

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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The new year is well under way and bottle shows are filling up the calendar. I'm hoping to see many of you as I travel around the country. Please be sure to stop and say "Hi." It is always nice to share information and hear suggestions from FOHBC members. Though I'm slowing down a bit, my enthusiasm for the Federation remains strong. My plans include shows in Milwaukee, Tampa, Kalamazoo,

Baltimore, Rochester and Mansfield, with maybe even Saratoga, Dalton, and Minneapolis. Whew!

The Federation will have a display table at several shows, especially promoting our upcoming Reno 25 Convention. Look for the Federation logos on our new black table runners, but don't wait 'til then to make your room reservations at the Silver Legacy Resort and Casino! Reno 25 will include some interesting, unique activities such as the great shootout bottle competition, educational seminars, and the awards banquet. Check out FOHBC.org for the latest information.

A repeat of a sell out will be a commemorative Drake's bottle... this time in RUBY RED! Two one-of-a-color Drake's will be included as a raffle and auction item. We're limiting production to 150, which is less than what was sold of the cobalt blue ones at Houston 24. See me all decked out in Reno Red FOHBC shirt, cap, and Drake's in Regional News this issue and at any show you and I attend between now and the end of July. (If we ever decide to do a commemorative Drake's in white, I may have trouble staying presentable.)

The Federation Board of Directors is reviewing our fees structure. We won't be raising membership dues, which continues to be a great value, but we are needing to pass along increased mailing costs to our members in Canada and foreign countries. And we have had to increase club dues, adding some of the cost of insurance coverage for club events. Again, still a great bargain for our member clubs. We have found that almost all venues require insurance, so this continues to be a great benefit of club membership.

Getting back to Reno 25, our Awards Banquet is the opportunity you all have to recognize yourself for your talents in bottle collecting or offer recognition to another member or club. We have changed the rules, so it is both self-nomination and nomination of others. We had 75 entries to judge last year and would like at least that many this year. See full details of the contests at FOHBC.org. Don't be shy...it benefits everyone to highlight contributions to

our hobby. Contest categories are Newsletters, Articles, Posters, Social Media, and Websites, so let us know which ones you think are the best.

Much-anticipated and requested updates to the Auction Price Report have begun. An upgrade in new listings will be PHOTOS! Make sure to take advantage of your access to the Auction Price Report by maintaining your membership.

The Virtual Museum continues to expand. Houston 24 brought in many new subjects and Alan DeMaison has been hard at work getting these ready for the Virtual Museum. New galleries have been added, so check that out! The Virtual Museum operates solely on donations and there's a fundraising campaign in motion. "25 from 25 in 25" is our slogan for the campaign to receive \$25/month from 25 members in 2025. And I'm so pleased to announce that an anonymous donor has pledged \$5,000 if we can get a matching donation. That's double or nothing, with better odds than Reno! Without these donations, our Virtual Museum is at the end of its funding. Alan is also searching and applying for grants for this project which helps us fulfill our educational mission. Any donation amount is appreciated, but I sincerely hope we can reach our 25 from 25 in 25 goal and get that matching donation!

We are starting to get back on track with our magazine publishing schedule. Though this issue is still a couple weeks behind, our May-June issue should reach you on time in mid-April. Thank you for your patience as we have all caught our breaths after Houston 24 – at least I think Ferdinand is starting to breathe more regularly.

You'll find some very interesting articles in this issue of AB&GC including Alice's now-favorite "Cowgirl ACLs" which has her on the hunt for one. Mike Dickman has certainly taken us through a whirlwind tour of these collectibles. Ralph Finch again adds his words of wisdom and whimsy and never ceases to amaze us with what he finds to collect. Fortunately, he recognizes that his wife, Janet, is a saint and an excellent photographer. This issue also includes some great color runs in various bottle collections that grace display cases, fireplace mantels, and windowsills. Next issue may include photos of my new bottle cases in which I incorporated some suggestions from our latest Webinar aptly named "Bottle Cases." Using Mike Craig's lighting design, I have created a landing strip for nearby airplanes! Enjoy showing off your treasures wherever and whenever you can.

URGENT NEED

We are in desperate need of a Membership Director! Name your own hours, work at home, casual attire, no commute or parking concerns. Also, no pay for this volunteer position. Rewards are immeasurable in the form of eternal gratitude from the Board of Directors, and members, alike. Call me!

