|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *www.IowaABD.com* | *Lynn M. Walding, Administrator* |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | e - NEWS |
| *April 1, 2005* | |

1.  [Lee County Sheriff Takes Aim at Adults Selling Alcohol to Minors](#lee)

2. [Diageo and Kurt Busch: Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix](#diageo)

3.  [Industry, Anti-Tax Sentiment Hamper Plans to Fund Treatment Via State Alcohol Taxes](#industry)

4. [Anheuser-Busch Downgrade Cites Weak U.S. Beer Sales](#anheuser)

5. [Brewers Bottle Up Aftertaste](#brewers)

6. [Skyy Uncaps High-Tech “Luxury” Vodka](#skyy)

7. [Joe Sixpack | Great Taste Test put Schmidt's Back on Map - Briefly](#joe)

**1. Lee County Sheriff Takes Aim at Adults Selling Alcohol to Minors**

By: Cindy Iutzi, MVM News Network – *Fort Madison Daily Democrat*

*March 30, 2005*

MONTROSE - Lee County law enforcement officers are working together this spring to send a message to people who sell alcohol to underage drinkers. At the same time, businesses that sell tobacco will be checked for compliance with the tobacco law.

In Iowa, it is illegal to sell alcohol to people younger than 21, and tobacco to people under 18 years old.

"What we'll do is random checks at various liquor retail establishments," said Lee County Sheriff Buck Jones. "We're doing this because we know there is a problem with underage drinking in the county."

Jones recalled the death last year of a young man that occurred in North Lee County between West Point and Fort Madison. The teen had a .215 blood alcohol level when he died, Jones said. Driving with a .08 blood alcohol level is considered to be driving while intoxicated.

An investigation into where the youth obtained the alcohol is ongoing, Jones said.

The compliance checks will focus on convenience store/gas stations, grocery stores, bars, liquor stores, and any other establishments that sell packaged liquor and/or tobacco.

The sheriff's office will concentrate on county establishments, also including the cities of Montrose, Donnellson, West Point, Denmark and Wever.

The Keokuk and Fort Madison police departments will participate in the compliance check, working simultaneously within their own jurisdictions.

Jones is concerned about the upcoming prom season and doesn't want to see any more teens die because of underage drinking. He's aware of more parties in private residences being held where liquor is served to underage drinkers.

"If we get a call, we will go and check it out and see what's going on," Jones said.

Although parents may believe they are doing the right thing by hosting the parties, the teens still have to drive home, said Chief Deputy Jim Scholl.

Usually, compliance checks for alcohol and tobacco work the same way. An underage person working with officers goes into a store and attempts to purchase alcohol/tobacco. If he or she is successful, the police take it from there.

If the store is found to be selling alcohol to minors, the fine for the simple misdemeanor charge is $50 to $100.

Tobacco penalties are more stringent. The business' fine for the first offense is $100, second offense is $250, and third offense is $500. Also, the license to sell tobacco is either suspended or revoked as the number of offenses accrue.

Employees also face fines of similar amounts.

Jones said retailers can train their employees about tobacco law compliance to avoid fines if an employee does sell to an underage person.

The sheriff's office has assisted the Iowa State Police in compliance checks, but this is the first time the department is tackling the procedure on its own.

The Keokuk Police Department has been doing compliance checks for three years through Iowa Pledge Partners, affiliated with Alcohol and Tobacco Compliance of Iowa, the same organization the sheriff's office is going to use this year.

Iowa Pledge Partners furnishes kits for the compliance checks, Dobson said, including the materials necessary to call on retailers and "bring them up to speed."

Tobacco compliance includes items such as cigarettes, cigars, snuff and chew, he added.

Typically the Keokuk Police Department's Criminal Investigation Division enforces the Iowa Pledge program in Keokuk.



**2.** **Diageo and Kurt Busch: Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix**

By: PRNewswire

March 31, 2005

***Diageo Donates Space on Kurt Busch's No. 97 Nextel Cup Car to Century Council's 'Ask, Listen Learn: Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix' Program***

NORWALK, CT - Nextel Cup Champion Kurt Busch will carry a special message on the No. 97 Sharpie Retractable "Autographs for Education" Ford during this weekend's Food City 500 race at Bristol Motor Speedway: kids and alcohol don't mix.

