

THE
MUNICIPAL
LIQUOR STORE

Volume 70, Number 2, 2011

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
MINNESOTA BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION
www.municipalbev.com



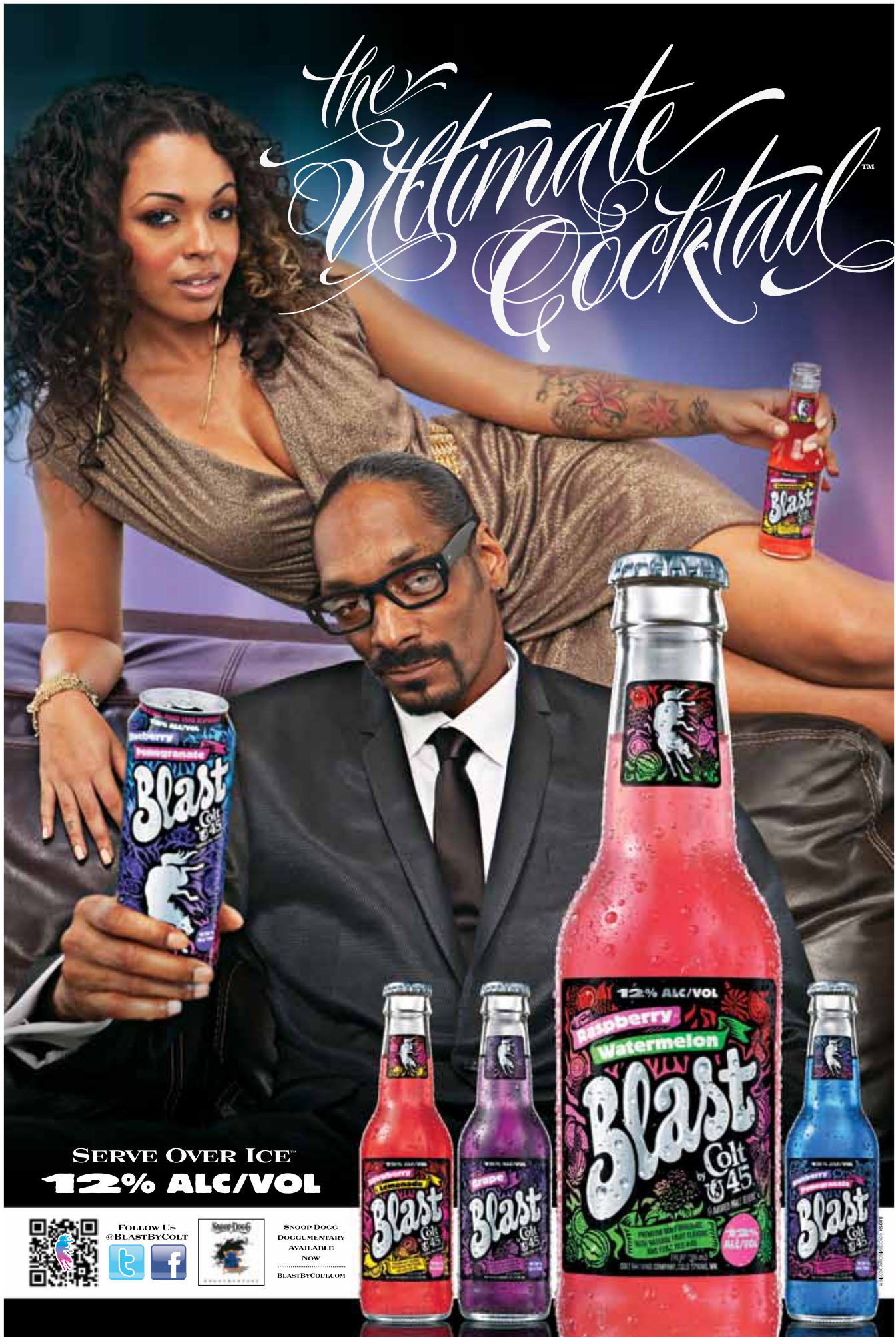
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Volume 70, Number 2, 2011

Official publication of the Minnesota Municipal Beverage Association. Published six times annually: September/October, November/December, January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August. For advertising and editorial inquiry contact Paul Kaspszak, Editor, Box 32966, Fridley, MN 55432. Phone 763-572-0222 or 866-938-3925. Advertising rates available upon request. Change of address: List both old and new address.

