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| *December 15, 2004* |

1. [MEXICO: Tequila Industry Faces Oversupply - Report](#First)

2. [When Common Sense Isn’t So Common](#Second)

3. [MADD Holds Vigil, Reminds Iowans to Drive Sober](#Third)

4. [US: Jose Cuervo Launches Responsible Drinking Ad](#Fourth)

5. [Tips for Responsible Hosting, Drinking](#Fifth)

6. [Woman Awarded $1.4M For Stunt at Bar](#Sixth)

7. [Top-Shelf Spirits, Wine and Beer Products Ride Status Wave as Spending in Restaurants and Bars Breaks All Records in 2003](#Seventh)

**1. MEXICO: Tequila Industry Faces Oversupply - Report**

Source: *just-drinks*

December, 15, 2004

The Tequila industry is facing an oversupply of the agave plant, which could lead to a damaging fall in Tequila prices, according to comments from the director of the Tequila Regulation Board (CRT), Ramón González.

González was quoted yesterday in the publication Corporate Mexico saying: "At this rate the tequila industry will not be able to absorb overproduction of this kind, implying damage to the industry upon which some 42,000 families depend."

Only four years ago the Tequila industry was in the midst of a massive agave shortage, which led to a huge planting programme.

However, now González argues that on oversupply is looming and that part of the problem was the cultivation of blue agave outside the area protected by the Denomination of Origin of Tequila (DOT).

González suggested that the industry may need to increase the proportions of agave used in Tequila distilling, from the common 49% to 51% to 55% or 70%.

**2. When Common Sense Isn’t So Common**

By DI Editorial Board – *Daily Iowan*

December 10, 2004

IOWA CITY, IA -- It's one thing to read it at the bottom of a Bacardi ad - if your eyes make it past the gorgeous blond - or to hear it in your parents' annual Thanksgiving lecture. Drink responsibly, they say. Unfortunately, it's not until tragedy strikes that the danger becomes clear - Everclear, in this case.

The fiery-stunt-turned-tragedy in April 2002 at Et Cetera, 118 S. Dubuque St., dramatically demonstrated the dangers of irresponsible alcohol use (specifically, lighting it on fire), propelling Iowa City's propensity to party into the spotlight. While the incident occurred more than two-and-a-half years ago, it is news once again as a lawsuit is underway.

Former UI student Deanine Busche today has scars on her arms, hands, and face as a result of the bar stunt performed by Et Cetera's then-manager, Troy Kline. On that night, he poured alcohol into a drink well and lit it on fire, an act he allegedly performed on a regular basis to entertain patrons such as Busche. But this time, his pyrotechnics had tragic effects.

While it's up to the jury to decide the details of what happened next, a few things are not debatable. Kline admits having poured more Everclear on the fire after it began to fizzle, which immediately flared up and leaped toward the crowd, severely burning Busche, who was just 6 feet away. Havoc ensued. Bar patrons who stomped on Busche in an attempt to smother the flames inadvertently broke her nose and injured her shoulder. In short, it was a horrifying situation, a situation literally fueled by alcohol.

Regardless of whether the jury decides Busche played a role in re-igniting the flames, as Kline contends, the incident serves as a much-needed wake-up call. That the bar manager was dousing dying flames with more alcohol makes placing blame relatively easy, even if Busche or her friends did play any part in creating the fireball. It goes without saying that fires should never be lit in a crowded bar, particularly when patrons are literally just feet away.

The effects of Iowa's party scene have been prominent lately, from the seemingly endless debate over the 19-only ordinance to Pi Kappa Alpha's recent five-year suspension due to alcohol violations. But it is this horrific fire that has the most potential to convince people that practicing responsible drinking, as well as a bit of common sense, is not such a bad idea. In addition to jarring bar patrons into contemplation, the case has, hopefully, pushed bar owners to more strictly monitor conditions to ensure safety.