In recognition of April as Alcohol Awareness Month, Diageo, the world's leading premium drinks business, today announced it has donated its space on the No. 97 car to "Ask, Listen, Learn: Kids and Alcohol Don't Mix" -- a dynamic multimedia program developed by The Century Council and Nickelodeon that provides parents with important tools to talk to their children about the consequences of underage drinking. The space, which covers the lower hood and rear quarter panel areas of the car, is normally occupied by the company's Crown Royal and Smirnoff ICE brand logos.

"Diageo has a long-standing commitment to promote responsible consumption and the fight against underage drinking," said Ivan Menezes, President and CEO, Diageo. "What better time to donate our space on the No. 97 car to further support these efforts than during the first weekend of Alcohol Awareness Month."

Research shows that parents have the power to influence their kids' decision not to drink alcohol.

According to the 2003 TRU Omnibuzz survey, 65 percent of adolescents identify parents as the leading influence in their decision to drink or not to drink. "Ask, Listen, Learn" was designed to help parents exercise that power by giving them the tools they need to have effective conversations about underage drinking with their kids.

Designed by a team of national experts with the creative expertise of Nickelodeon, "Ask, Listen, Learn" is an interactive program that provides parents of middle-school aged children (tweens) with discussion booklets, websites and television advertising for kids and parents all designed to help parents talk to their kids. To date, "Ask, Listen Learn" has reached over 50 million kids and parents with the critical information about the dangers of underage drinking.

"This program recognizes that the key to stopping underage drinking is early and often communication between parents and children. It provides both kids and parents with information and strategies to help jumpstart the conversation about the dangers of underage drinking in a language and format that they understand. By visiting <http://www.asklistenlearn.com/> for kids and <http://www.asklistenlearnparents.com/> for parents, families can access free information and materials, created in format and language designed specifically for them," said Susan Molinari, Chairman of The Century Council.

Like Diageo's Smirnoff ICE sponsorship, Crown Royal Championship Racing is utilizing its new association with NASCAR to promote responsible drinking with millions of NASCAR's adult fans. They have allocated a multi-million dollar marketing budget to support the sponsorship of Kurt Busch and his No. 97 team, which includes dedicated social responsibility messaging under the tagline "Be a Champion. Drink Responsibly."

"I'm thrilled about taking the 'Ask, Listen, Learn' program along for the ride in Bristol," Busch said. "They promote a cause that is very important to me and my associate sponsors, Crown Royal and Smirnoff ICE, and I'll do all I can to get them and their message into Victory Lane."

Crown Royal and Smirnoff ICE's sponsorship of Kurt Busch and the No. 97 Ford Taurus car is built around Diageo's existing relationship with Roush Racing, which started in 2003 with a primary sponsorship of Matt Kenseth and the No. 17 Roush Racing car for Diageo's flavored malt beverage Smirnoff ICE.

About Diageo

Diageo (Dee-AH-Gee-O) is the world's leading premium drinks business with an outstanding collection of beverage alcohol brands across spirits, wines, and beer categories. These brands include Johnnie Walker, Guinness, Smirnoff, J&B, Baileys, Cuervo, Tanqueray, Captain Morgan, Crown Royal, Beaulieu Vineyard and Sterling Vineyards wines.

Diageo is a global company, trading in more than 200 countries around the world. The company is listed on both the New York Stock Exchange (DEO) and the London Stock Exchange (DGE). For more

information about Diageo, its people, brands, and performance, visit us at <http://www.diageo.com/> .



**3.** **Industry, Anti-Tax Sentiment Hamper Plans to Fund Treatment Via State Alcohol Taxes**  
By: Annie Turner – *Join Together.org*

April 1, 2005

More states have floated legislative proposals to use alcohol excise taxes to fund substance abuse treatment and prevention programs, but the plans face significant opposition from the alcohol industry and lawmakers reluctant to raise taxes.  
  
Ten states currently dedicate some portion of excise-tax revenues to fund alcohol treatment programs, according to [Ensuring Solutions to Alcohol Problems](http://www.ensuringsolutions.org/#_blank), a George Washington University think tank that tracks alcohol-tax issues. Oklahoma, Missouri, Massachusetts and Oregon are among the states that have recently debated similar proposals.  
  
By increasing alcohol taxes, states can significantly reduce alcohol consumption and its associated negative consequences, particularly among underage and underprivileged populations, according to Assessing State Readiness to Act on Alcohol Tax Research Findings, a report by the Substance Abuse Policy Research Program (SAPRP) of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.  
  
"The price of alcohol matters, especially with teenagers," said Dr. Richard A. Yoast, Director of the AMA Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse. "Higher alcohol prices are proven to reduce everything from violent crimes to rape."   
  