DIRECTORS

TOM AGNES

(President)

Brooklyn Center Liquor
5625A Xerxes Ave. North
Brooklyn Center, MN 55430
763-381-2349



BRIAN HACHEY

(Sec./Treas.)

Stacy Wine & Spirits
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ON THE COVER

"This is the historic last call at the old muni," announced Gina Holman, the general manager of Wayzata's Bar and Grill, through a bullhorn to a crowd of hundreds gathered outside of the city's restaurant at 810 Superior Blvd. on April 28, 2011.

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The mood was anything but somber as people streamed in to enjoy one last cold one at the city-owned restaurant and bar that has served the community since 1967.

Back outside, Holman called for a ceremonially dumping of beverages before leading the crowd across the street.

"This is not goodbye. It's see you next door," said Holman.

See page 7 for more on this special event.

Photo by Mark Trockman, Lakeshore Weekly News

From left, Wayzata Mayor Ken Willcox, C.E.L.'s Kari Logan and Gina Holman, the muni's general manager; dance the muni motion Thursday, April 28 in front of the new muni just before the grand opening.

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MMBA President's Message



Tom Agnes
President

MMBA Institute for Beverage Professionals.

Have you ever had a customer come in and ask questions about wine? They are looking to make a purchasing decision with some help from you or a staff member. This can be a little scary for some people because nobody has tried every wine in the store and knows everything about them.

However, MMBA can help. We started a program a while back called IBP (Institute for Beverage Professionals). This is an on-line training program you and your staff can use. This is a great way to educate you and your staff at a very reasonable price. You do not need to send anyone to vineyards in California, or have them attend expensive long classroom schedule away from the store. This can be done from any computer with a user name and password that is very easy to attain.

To access the program go to the MMBA website www.municipalbev.com and find the "The Institute for Beverage Professionals" button.

Within the website you will find a home screen and a catalog. If it is your first time you will need to set up that username and password. There is also a catalog area where we now have "Wine 101" and "Alcohol Awareness Server Training". There will be more to come in this catalog as we analyze industry needs.

Once you have the essentials completed, you can begin the Wine 101 course. This should take you an about hour undisturbed and no more than two. You will learn about different varietals, food and wine pairing, regions where the grapes come from and details about every wine label.

Bobby from Albertville completed the course and said "This was much simpler that I expected". He said he was also able to use the information on the sales floor the same day he took the course.

When the course is completed you will take a test based on what you learned. Once the test is passed you will receive a certificate you can print out. I know the cities I have worked for love putting these certificates in your employee file. If you have several employees taking the course you could hang them on the wall to show recognition.

After receiving his certificate John, a municipal liquor 22 year employee said "I am impressed by the accuracy".

Consider this as an option for training your employees in the future.

Amy a frequent MMBA conference attendee said after completion of the course, "I think everyone at the conference should consider this training".

For about the price of a one year subscription to a popular wine magazine you could have a useful tool for your employees to provide better customer service to every wine customer that walks through your door.

Enjoy the training and look for more to be added soon.

Tom Agnes
MMBA President

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Wayzata Opens “The People’s Pub”

By Brett Stursa
Lakeshore Weekly News Editor

“This is the historic last call at the old muni,” announced Gina Holman, the general manager of Wayzata’s Bar and Grill, through a bullhorn to a crowd of hundreds gathered outside of the city’s restaurant at 810 Superior Blvd. on April 28.

Inside the old Wine and Spirits shop, a full-sized silver coffin was filled with a few empties and a sign that read, “We’ve gathered here today to pay respects to the muni at 810 Superior Blvd.”

The mood was anything but somber as people streamed in to enjoy one last cold one at the city-owned restaurant and bar that has served the community since 1967.

Back outside, Holman called for a ceremonially dumping of beverages before leading the crowd across the street.

“This is not goodbye. It’s see you next door,” said Holman.

The move next door was necessary to make way for the redevelopment of the Bay Center.

After years of study, the Wayzata City Council approved building the new muni back in 2010.

The construction of the new restaurant and liquor store, which is about twice the size of the old space, was expected to cost about \$3.8 million.

