

FOHBC REGIONAL NEWS

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Northeast Region [Charlie Martin, Jr., Director]



First, let me wish you and your family a Happy New Year! I trust that 2025 will be the year you add that long-sought-after bottle to your growing bottle collection. We all have a “nemesis bottle” that got away or “you just missed it, I sold it five minutes ago...sorry.” Well, make up your mind that this is the year

you will prevail. In order to increase your chances of success, you will need to make a plan to visit as many bottle shows as you can. Please keep me updated on your success. I would love to hear your story of how you finally acquired the bottle of your dreams.

It has finally happened!! Not writer’s block, but the absence of copy to write about. I’ve been telling the story of the Northeast region bottle shows, going on for two years, and for the first time, I have no reports submitted to me to inform you about. Suffice it to say, I am wordless! Yet, I feel compelled to fill my allotted space every two months with information about local bottle club activity. So, failing bottle show talk, let me take this opportunity to tell you about some of the digital newsletters that I have received from bottle clubs in our region over the past year.

I want to mention two newsletters, both of which come from bottle clubs in **New York**. First, the **Greater Buffalo Bottle Collectors Association’s** newsletter is named the *Traveler’s Companion*. The second newsletter is entitled *Applied Seals*. It is the newsletter of **The Genesee Valley Bottle Collectors Association, Inc.** I am fortunate enough to receive their digital newsletters. One thing I notice about both publications is their balance of articles. For example, there are interviews with club speakers, show and tell (or, as a kid, we used to call it “bring and brag”). They publish bottle show information, feature articles about collections their club members have acquired, provide the minutes of the previous club meeting, and many more interesting tidbits of information related to bottle collecting. Every issue of both newsletters is chock full of a plethora of information for their club membership. Even if you cannot attend a club meeting, you are able to stay current and connected with your club activity via these newsletters. Kudos to both newsletter editors, **Craig Means**, *Traveler’s Companion*, and **Jim Bartholomew**, *Applied Seals*. They do an excellent job connecting their membership physically and digitally throughout the year. It is no wonder they have received so much notoriety for their efforts. I trust and hope that your bottle club uses its newsletter further to strengthen the bonds of its membership within the club. Until next time, happy bottle hunting!

Midwest Region [Henry Hecker, Director]



The Milwaukee Antique Bottle and Advertising Club is making final preparations for the annual show on Sunday, February 2, 2025, at the Waukesha Expo Center. This show typically features about 125 tables, and attendance approaches about 400 attendees.

This time of year, the temperatures in the Midwest make it just about impossible to dig, except maybe during a prolonged warm spell. However, Peter Maas and I have found a way to beat the weather in our continued research of the many potters who served Wisconsin households in the 19th century. We are currently working on a site occupied by two German immigrant potters from 1859 to 1866. Unlike our outdoor dig of the Pointon pottery in Baraboo, Wisconsin, chronicled in our article in this magazine in 2022, this site is inside and out of the elements. Inside, as in an exposed cavity under a house with access via a sixteen-foot crawl space. (Yes, we have owner permission!) We are finding some amazing “crier” pottery sherds that will greatly expand our knowledge of the pottery. I guess we can add spelunking to our resumes. Stay tuned; our discoveries will make for a very interesting future article.



Pottery shards dug by Henry Hecker and Peter Maas.



Southern Region [Tom Lines, Director]



Our Collector Profile this issue focuses on Louisiana’s **Jim Corvin**. At 86 years young, Jim is one of the most energetic bottle collectors and diggers I’ve had the pleasure of knowing in my nearly 50 years in this wonderful hobby we share. And he’s been at it for over a decade longer than me. Jim is a long-time

Baton Rouge, Louisiana resident and is a fixture on the Southern bottle scene, setting up shows for over 50 years. I spent a very pleasurable hour and a half talking with Jim and hearing his digging stories one after another.



The bottle bug first hit him after he left the Navy in 1961. Thank you for your service, my friend! Jim's brother got him interested in looking around an old building lot that had been demolished in New Orleans. They found multiple pieces of broken glass, which Jim said was neat. Later, his brother and another friend were searching the banks of the Mississippi River and ran into a gentleman cleaning out a building. Seeing some bottles in a trash pile caught their attention, and they ended up getting the bottles. Apparently, there were a number of "Brown's Iron Bitters" included, so his brother gave one to Jim. That started his life-long quest for bottles.