States facing financial pressures may be more receptive to tax increases to help reduce deficits, and "most state budgets coming out of this recession severely weakened,” says the SAPRP report (for a PDF copy of the report, click [here](http://www.saprp.org/pdf/Tax%20Readiness%20Report%20revised%202%207%2005%20FINAL.pdf)).  
  
So far, however, the obstacles to raising alcohol taxes have largely trumped public-health arguments. For example, despite the prominent political and economic role played in the state by St. Louis based brewer Anheuser-Busch, Missouri poll respondents have shown support for a two-cent-per-drink increase on excise alcohol taxes. A proposed Missouri excise-tax increase would generate an estimated $44 million per year, which could help offset the $10.9-million 2006 budget reduction facing the state Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse and the corresponding loss of over $33 million in federal funds over the next three years, supporters say. Without a revenue increase, state addiction-service providers fear many existing treatment programs will suffer or be eliminated altogether.  
  
But Missouri Representative Bill Deeken's proposal to apply excise-tax proceeds towards treatment, prevention, and enforcement faces anti-tax opposition from lawmakers, and remains stalled in the state legislature. Despite the budget difficulties and public support, Missouri House Speaker Ron Jetton said the bill has little chance of passage, and he has not referred the measure to any legislative committee.  
  
Oklahoma state representative Darrell Gilbert (D-Tulsa), frustrated over lack of progress for his plan to double the current state excise tax on beer and alcohol to raise $70 million a year in funds for substance abuse treatment and prevention, is proposing a constitutional amendment so that the issue can go to a popular vote.  
  
"During [a] debate on increasing the cigarette tax, I got a lot of questions from my constituents asking why we weren't trying to do the same with beer and alcohol and taxes," Gilbert said. "It was their opinion that beer and alcohol bring more trouble to people's lives than cigarettes do."  
  
Massachusetts State Senator Marian Walsh (D-West Roxbury) has also proposed an increase on excise alcohol tax, which he said could generate up to $58 million every year to fund treatment and prevention programs while adding one cent to the cost of a glass of wine and two cents to a bottle of beer or shot of liquor.   
  
But lobbyists for the alcohol industry have dampened the reception for Walsh's bill, which failed in 2001 and 2003. The Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S. argued that the increased tax would unfairly impact the 90 percent of consumers who drink responsibly.   
  
The same arguments from the alcohol industry have daunted a similar bill in Oregon that proposes to raise beer taxes by up to 10 cents a bottle to generate $150 million a year for treatment and prevention of addiction.   
  
Co-sponsors Representative Jackie Dingfelder (D- Portland) and Senator Bill Morrissette (D-Springfield) termed the legislation "an attempt to collect a long-past-due bill from the beer industry." But House Speaker Karen Minnis has indicated that Oregon Republicans have no interest in introducing new taxes.  
  
While anti-tax sentiments abound, alcohol taxes remain generally popular among voters nationwide, especially if increased revenue is earmarked for treatment and prevention. A 2004 American Medical Association (AMA) poll of 800 voters showed that two-thirds of Americans favor a state tax increase on alcohol to fund prevention programs.



4. Anheuser-Busch Downgrade Cites Weak U.S. Beer Sales

By: Greg Edwards – *Dow Jones Newswires*

March 30, 2005

ST. LOUIS (Dow Jones)--Bear Stearns downgraded Anheuser-Busch Cos. ([BUD.NYS](http://www.newratings.com/companies/company.asp?isin=US0352291035)) to peer perform from outperform Wednesday, citing weakness in U.S. beer sales.

"We project that the softness in U.S. beer that began in early 2003 will continue into 2005 with no clear end in sight," analyst Carlos Laboy said in a note to investors. "A-B is too heavily exposed to the sluggish U.S. to assume any serious growth upside this year."

Bear Stearns had figured that the brewer of Budweiser and Bud Light would benefit from declining interest in Atkins diets and better weather and grow domestic shipments by 1% this year.

"But that is not happening," Laboy said. Bear Stearns has lowered its domestic volume growth estimate for Anheuser-Busch from 1% to 0.4%.

He said Anheuser-Busch's new products, such as Budweiser Select and B-to-the-E, don't look like the answer.

"We had expressed some optimism that A-B might be able to innovate its way out of its U.S. funk," Laboy said. But, "we project that the success of B(e) will be limited and the launch of Budweiser Select will likely be neutral at best."

In addition, competition from wines and distilled spirits continue to hurt the beer industry, Laboy said.