City Manager Al Orsen said the final costs have yet to be tallied, but there weren’t significant surprises during construction, so he expects the estimate to be accurate.

The city council’s decision wasn’t

without controversy, as some in the community didn’t think the city should continue to compete with private businesses.

But that didn’t appear to be on the minds of those who came out to celebrate the opening of the new muni at 747 Mill St.

After last call at the old muni, a group of young professionals from the Wayzata Chamber of Commerce led the crowd across the street with a dance choreographed by the muni’s public relations firm C.E.L.

Speakers blared a song with the melody of “The Loco-motion,” but with lyrics written for the occasion, including “Come on Wayzata do the muni motion with me.”

It took only minutes for the crowd to cross the street to be greeted by Mayor Ken Willcox.

He welcomed the crowd to what he called “the people’s pub” and told them that if they had the same reaction he did when he first stepped into the new muni, “You’ll walk in and say ‘wow.’”

While Willcox said the new space is “dressed up a bit” compared to the old muni, the new muni “captures the heart and soul of the place.”

With that, Holman popped the Champagne bottle’s cork, took a sip and unlocked the doors to the new muni.

“Welcome to your muni,” Holman told the crowd.

Former Congressman Jim Ramstad was on hand and one of the first things Holman did once inside the new muni was take Ramstad and his wife Kathryn to a plaque in memory of Ramstad’s father, Marv.

He was a regular at the old muni with a table dedicated to him.

Two other tables were dedicated to Greg Rye and Sue Bangert, a former city council member who died 2009.

The old muni was 7,200 square feet and the new one opened with almost 15,000 square feet.

Holman is quick to note that it’s not an exact comparison, as space for mechanical equipment is included in the square footage in the new muni but not in the old one.

The number of seats in the restaurant significantly increased. There were 108 seats in the old muni and the new muni has 150 seats inside, as well as another 50 seats outdoors.

Holman estimated about 1,000 people joined in the opening day celebrations. “It was a home run,” said Holman, who said customers were excited to celebrate a new beginning.

Business did well, too, for the Thursday night opening as Holman said they brought in twice as much as they would on a typical Friday.

Despite its updated appearance, prices aren’t increasing at the new location. “We’re offering the same quality for the same price,” said Holman.

As a city-owned business, all of the profits go back into the community to pay for things like road maintenance.

Willcox said he views the much-anticipated opening of the new muni as only the beginning of what’s to come for Wayzata.

“This is the start of a very exciting time in Wayzata,” said Willcox.

U of M Professor Perfects Science of the “Woo”

By Jackie Crosby, Star Tribune

Most of us have a hunch that, for better or worse, our moods and perceptions influence what we buy.

Joan Meyers-Levy puts some science behind it.

She's a marketing professor at the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management, and writes dense academic papers about such things as how ceiling heights, product displays or floor surfaces influence a consumer's mind-set.

As retailers polish their storefronts, Meyers-Levy's research suggests they'll need to do more than put out the "on sale" signs if they hope to clinch the deal.

"There's all this stuff around us that we think we can ignore," she said. "But it's profoundly affecting us."

On a recent outing among stores at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Meyers-Levy offered some insight into a field she's been immersed in for three decades.

Turns out, a little background music or even the chaos of a construction project can be a good thing. Why? Because research shows a "moderate level of stimulation" makes shoppers "evaluate things more positively," she said.

The skylights, windows and lighting in the mall itself are designed to stimulate big, positive thoughts. The height of a ceiling inside a store does more than create ambience. It influences the way people think, according to research Meyers-Levy did with partner Juliet Zhu of the University of British Columbia.

High ceilings -- often found in furniture

stores -- encourage consumers to "process things in a more abstract, flowing way," Meyers-Levy said. "Your mind is thinking expansively. You see connections among things that aren't necessarily together."

A high ceiling might inspire shoppers to ponder how well that chair at Room & Board might fit in with your existing living room. Or whether a bookcase in the Broyhill area at Becker Furniture World showroom would complement a loveseat you spotted in the leather area.

A lower ceiling, on the other hand, makes people more focused on the task at hand, Meyers-Levy said. Consumers might zoom in on defects or study whether an item is scuffed or needs repairing.

