifetime **Houston 24**, a number of local shows have come and gone in the last several months, with one of the biggest western region shows, the **'49er Historical Bottle Association Best in the West 45th Antique Bottle & Collectibles Show** in Auburn, California, on November 8 and

9. These "lifeblood" events were scattered throughout the west, from Los Angeles to Oregon and in between. All were received positively, underscoring their importance to local collectors. In fact, they are so essential that some collectors attend all of them—and that is a north-south distance of over 800 miles. Now that's dedication!

I recently received an introductory call from **Andrei Pischalnikoff**, an interesting individual, bottle collector, and storyteller who hosts a variety of "shows" that include the history and use of patent medicines, snake oils, and early purveyors of these products. He is a California resident and hosts events throughout the state. Andrei is also a relatively new member of the FOHBC. To learn more, one can Google "doctorrnick.com/about."

In the past, I believe I have mentioned the **California Antique Bottles** site on Facebook. It is important to note that the site currently has over 1,400 members. It is not unusual for the site to add as many as 50 posts per day regarding antique bottles. It is a given that you know someone who is a member. If you want to increase your bottle "fix," I recommend you give it a try. On the Facebook site, simply look for the magnifying glass (search icon) and type California Antique Bottles. This is not the only interesting bottle-related Facebook site, as there are at least 24 other bottle-related sites as well. One caveat: you may become one of those "addicted" individuals who is always looking at their cell phones.



WASHINGTON BOTTLE & COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL SHOW AND SALE

February 22, 2025

ONE DAY ONLY!



Kent Commons, 525 Fourth Ave. N, Kent, Washington 98032

Early Entry: 8:00 to 10:00 AM – \$10

General Public: 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM – Free

Come and treasure hunt for rare bottles, breweriana, advertising, whiskey, insulators, WA Territory, poison, sodas and so much more!

There will be Owl Drug & Washington Territory collections for sale!

Dealer information contact: Lisa.g.Conners@gmail.com

Hosted by: Washington Bottle & Collectors Association (WBCA)

wabottleclub.org

GOLDEN GATE HISTORICAL BOTTLE SOCIETY

Presents Their

57th ANNUAL BOTTLES, ANTIQUES AND COLLECTIBLES SHOW & SALE



FRIDAY, APRIL 11th 2025

12:00 noon to 5:00 pm (\$10)

SATURDAY, APRIL 12th 2025

9:00 am to 3:00 pm (FREE)

CONTRA COSTA EVENT PARK (Fairgrounds)
SUNSET HALL, ANTIOCH, CALIFORNIA

Free Walk-In Appraisals Buyers at Show

Dealer Setup – Friday the 11th of April – 11:00 am to Noon

For Show Info Contact: GARY or DARLA ANTONE (925) 373-6758

Email: packrat49er@netscape.net or gghbs.org