"The pendulum has swung in wine and spirits' favor," he said and added, "beer has an uphill battle for consumer attention for the foreseeable future."

Bear Stearns does and seeks to do business with the companies it analyzes. Laboy does not own share of Anheuser-Busch.

Shares of Anheuser-Busch were trading recently at $47.60, up 34 cents or 0.7%, on volume of 1.7 million shares. Average daily volume is 2.8 million.



**5.** **Brewers Bottle up Aftertaste**

Gannett News Service

April 1, 2005  
  
As anybody who's ever kissed a beer drinker can testify, brewskis leave an aftertaste. Now -- after light beer, ice beer, dry beer and low-carb beer -- brewers' latest wrinkle to try to stop consumers from switching to wine and liquor is so-called no-aftertaste beer.  
  
Global brewer InBev recently announced a rollout in the USA of its Brahma beer coming later this year. Instead of a bitter aftertaste, it says, the best-selling Brazilian brew offers a crisper finish with a hint of papaya.  
  
InBev, which markets Stella Artois, Beck's and Rolling Rock, will roll out Brahma in the Los Angeles, San Diego, Miami, Tampa/St. Petersburg and Orlando markets on June 1. Originally brewed in 1888, Brahma will hit New York City, Chicago, Dallas, Houston and Austin by July.  
  
InBev has had success marketing Stella Artois as an upscale import beer for the urban hip from Greenwich Village to Hollywood. The brewer will position Brahma -- with its clear, curved bottle -- for "unisex" appeal among all beer drinkers.  
  
The twentysomething consumers, particularly women, driving the $70 billion U.S. beer market cite a lingering, "beery" aftertaste as their biggest complaint. So brewers hope "no-aftertaste" beers will stop women and more white-collar beer drinkers from switching to wine and spirits.  
  
Anheuser-Busch used the world stage of the recent Super Bowl to promote the Feb. 21 launch of Budweiser Select, its new brew, with a crisper flavor and "cleaner finish."  
  
And brewers are already selling the idea these brews could make you more attractive to the opposite sex. The Super Bowl TV spot introducing Budweiser Select urged 140 million U.S. viewers to "lick your lips, pucker up and kiss your aftertaste goodbye."  
  
"These will be the preferred beers for nonbeer drinkers. They are the polar opposite of the big, heavy European beers and microbrews that overwhelm you with taste," says Tom Pirko, president of BevMark consultancy. "There's a large portion of the population that objects to beer because of the aftertaste. Beverages in general are getting lighter. If you lighten up beer you may be able to bring more people into the market."  
  
But Harry Schumacher, publisher of the online publication Beer Business Daily, warns brewers are also playing with fire with these new beers. The new Budweiser Select could simply cannibalize sales of Bud Light, the USA's top-selling beer.  
  
Brahma and Budweiser Select also bring up the subject of beer aftertaste, a subject that makes most beer executives uncomfortable at best. Anheuser-Busch has already backed off its original "no-aftertaste" claims in favor of "cleaner finish," he notes.  
  
"They got some pushback from their distributors who said it's just not good for the beer industry to infer that beer has aftertaste -- particularly when wine and spirits are really coming on strong," Schumacher says.  
  
Brahma will have some trends in its favor. Light beers now account for roughly half of the U.S. beer volume of 206 million barrels, according to Eric Shepherd, editor of Beer Marketer's Insights.  
  
The lighter south-of-the-border Corona brand has emerged as the country's best-selling import, with a 3.4 percent share vs. 2.3 percent for former leader Heineken.



**6.** **Skyy Uncaps High-Tech “Luxury” Vodka**

By: Chris Rauber – San Francisco Business Times

March 30, 2005

San Francisco’s Skyy Spirits LLC said Wednesday it will release Skyy90, it first “luxury” vodka this spring.

Starting in May, the new vodka will be rolled out in select restaurants and bars in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Orange County and Miami. Other markets will follow, probably in September, according to Lauren Weiss, a spokeswoman for the company.

Introduction of the new product, described by the company as “the most technologically advanced spirit ever,” comes after 10 years of development and a $25 million investment in an advanced distillation facility in Kansas, officials said.

Master distiller Randall Schrick developed the new vodka for Skyy. It’s distilled from amber winter wheat using a computerized distillation process. The company says the process produces the industry’s first “100 percent distillate,” which is then blended with small amounts of water to produce a 90 proof vodka.