As Meyers-Levy passed a MasterCuts, she hypothesized that the high ceiling in the salon area might bolster a woman's urge to get flamboyant and try a drastic new cut or color. The lower ceilings in the product area might spur a comparison among hair gels.

"I'm interested in the environment, and what goes unnoticed," Meyers-Levy said. When we're shopping, "we aren't conscious that we're standing on tile or carpet. All our focus is on the product. You wouldn't think that people would be sensitive to what they're standing on. But I find that they are. Carpet gives a sense of comfort in the body and that can affect people's perceptions of products."

Some of the theories may seem esoteric, but Meyers-Levy contends they are under-studied areas of consumer research, and she and Zhu are trying to generate interest for more research. Meyers-Levy's work has appeared in such trade publications as the Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Marketing Research, and Journal of Applied Psychology.

The retail lab

While she does get out to stores, much of the work of testing out theories happens in two small rooms on the third floor of the Carlson School on the University's West Bank. Students volunteer to be part of an experiment, and typically earn a couple of bucks or get class credit for their time.

The small, narrow labs have nondescript white walls and just enough room in them to outfit with a wall display, bookshelf, mirror, lamp and a chair. The rooms are arranged with the same basic layout and furnishings, but a key characteristic will be different: For example, one room will show a coffee mug on a wood table, the other will put it on glass. Or one will be filled with curvy furniture and objects, the other angular.

The labs allow Meyers-Levy to test how the context around a product influences people's impression of it. One of the things she has learned: A field test of the product can cement the sale. For example, when you try on shoes at a place like REI and walk across the footbridge or climb up the wall, that experience does more than help you figure out if the shoes fit. Same goes for taking a test run on a Wii at a Best Buy store.

"It's a very effective sales technique," she said. "People get the sensation and exhilaration ... and attribute that to the shoes."

And if you have to work hard to get at your object of desire -- say you need a ladder to get something off a shelf at the Home Depot -- you're not only more likely to buy it, but you're more likely to be satisfied with your purchase.

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Free-Pour or Hand-Measure?

By Barprofits.com

The decision whether to rely on free-pouring or hand-measuring liquor largely boils down to a question of style vs. substance. Free-pouring is a stylish technique extremely popular with bartenders. It's also the fastest, most expedient method of pouring from a drink making perspective. The speed is derived from the bartender being able to portion the spirits with one hand, while simultaneously adding in the mixer with the other. Speed of service is why it's frequently employed in high-volume beverage operations.

The technique does have its shortcomings though. Free-pouring accurate measurements over the course of a long night requires an inordinate amount of mental stamina. It's especially difficult for bartenders to pour accurately when they're tired, or working at a frenzied pace, which is when profitability and drink consistency really take a beating. But regardless of the circumstances, it is easier to dispense heavy shots when free-pouring than when using a shot glass and it's harder for supervisors to spot the overage.

Permitting bartenders to free-pour liquor can be an expensive proposition. On the other hand, some will contend that the cost of slowing their bartenders' with shot glasses is equally steep. The deciding factor is typically based on the operational demands of the concept. Since no bar or restaurant operates under the burden of too much profit, effective portioning controls are a must.

FREE-POURING STEP BY STEP

1. *Here's a rule of thumb. When a liquor bottle outfitted with a medium-speed commercial pour spout is inverted between 45° and 90°, it will dispense approximately 1/2 oz. of spirits*

per second. Based on that, an internal cadence of "one-one thousand, two-one thousand, three-one thousand," will yield a 1.5 ounce portion of spirits.

2. *Should the count of three result in more than a jigger of spirits in the glass, then the bartender's internal cadence is too slow and will need to be sped up. If there's less than a jigger in the glass, it means the person's cadence is too fast and will need to be slowed down. After that, it's just a matter of the bartender maintaining a consistent cadence.*
3. *Liqueurs, which are denser and more viscous than spirits, will pass through a spout at a slower rate, which means that when free pouring Baileys or Kahlúa*

bartenders need to know to compensate by counting more slowly.

