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| *November 16, 2007* |

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**I. NATIONAL NEWS****1.** **Suitors Prepare Ground for Long-Awaited Absolute Auction Process**

**Global spirits players have begun preparing the ground for the eagerly-awaited 7 billion used-plus auction of Absolute vodka, which analysts believe will be done within the next 3 to 6 months.**

*AFX*

November 15, 2007

Absolute parent company V&S Group is one of six companies the Swedish government announced in March it will be wholly or partially divesting its interest. While the Swedish finance ministry has steadfastly refused to put a timeframe to the privatization processes, or indeed say in which order the companies will be privatized, Credit Suisse beverage analyst Michael Bleakley told Thomson Financial News he expects the sale is "going to be done in the next 3-6 months."

The Swedish authorities have said they are open to considering a possible stock market flotation of the business, but a trade sale is being viewed as the the most likely means to achieve the highest value.

"You get the industry to pay up for the business and the synergies going forward and you can get that without having to pay listing costs and listing fees," said Bleakley. "So why go for a two stage process when you can go for a one stage process?"

In a detailed note to investors, Credit Suisse said it expects the base valuation of the V&S business to be 7 billion usd, valuing the 10-million-case-selling brand Absolute at around 6 bln itself. Factoring in the cost of exiting V&S distribution arrangements which could be as much as 980 million usd, Credit Suisse said the total cost to the winner could be in the region of 8.4 bln.

V&S will be in London next week to present third quarter results to analysts, and while there is not expected to be a great deal of news of when the widely-anticipated auction process will start, the presentation will give the company an opportunity to maximize its value in they eyes of its international suitors -- including Diageo PLC, Pernod Ricard, Fortune Brands and Bacardi. V&S reported third quarter operating profit up 23 percent to 677 million skr, with chief executive Bengt Baron saying the performance of the V&S Absolute Spirits arm was "one of the best ever figures for a single quarter".

Diageo, Pernod, Fortune and Bacardi have all openly expressed their interest in taking part in an auction process for V&S, with Swedish private equity firm EQT also saying it is considering bidding for the distiller. In a note to investors, Credit Suisse said it expects 5-6 major spirits and beer players to be present at the beginning of the process, postulating that US brewer Anheuser-Busch may be interested in Absolute as it has been struggling with a spirits market that has been taking share away from beer.

While the potential suitors have said they have not been informed of a start to the proceedings, they have begun preparing the ground for a possible bid.

Late last month, Diageo launched and priced two trances of 5- and 10-year bonds, the proceeds of which it said would be used for "general corporate purposes". Pernod Ricard, meanwhile, at its AGM earlier this month, asked for the authority to issue up to 5 billion usd in bonds, as well as 170 million eur of shares. It also gained approval to implement a two-for-one share split in January.

And on Monday, Fortune said it had agreed to sell its entire still wine operations to Constellation Brands in a deal worth 885 million usd, netting Fortune around 840 million after tax.

The group recognized that while its wine business -- including such brands as Clos du Bois and Geyser Peak and more than 600 hectares of vineyards -- is one of the most attractive in the US it said the deal would allow it to focus on the higher returns of the spirit segment.

A spokesman for Fortune said the sale results from a long-term strategic review of the wine business and is consistent with the group's strategy to position the businesses for higher returns.

"We've been very clear in both our level of interest in V&S and our confidence in financing a potential transaction, long before the sale of the wine business," he said, but declined to comment on how the group would intend to finance any possible deal.

He added: "The sale enables us to more intensely focus resources on the higher return premium spirits segment of our business and also enhances our financial flexibility to create value and continue developing our high return spirits business or pursue other kinds of opportunities."

Credit Suisse's Michael Bleakley believes the sale is an indication the group is "preparing the ground" for the Absolute auction, with Fortune Brands having the added advantage of not having to stump up the exit costs for V&S's international distribution agreement with Maxim (in which Fortune is also and participant) and Future Brands (in which Fortune is the only other partner).

"They've got a billion dollar head start," said Bleakley. "But if the auction goes to the highest bidder -- which I think one has to read the Swedish Government would like to see -- then Fortune have got a point at which they have to leave the negotiation table in terms of not having quite as deep a pocket as some of the European players."