Thousands of students attend this university in order to learn both academically and socially. As the Et Cetera trial continues, a new generation of students has the opportunity to learn Busche's story, a sad tale illuminating the sometimes dangerous consequences of alcohol abuse - which, as we learned from this tragedy, doesn't only occur when consuming it. So, at the risk of sounding like the surgeon-general (or, worse, someone's parents) we encourage everyone to drink responsibly. Unfortunately, this is a case that proves once again that common sense isn't always common.

**3. MADD Holds Vigil, Reminds Iowans to Drive Sober**

*WHO-TV*

December 14, 2004

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| Above: MADD members light candles to remind Iowans not to drink and drive. |
| Above: MADD members light candles to remind Iowans not to drink and drive. |
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DES MOINES- One group hopes a burning candle will help the public use common sense during the holiday season.  The Polk County Mothers Against Drunk Driving chapter held a candle light vigil to remember people killed in accidents involving alcohol. The group has met for 21 years, and each year the message is the same. Bill Shackleford, from MADD, said, "Celebrate but do it intelligently. Don't impair yourself and drive. If you go out and party, use a designated driver." Last year, 124 Iowans died in accidents involving alcohol. State troopers say they'll have a sharp eye out over the next few weeks for drunk drivers- for two good reasons. Matt Sauer, from the Iowa State Patrol, said, "We have a lot more traffic on roads and interstates in Iowa, and we have the holiday season with celebrations- Christmas, New Year's." Sauer says since Iowa lowered the legal blood alcohol limit from 0.10 to 0.08, crashes involving alcohol have gone down. |

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| **4. US: Jose Cuervo Launches Responsible Drinking Ad**Source*: just-drinks.com editorial team*December 14, 2004Jose Cuervo International, the global marketing division for Tequila company Jose Cuervo, has announced the launch of a new television ad in the US to promote responsible drinking. Entitled “Reverse,” the new ad will begin airing nationally in December.The spot opens with a group of friends about to drive away from a party. But the advert actually runs backwards, as if the tape is being rewound. Focusing on the driver, the camera watches a group of friends as they back up to the house. They move back inside and back in time through the party to the critical point in the evening where the driver is offered his first drink. With the soundtrack also running in reverse, his response, “Not tonight, I’m driving,” is played backwards, which requires subtitles to clarify what he’s saying. It then reminds consumers to “Please drink responsibly,” underscoring the message with the fact, “You can’t rewind the night.”“With the holidays fast approaching, we could not think of a more opportune time to impress upon our consumers the importance of drinking responsibly,” said Carlos Arana, managing director, Jose Cuervo International. |

**5. Tips for Responsible Hosting, Drinking**

*Pueblo Chieftain*

December 15, 2004

Parties are one of the great joys of the holiday season. Just don’t let the festivities get the better of you by downing one too many hot buttered rums. The Distilled Spirits Council of the United States has the following tips for staying safe this year:

Designate a bartender who can serve guests and keep an eye on how much they’re drinking. Federal guidelines define moderate drinking as no more than two drinks for men and one drink for women.

Monitor your own drinking. Know that a serving of beer (12 ounces), wine (5 ounces) or spirits (a cocktail with 1 1/2 ounces of 80-proof) each contains the same amount of alcohol.

If you’re hosting a party, provide food with your drinks. Consider food pairings that complement your cocktails. Fresh seafood and breads accentuate vodka cocktails; spiced and smoked meats and cheeses complement bourbon and scotch; and fruit enhances rum and tequila.

Make nonalcoholic beverages available for your guests. Create a festive nonalcoholic punch.

Designate a driver or call a cab if people are imbibing. Hosts and hostesses should have local taxi service numbers available.

##### *- Knight Ridder Newspapers*

**6. Woman Awarded $1.4M For Stunt at Bar**

By Jeff Patch – *Des Moines Register*
December 16, 2004

IOWA CITY, IA. - A Johnson County jury on Wednesday awarded nearly $1.4 million to a former University of Iowa student injured during a fiery bar stunt more than two years ago.