4. *It's advisable to routinely test bartenders pouring abilities. Arrange a half-dozen empty glasses on the bar rail, and have them quickly pour a staggered series of measurements into each. Afterwards, pour the contents of each glass into a graduated cylinder, or measuring cup to gauge their accuracy. Many operators establish standards for pouring accuracy, and if a bartender doesn't pour up to those standards, the individual is required to use a shot glass until such time as he's able to consistently free pour accurate measurements.*

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*BASES Consumer testing



Cambridge Wins Two National Awards

Rachel Kytonen, Isanti County News, Cambridge

Bobbi Mix will use just about anything to make her wine displays unique. She will bring in antique items from home, or even make her husband build something.

Northbound Liquors, Cambridge's municipal liquor store, won its second national first place merchandise display award in December 2010. Bobbi Mix, Northbound Liquors' Assistant Manager, designed the award-winning displays, and enjoys offering unique and creative displays for her customers. Photo by Rachel Kytonen

Whatever the case, it shows. Bobbi Mix, assistant manager at Cambridge's municipal liquor store, Northbound Liquors, recently learned she won a first place national award for her display in December using Yellowtail wines.

Mix's display was chosen from over 700 displays nation-wide. Mix also won a first place national award in August from Rosemount Wines that also had over 700 entries.

"I have always enjoyed building neat displays," Mix said. "For decorations, I use a lot of things. I bring in things from the woods, haul stuff in from my home, and even my customers will bring in items for the display."

Cambridge City Administrator Lynda Woulfe said she doesn't know of any other city winning two first place national awards in the same year.

Mix said when deciding on what wine display contests to enter, she always makes sure it's a product that customers will purchase, and there isn't a minimum number of cases she has to purchase for the display.



"I only enter these contests if I know it's a product we can sell," Mix said.

The Yellowtail Wines contest in December was a Christmas theme, and mix mentioned Wolcyn Tree Farms donated the trees for the display.

"The sales representative saved bottles for me, and the ornaments for the tree were made from Yellowtail bottles," Mix said. "We also brought in an old sled for the display, and antique windows. It was a small display, using only 75 cases, but it was unique."

Mix said she never purchases items for her displays.

"I do a lot of recycling with antiques and craft fairs," Mix said. "I like to use different and unique things with my displays. Customers come in here all the time, and comment on the unique displays. It's a really neat thing for our store."

Store Manager Terry Baar said Mix's displays make the store unique, and customers enjoy seeing what displays she'll do next.

"Bobbi's displays are very important to the store," Baar said. "We want our displays to be fun, creative, and keep changing."

Baar feels Mix's displays add a lot to the store.

"We want the image of a fun store with a personality," Baar said. "Our customers comment two or three times a week on our displays. Bobbi is a very good employee. She is fun, dedicated, creative, knows and loves wine."

Mix, who has worked at Northbound Liquors for over 20 years, said she really enjoys her job.

"I really like working for the city of Cambridge," Mix said. "I like the freedom I have to make decisions, and enjoy all the employees and customers I work with."

Mix said the rewards that come with a first place award really go to the sales representative, but she gets the pride in knowing it was a job well done.

"This is a great job, and I love all my customers," Mix said. "The atmosphere in here is really fun, and I was really excited when I got a call from my sales representative about the first place award. We like to change things around in the store, and keep things fresh and exciting."

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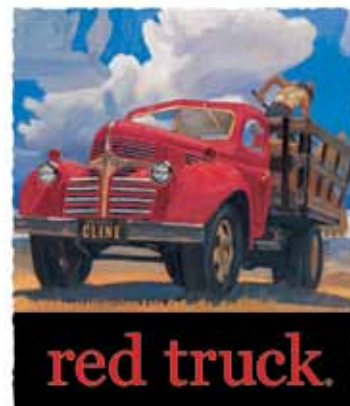
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Nisswa Liquor Revenues Help Taxpayers

By Nancy Vogt
Lake Country Echo Editor

The reason for the creation of Nisswa's first municipal liquor establishment in 1950 remains the driving force behind today's city liquor operations.

The idea behind Ye Old Pickle Factory, the city's on-sale/off-sale liquor operation, was to generate income for the community. Today, Nisswa owns the Pickle and Spirits of Nisswa, an off-sale liquor store that opened in 2002, to help fund city expenditures.

Harold Kraus, a current Nisswa City Council member and former mayor for 10 years, said the primary purpose for the first municipal liquor operations was to promote moderation, control alcohol sales and generate income for cities.