Bleakley believes that even after selling its wine operations and despite its 1 billion usd advantage, Fortune's net debt to EBITDA would be around 6 times, which he said is arguably too high. Pernod Ricard would also see its net debt to EBITDA ratio soar to 7.07 if it were to pay 8.4 billion usd for V&S.

The only company that would be able to justify the deal on its balance sheet, Credit Suiss argues, is Diageo which would have a net debt to EBITDA ratio of 3.53 if it paid 8.4 billion for Absolute.

Credit Suisse also that Diageo could meet a target 9 percent ROIC by year four, if it were to get synergies of around 300 million used from the deal, while the other players may have to wait up to seven years to see a payback.

However, funding the deal will not be the only issue for the interested parties and achieving the highest price may not be the only concern for the Swedish authorities.

Competition concerns exist for all spirits industry players, with the exception of Fortune. Though Diageo will be keen to stress that Absolute and its 20 million case selling brand Smirnoff compete in different segments in order to circumvent competition issues, particularly in the US.

Credit Suisse said the Federal Trade Commission has been very consistent in stance by looking at potential sector market shares as opposed to total market shares both the formation of Diageo in 1997 and the later break-up of Seagram in partnership with Pernod Ricard.

It said it believes the Absolute acquisition will be treated in the same way by US authorities, with the best case scenario for the group being the commission splitting the vodka category by price-point.

Charles Stanley analyst Sam Hart acknowledged Diageo has an argument that it has a "slight gap in its portfolio" in the premium vodka segment.

The treatment of the category on price-point would mean, however, that Pernod Ricard would not be allowed to complete a deal without first disposing of its distribution rights to Russian brand Stolichnaya as its share of the imported vodka segment would be 52 percent.

Pernod has previously stated that it would be happy with one brand or the other but chairman and CEO Patrick Ricard said in September that the decision to pursue Absolut would be dependent on the group's negotiations to acquire Stolichnaya.

Speaking at a presentation for Pernod's full-year results, Ricard said Stolichnaya is the main priority because it is up for sale. Thomson Financial News understands the discussions to acquire the brand are continuing.

In Europe, Credit Suisse argues the European Commission is likely to focus on the total market share in Germany, Spain, Greece and the UK, rather than sub-category share, when making its decision.

It believes the commission may look at spikes in Spain and Greece, where Diageo's vodka market share would be over 50 percent following an acquisition, but said there are factors that could mitigate EU or local government regulatory decisions. It highlighted Heineken NV's 82 pct market share in the beer category but noted it was organic rather than acquisition driven.

It added from a total spirits market point of view, the potential change in market share is Spain and Greece -- 80 and 370 basis points respectively -- is fairly minimal, with the change in UK market share also only 80 basis points.

The Swedish Finance Ministry failed to respond to requests for comment on the status of the privatisation process, however minister Mats Odell has recently been reported as saying the process is going forward without problems and is in line with expectations.

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**2. Fortune Brand's Wine Unit Sale May Aid Vodka Acquisition**

**Fortune Brands Inc.'s (FO) decision to sell its U.S. wine business would make it easier for the company to buy Sweden's Vin & Sprit AB, the maker of Absolut vodka, which is considered a prize.**

*Dow Jones Newswires*

November 12, 2007

Fortune - which Monday announced that it would sell its U.S. wine business to Constellation Brands Inc. (STZ) for $885 million - has already expressed an interest in buying V&S. But buying the maker of Absolute and other spirits may not be easy - Fortune will come up against a long list of competitors, including international alcohol companies such as Pernod Ricard SA (12069.FR) that are also interested in the Swedish company. Still, the Absolut brand is particularly important to Fortune, which currently co-owns a joint venture with Vin & Sprit to distribute Absolute in the U.S. and is part of another broad partnership to distribute the vodka abroad. Some analysts have been concerned that Fortune's business could be hurt if a competitor bought V&S.

The U.S. wine unit sale increases the probability that Fortune Brands will be the buyer of the Absolut Vodka brand from V&S, UBS analyst Kaumil Gajrawala wrote in a research note to investors. "Fortune management has stated they are confident they can finance a deal for Absolut, but we believe this further strengthens their ability to do so independently," he said.