Deanine Busche, now 23, of Schaumberg, Ill., also was awarded $275,000 in punitive damages for injuries she received in the April 2002 fire at Et Cetera, a popular downtown nightspot.

Busche had asked for more than $2 million in damages in her lawsuit against the former owner of Et Cetera, Herbert Pohl, and the bar's former manager, Troy Kline.

According to the jury, Pohl and Kline were 67 percent responsible for the burns Busche sustained over 13 percent of her body. The jury also found that Busche deserved 33 percent of the blame.

The fire began when Kline poured alcohol into the well of the bar and lit it as part of a stunt.

Busche was one of nine people burned when the stunt went awry.

Et Cetera has new owners.

Kline and Pohl should pay Busche nearly $1.4 million to compensate her for her injuries, including pain and suffering, according to the ruling, handed down shortly before noon. In addition, the jury recommended Kline pay $25,000 and Pohl pay $250,000 in punitive damages.

District Judge Amanda Potterfield can amend the award amount, and the defendants can appeal.

Lawsuits filed by two other people injured in the fire - Christopher Reed, 25, of Des Moines and Taryn Von Bartheld, 22, of Iowa City - were settled last year.

Amy Shah, 22, of Palatine, Ill., has a lawsuit pending.

**7. Top-Shelf Spirits, Wine and Beer Products Ride Status Wave as Spending in Restaurants and Bars Breaks All Records in 2003**

December 15, 2004

NORWALK, Conn., Dec. 15 /PRNewswire/ -- Demand for de luxe drove beverage alcohol spending in American restaurants and bars to a record $74 billion in 2003, according to the Cheers On-Premise Handbook 2004 published by Adams Beverage Group.

"You are what you sip," said Tiziana Mohorovic, spokesperson for Adams Beverage Group. "Being knowledgeable about wines, spirits and beers is considered a mark of sophistication. At the same time, American tastes in beverage alcohol have advanced considerably. The bottom line is that consumers are spending record amounts on premium drinks in restaurants and bars nationwide."

Classic cocktails -- martinis, cosmopolitans and Manhattans -- have been gaining on the margarita -- the perennial mixed drink leader -- over the past six years. Among leading growth brands in restaurants and bars, Grey Goose increased share and once again captured the top spot. Kendall-Jackson held onto its number one ranking among wines, and Michelob Ultra continued to capture carb-conscious consumers.

"Consumers want an experience in a glass," added Mohorovic. "Flavorful, colorful cocktails, adorned with flowers or fresh fruit, and served in attractive glassware are what's hot in restaurants and bars. Demand is equally strong for high-end wines and beers," said Mohorovic.

Adult beverage retail sales have been on the upswing for more than two decades. Retail sales climbed 7.7% in 2003 -- the largest percentage gain in more than a decade, according to Adams Beverage Group. Top-shelf products across all spirit, wine and beer categories drove the growth.

"James Bond, with his preferences for vodka martinis -- "shaken not stirred" -- and '53 Dom Perignon, is perhaps the greatest pop icon when it comes to beverage alcohol bon vivants," added Mohorovic. "One's choice of cocktail, wine or brand of beer is seen today as an meaningful expression of personal taste -- fashion, culture and sophistication in a beverage."

Cheers On-Premise Handbook 2004 is the only report of its kind. Contents include: five year trends in beverage alcohol consumption -- specifically premium and superpremium category and brand growth; on-premise spirits, wine and beer cases and retail dollars; new beverage alcohol product introductions; consumer drinking preferences; exclusive results from Cheers OnTrac Bar Managers study, including spirit, wine and beer brand specific data by outlet, region and 31 key metro markets; restaurant industry trends, and consumer demographics. The cost of the publication is $1,500. The Adams Beverage Group serves all segments of the beverage alcohol industry through Cheers, Beverage Dynamics and StateWays magazines, Adams Beverage Handbooks and Adams Beverage Research.