In 1946, after World War II had ended, the people in Smiley Township and the village of Nisswa decided to look at combining the two municipalities to have one government entity, which would allow the creation of a municipal liquor store to generate income for the community, Kraus said.

The city of Nisswa was incorporated on Nov. 12, 1946, and the Pickle Factory was started in 1950.

"Howard (Wallentine, a former city leader) always told me that if it hadn't been for the Pickle Factory, Nisswa wouldn't have any paved streets," Kraus said.

What else has been funded with profits from the Pickle and Spirits?

From 1989-2005, Kraus said, \$37,500 in revenues from the Pickle each year supplemented the cost of implementing the city's wastewater system.

Revenues were used to buy a second ballfield for the city at Nisswa Park. When the city started its police department in 1996, Pickle Factory revenues paid for the first two squad cars.

Remaining profits have always been deposited in the city's general fund, resulting in a property tax reduction for residents.

In 2000, city council members started talking about building new city offices and a maintenance building, asking themselves how they could pay for the buildings. They visited off-sale municipal liquor stores throughout the state, eventually deciding to build a store like one that had just opened in North Branch.

Kraus, who is council liaison to the Spirits of Nisswa and a member of the city's liquor committee, said the council at that time created a business plan and projected that in two years sales from the Spirits store could service the debt of building a new city hall and maintenance building.

Spirits was built in 2002, and revenues from that store and the Pickle have been dedicated to cover the construction of city hall, which was completed in 2005. That debt will be paid off in 2025.

"In the last four years, this enterprise business of the city has contributed \$630,000 to the general fund," Kraus said, noting municipal liquor revenues also have allowed the city to keep its tax rate lower than most area cities.

"That's what these enterprise businesses can do for you," Kraus said.

Kraus acknowledges there have been a few bumps in the municipal liquor road in the past few years.

"We've had a couple of years when things were tough," he said.

That includes this past year when the Pickle lost \$50,000, prompting the city to replace the business' manager after nearly two years on the job.

But the city has taken steps to turn things around. Ron Bialke was hired two years ago to manage Spirits. Last week, the city hired longtime Pickle Factory bartender Terry Wallin to manage that business.

Also the city remodeled the Pickle Factory both inside and outside two years ago and added an outdoor patio.

"I think we made some decent changes," Kraus said. "From a structural standpoint, we improved the facility. Times have changed. Our customer base was changing and that dictated to us what we had to do."

To that end, the Pickle has been open on Sundays for almost two years, which has been good during football season.

A concern now, Kraus said, is a pending bill in the state Legislature for Sunday off-sale liquor store sales. Currently, liquor stores are closed on Sundays.

Kraus believes if liquor stores were open on Sundays, the city would see higher operational costs but no corresponding increase in sales.

2011 has been good so far for the city's municipal liquor operations, Kraus said.

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Bar Design: Form vs Function

By: Robert Plotkin

If you've ever worked behind a bar on a busy shift, you already know there is no such a thing as a perfectly designed bar. Ill-devised layouts and poorly placed equipment can prove to be insurmountable obstacles and leave bartenders incapable of performing their duties behind the bar in a timely and efficient manner.

While there's no such thing as the perfect bar, some layouts are much easier to work with than others. Every misplaced step a bartender takes costs the bar money in lost productivity. Operational folks are passionate about the logistics of drink production: how the workstations are configured, where equipment is placed relative to the workstation and how the inventory is merchandised. They are, after all, responsible for ensuring that the facility is designed to operate at peak efficiency; anything less negatively impacts revenue and service.

However, from a design standpoint, the bar is the central focus of the front of the house. The structure dominates the overall interior design and, therefore, falls within the operational staff's purview. They are, after all, responsible for creating ambience and visually delivering on the promise of the concept. Where the bar is placed, the shape of the structure and the traffic flow around the bar are crucial design considerations.

"The management point of view really is the prioritized melding of both the operational and interior design perspective," says Jean-Pierre Etcheberrigaray, vice-president of food and beverage for Intercontinental Hotels. "Add a few curves to a bar for affect and you could wind up adversely impacting drink production, delaying service, increasing labor costs, detracting from the ambience, snarling traffic flow or undermining the concept."