“Skyy90 was designed for today’s martini drinkers, who desire higher quality and luxurious indulgences,” said Keith Greggor, the company’s chief marketing officer. Skyy is a subsidiary of Milan’s Gruppo Campari, and holds exclusive U.S. distribution rights for other leading Campari brands.

Ironically, Wednesday’s announcement was the second this week by a San Francisco-based purveyor of high-end vodkas.

On Tuesday, Infinite Spirits Inc., the maker of Shakers Original American Vodka, said it had signed a partnership with a well-known California liquor distributor to distribute its ultra-premium vodkas throughout the Golden State. Frank-Lin Wine & Spirits, a family-owned business based in San Jose, will serve as exclusive distributor of Shakers Vodka to all liquor trade channels in the state, Infinite Spirits officials said March 29.

Skyy90 vodka will cost between $30 and $35 for a 750 ml bottle.



# 7. Joe Sixpack | Great Taste Test put Schmidt's Back on Map - Briefly

By: Don Russell, staff writer – *Daily News*

April 1, 2005

http://www.philly.com/images/common/spacer.gif

NO ONE EVER accused the *Inquirer* of being a Joe Sixpack kind of rag. It's a pinkie-extended, wine-sipping broadsheet that prefers to sniff, not guzzle, before enlightening all with its fruity yet (dare we say?) pretentious character.

But credit goes to the *Inky* for a landmark, though largely forgotten, work of journalism 30 years ago this week, when the ivory-tower snoots briefly put down their pinot grigio and cracked open a few cans of blue-collar beer.

The work - a simple taste test conducted by a group of six unnamed editors and reporters at the *Inquirer*'s Sunday magazine - was a goofy stunt. But its results were seismic.

It almost certainly delayed the demise of one the city's last remaining industrial breweries, saving hundreds of jobs.

And it helped lay the groundwork for Philadelphia's great craft beer renaissance.

The report was published on March 30, 1975.

Within days, reporting duo Donald Barlett and James Steele would win the newspaper's first Pulitzer. The *Inquirer* was finally on the verge of replacing the *Evening Bulletin* as the city's leading newspaper.

Meanwhile, **Ortlieb's** was fading fast, **Schmidt's** was up for sale.

And **Coors** had just arrived in town.

Three decades later, it's easy to forget that for most of its history, Coors was a regional beer distributed only in 11 Western states. The light lager was unpasteurized and the Coors family - believing their beer did not travel well - refused to permit its sale beyond the Mississippi. Until the mid-1970s, the only bottles that made it to Philadelphia were carried in the suitcases of locals returning from Denver.

The Coors mystique

Dan Baum, author of "Citizen Coors: An American Dynasty," said the refusal to permit distribution was not some sly marketing plan to create demand for the beer.

"You have to remember," Baum said, going back 30 years, "the old men running Coors spent nothing on advertising or marketing. They think it's evil. These are people who are deeply committed to the notion that the 20th century was a bad idea... .

"Rather than spend on advertising, they put their money into making better beer. They don't think they can trust people to keep their beer cold nationwide. They consider their beer like milk: It's gotta be drunk immediately, kept cold from the brewery to the glass.

"They're nuts, they're insane, they're pathological brewers. This is not business talking. It's kind of a wacky family tradition. They're really nuts.

"So the idea of expanding eastward is anathema to them. They were horrified that people would come from the East and drive home with cases in the trunk. They thought the people back east were drinking spoiled beer."

The limited availability, though, only enhanced what became known as the "Coors mystique."

It was said to be Paul Newman's favorite. President Gerald Ford reportedly stocked it on Air Force One. Even Hollywood got into the act, with Burt Reynolds outsmarting Buford T. Justice with a truckload of illicit Coors headed east in "Smokey and the Bandit."

Still, you couldn't legally buy a case of the stuff in the East.

A loophole

Finally, in January 1975, a crafty Olney beer distributor and a Center City lawyer broke the embargo.

Today, Paul Lipschutz runs a sports-collectible firm. But 30 years ago, he was a partner at Paul Bros. Beer Distributors on Chew Street near Rising Sun Avenue.

"Some Secret Service guys had just gotten caught smuggling a couple of sixpacks of Coors on Henry Kissinger's plane," Lip-schutz remembered. "The publicity was enormous, and we just wondered why we couldn't just import it ourselves."

They went to Barry Goldstein, a local liquor-law attorney, and Lipschutz told him, "Find out how we can sell Coors in Philadelphia."