Jim hooked up with Sidney Genius, also from Baton Rouge, early on and became digging partners. Together, they made their first trip down to New Orleans in the mid-1960s to a bottle club meeting. After meeting some members and talking, they got a feel for the area. Jim said back then, if you found an empty lot, you just went out, probed, and started digging—no special permissions required! Unheard of nowadays!! Jim and Sidney dug together for four to five years. Around this time, Shank Gonzales also joined in with him. When the New Orleans Superdome was announced, a large area in the city was opened up for digging. Jim said they dug pits and privies there for nearly three years.

As Jim met other diggers, he began traveling to distant locations, including Philadelphia, Baltimore, Brooklyn, Covington (Kentucky), and along coastal North and South Carolina. Some of his digging buddies included Mike Kolb and Terry Gillis. He remembered the I-95 dig through Philly as amazing, saying that very little probing was necessary because the black circle pits just stood out on the ground. He recalled one of the most productive "travel digs" was in Baltimore, where they dug over 170 bottles in one large brick-lined pit!

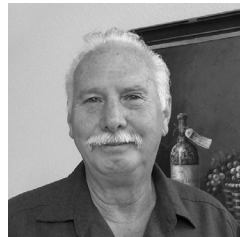
Although the travel digs were fun and usually quite worthwhile, New Orleans was always his digging home. One of his more notable finds included the elusive black glass pontiled "M. A. Micklejohn, N.O - Washington. - Purifier" in mint condition. Another gem was a "pink" Dr. Townsend's...yes, PINK! I had the privilege of examining this one personally, and WOW, what a color! Jim also mused about the number of "Udolfo Wolfe's Aromatic Schnapps" they dug in NOLA, saying, "We dug so many, we just got tired of digging them!"

So what does Jim collect? He said he amassed three different collections of NOLA pontiled sodas over the years...selling a whole collection and then starting over again. He loves black glass and has a few pontiled medicines as well. He also loves painted marbles, and he still adds to their number as he continues to dig. Yes, that's right! At 86, he still digs every chance he gets.

As we wound down our call, Jim reflected on his many years in the hobby and the hundreds of people he's met, saying, "I've never met anyone I didn't like or had anyone do me wrong. Bottle collectors are just a good bunch of people." Jim's an inspiration to us all. I bet if you ever met him, you would agree! He's always at the Daphne, Alabama show, Jackson and Biloxi, Mississippi shows, plus a scattering of other regional shows.

Please let me know if you have any Southern news to pass along to our readers. Happy New Year, y'all! May the bottle gods fulfill your every wish in 2025!

Western Region [Eric McGuire, Director]



The Western Region is again honored with hosting another national event in Reno, Nevada, this year. Our team is already hard at work in making this a memorable event and I am confident in stating it shouldn't be missed. The heart of our conventions is the show/sale event, which promises to be a highlight this year. As I write these few lines, we are already working to present you with the best bottle show/sale event of the year.

I want to remind you of some of the benefits associated with the FOHBC. The articles in the *Antique Bottle & Glass Collector*, and its predecessor editions, are the single most comprehensive collection of information on bottles in existence that can be accessed. This is a huge resource that is available to our members.

Our Auction Price Report is also the largest accessible database covering past bottle auctions, to be found anywhere. And we are constantly adding new information as time permits. Of course, our "flagship of knowledge" is our unique and ever-growing Virtual Museum, which far outstrips any knowledge base about bottles anywhere in the world!

Please excuse me for going beyond what might be expected of the usual Region Report. However, I am a strong believer in the FOHBC mission and what we have to offer. You will find even more information on these subjects throughout our journals. And there is even more to come.

Speaking of how the FOHBC can give to its members, I am reaching out to all and requesting comments about how we can best serve you. Going forward, it is important to know if there are opportunities we are missing. Please don't be shy about commenting. You can respond with your comments and suggestions by emailing any of our board members listed in this issue, including mine, etmcguire@comcast.net.