Etcheberrigaray contends that subsequent decisions pale in importance

to choosing the design and physical shape of the bar. "Nothing one does can overcome a poor choice in terms of design. The physical layout of the bar largely determines the placement of equipment, liquor displays and workstations, which, in turn, dictates the speed at which bartenders can make drinks and provide hospitable service. A difference of 3 feet one way or another may not seem like much when you're deciding where to position a glass-washer, but it can add up to hundreds or even thousands of extra steps for bartenders a week. That's a lot of wasted time."

What is the most operationally friendly bar design? Which best allows bartenders to quickly make drinks and service the guests? Which layout is most visually appealing and the most efficient use of space? Tackling the debate head-on, we polled beverage veterans regarding their take on these issues.

Engineering in Speed

Scott Young is a celebrated bartending trainer. Having spent the majority of his life behind a bar, the Vancouver native

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— owner of extremebartending.com
— knows a workable bar design when he sees it.

“I think most bartenders would rather work a linear bar, one with a workstation positioned every 10 to 15 feet or so,” he says. “This configuration allows unrestricted views of the guests and permits them to move freely behind the bar.”

Young adds that the most effective bar design is one that guides guests to where we want them, instead of forcing bartenders to constantly run back and forth wasting steps and precious time. He points out that efficiency of movement is crucial even behind slower bars. The time wasted on drink production is always better spent on service.

A linear bar allows for unobstructed vision of the patrons seated at the bar and often can be worked by one bartender in non-peak hours of business. The design also is the easiest of the various shapes in which to position equipment, outfit with workstations and properly merchandise inventory. It typically requires less square footage to accomplish the same volume of business and accommodate the same number of bar stools as other shaped bars.

“Linear bars are, unfortunately, the least interesting and appealing shape from a design standpoint,” suggests Tracy Finklang, corporate beverage manager at Rock Bottom Restaurants. “Working an exceptionally long bar, where to get from one end to the other requires marathon-type endurance, poses its own unique challenge.”

A proponent of the linear bar is Mark Grossich, CEO of New York-based Hospitality Holdings, whose portfolio of contemporary cocktail lounges include The World Bar in Trump Tower, Carnegie Club in CitySpire Centre and the Campbell Apartment in Grand Central Terminal. “In addition to being faster to work, linear bars afford bartenders with optimal face-to-face

time with guests. From my point of view, there’s nothing more important than that.”

Horseshoe and oval bars also require constant movement on the bartender’s part to ensure all of the patrons seated at the bar receive proper service. These bars also are the most labor-intensive. Horseshoe and oval bars require more bartenders to work during peak business hours to provide the same level of service and are the most difficult in which to adequately position equipment and merchandise inventory.

David Commer of Commer Beverage Consulting and former T.G.I. Friday’s beverage director believes oval bars are faster for bartenders.

“It’s easier to survey what’s going on at an oval bar and provide outstanding service to the guests,” he says. “The close proximity of workstations, equipment and inventory at an oval bar facilitates drink production and speed of service.”

A Room with a View

It’s interesting to note that up until about 60 years ago, the classic linear or “L” shape bars in America and Europe all incorporated large mirrors behind the bar. Etcheberrigaray believes that the mirror is crucial to the design. Without it, guests seated at the bar can only watch what’s happening behind them by turning around on their stools.

That puts their backs to the bartenders and that’s bad for business. Drop the mirror, doom the design.

“In addition, bartenders rely on that mirror to extend their field of vision and catch reorder cues without turning around,” says leading restaurant consultant, Bill Main. From the patron’s perspective, Main believes the best bar shape is the oval or horseshoe. “They both create a sense of privacy, while still allowing guests to scan the room easily. People-watching is a great American pastime. Horseshoe bars have a high ‘see and be seen’ quotient.”

On a more pragmatic level, Main states that curved counters tend to engage people, while straight edges tend to repel.

“Customers gravitate toward curved kiosks in airports 20% more frequently,” he says.

Mark Grossich has built and operated cocktail lounges that featured all of the various bar designs mentioned.

“In the final analysis, I think this discussion renders down to ‘form follows function,’ or more specifically, form follows the optimal floor/furniture plan for the space,” Grossich says.

So go ahead and advocate putting an oval bar in a square space or a linear bar in a round space. You’ll catch an earful either way.

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