Like any decent Philadelphia lawyer, Goldstein found a loophole. As an importing distributor, Paul Bros. was permitted to buy beer from out-of-state beer distributors, even if the brewery wouldn't sell it to the company directly.

So, the company sent a refrigerated trailer to Wyoming and bought all it could. When Coors caught on, Lipschutz sent the trucks to Kansas City.

They hired locals to purchase a legal maximum of seven cases at a time for $7.50 each and filled the truck with 2,000 cases.

The feds got word of the scheme, tracked down Lip-schutz's partner and discovered he had 10 grand in the motel safe. "Everyone was suspicious," Lip-schutz said.

"But Barry got on the phone and says, 'What did we do wrong?' The feds said they didn't know, and they immediately released the beer."

Soon, Paul Bros. had a Coors pipeline to Philly. "I had my mother, my aunt, my cousins working the phones," Lipschutz said. "No one really believed Coors was here in volume."

The *Inquirer* actually sent someone to Paul Bros. to photograph the first cases to arrive. Publicists for talk show host Mike Douglas leaked an item to Larry Fields, the People Paper gossip, about scoring some for Newman. *Daily News* columnist Larry McMullen wrote how, suddenly, everyone was sitting around Pop Edwards' on Market Street wearing a Two Guys jacket and drinking Coors.

It was an instant sensation. The distributor was moving 4,000 cases a week and, Lipschutz said, "the demand was at least three to four times that much."

The taste test

All the excitement, though, ignored one essential. As *Inquirer* food editor Bill Collins wondered, "How good is it?"

Noting there was "a small but noisome minority of beer drinkers who refer to Coors as 'Kool-Aid with bubbles,'" Collins put the beer to the test. He assembled "six intrepid *Inquirer* editors and writers" and conducted a blind taste test. Sipping from paper cups, the panel rated 10 beers on a scale of 1 to 10 for "purity, body and flavor."

The results were a shock, and not just because Coors finished a very mediocre 5th.

In first place, well above the rest, was our town's lowbrow but lovable Schmidt's.

Collins is no longer among the breathing, and the names of that tasting panel are forgotten, so it's impossible to know whether they were stunned by the findings. And maybe the results would've been forgotten, too.

But within days, the smart execs at Schmidt's were all over the test.

They blanketed the airwaves with radio ads, trumpeting their victory. TV ads re-enacted the tasting. Billboards declared Schmidt's "the beer the experts rated best."

Never mind that the panel was just a bunch of newsmen whose expertise was largely the result of long hours devoted to lounging at the Pen & Pencil Club. Schmidt's was No. 1, and everyone knew it.

The impact on the brewery was immediate.

For years, sales at the 19th-century Christian Schmidt brewery in Northern Liberties had been declining. Just weeks before the taste test, the family owners brought in Drew Lewis, the man who oversaw the breakup of the Reading Railroad, to find a buyer. G. Heileman, the Wisconsin conglomerate, made an offer. Some feared the firm would buy the equipment, shut down the facility and put hundreds out of work.

But the *Inquirer* taste test halted the sale in its tracks.

Sales began to creep up. Locals rediscovered an old-time favorite; some conducted their own taste tests, often with the same results.

Within six months, Schmidt's - buoyed by increased sales - cut off talks with Heileman.

You might say the results of the *Inquirer* taste test were temp-orary.

The aftershock

Within a year, the brewery would be sold, though to a local guy, Billy Pflaumer. He kept it going for another 10 years before it closed like almost every other regional brewery in America.

Meanwhile, Coors took over Philadelphia.

After going to court to halt the sale of its beer in the East, the brewery finally figured out how to ship nationwide. By the 1990s, Coors Light was the No. 1 selling beer in the city.

The aftershock of the taste test, however, extended beyond these two brands.

As an internal Schmidt's marketing report noted, the significance of the *Inquirer*'s tasting and those that followed "is that beer drinkers were telling Schmidt's - instead of Schmidt's telling them - that Schmidt's beer is better."

For the first time since St. Louis homogenized American palates, beer drinkers were choosing a favorite not because of slick advertisements, not because it was trendy, but because it tasted good.

And isn't that the essence of handcrafted beer?

In 1975, Anchor Steam Beer - America's first modern craft beer - was just getting its legs. In 1976, the nation's first post-prohibition microbrewery opened in California. In the next 30 years, 1,500 new breweries would open nationwide - and almost none of them benefited from huge, image-making advertising budgets.

Just as the *Inquirer* showed 30 years ago, it was all about the taste.