Absolute is seen as a hot brand in the premium spirits industry, and it has come into focus as the Swedish government looks into selling and privatizing several state-owned companies, including V&S. The government hasn't given specifics on how it may proceed with a possible sale. Some analysts in recent months have raised questions about how Fortune Brands would finance a possible acquisition of V&S, although the company has said it has the ability to fund a deal with the Swedish firm.

Bank of America analyst Bryan Spillane said the deal makes sense for Fortune as it strengthens its balance sheet, which would be helpful in the pursuit of V&S. "From an operating perspective, we believe wine is a relatively easy business for Fortune to dislodge as it had minimal integration with its spirits business and has very different efficiency and returns," he said.

Fortune's operations also include spirits, golf equipment and home products. The company sells the wine business at a time when sales have been declining at the company's home and hardware unit due to the downturn in the housing industry. Home products generate a chunk of Fortune's revenue, and the housing slowdown has left the firm more dependent on sales from its spirits business and products such as Jim Beam bourbon. Fortune's third-quarter net income climbed despite a 4% sales decline in its home and hardware unit.

The deal - set to close by year's end - by the world's largest wine maker includes Fortune's Clos du Bois, Geyser Peak and Wild Horse wine brands. The business makes about 2.6 million cases of wine a year and includes more than 1,500 acres of vineyards in California.

Fortune expects to realize net proceeds of about $840 million after taxes and an after-tax gain of $50 million to $60 million. The company anticipates the deal slightly adding to 2008 earnings.

"Because the wine industry is lower margin and more capital-intensive than spirits, it's naturally a lower return segment relative to our spirits business," said Fortune Chairman and Chief Executive Norm Wesley. "This sale increases our financial flexibility and will enable us to more sharply focus resources on the higher return premium spirits segment of our business."

Fortune said the decision to sell the wine business came after a strategic review of that business.

Fortune added that "because (its) spirits and wine brands each have separate sales organizations," it does not foresee the acquisition disrupting sales in its spirits portfolio.

Constellation said the deal should modestly cut into fiscal 2008 earnings and slightly add to profit in fiscal 2009.

Bank of America said its initial view of this deal was mixed for Constellation. The Fortune wine assets are attractive in terms of retail price points and margins, but the downside is Constellation's willingness to take on more debt given its already high leverage ratios, the firm said.

 <http://money.cnn.com/news/newsfeeds/articles/djf500/200711121454DOWJONESDJONLINE000474_FORTUNE5.htm>

**3. Affordable Wines Drying up Thanks to a Lousy U.S. Dollar**

**Ask foreign winemakers what their biggest problem is, and the answers are usually the same: the historically weak U.S. dollar.**

Jeff Siegel

*Special to the Star-Telegram*

November 14, 2007

"We're getting absolutely slagged," says Hugh Hamilton, an Australian whose brands include Hugh Hamilton and Jim Jim.

How bad is it? The Australian dollar cost more than 90 cents U.S. last week, its highest level since 1984, with the euro -- which French, Spanish and Italian winemakers use -- at a record high of almost $1.50. The euro cost $1.17 at the beginning of 2006. Even the Chilean wine industry is noticing the difference, as the peso continues to appreciate against the dollar, at levels that haven't been seen since 1999.

Why does this matter to U.S. wine drinkers? Because a weak U.S. dollar means higher U.S. prices for foreign wine. Hamilton's Jim Jim shiraz, which was $10 last year, is $13 this year. Veramonte, the Chilean sauvignon blanc, has traditionally been a value at $8. But the current vintage is selling for $11, which takes away a lot of its appeal.

And when France's beaujolais nouveau arrives this week, expect prices to approach $15 instead of the traditional $8-$10. This defeats the purpose of nouveau, which is supposed to be inexpensive, easy-drinking wine. What's the point of buying it when it costs as much as a better-made New Zealand pinot noir?

The weak dollar isn't pushing up prices for more expensive wine quite as much, according to several foreign winemakers. They have more room to play with, so you won't see those 20 and 30 percent increases. But if the dollar continues to slide, higher-end prices could rise significantly as well.

Are domestic wines an alternative? Not so much on the less expensive end, where California has really dropped the ball. Wine from the Southern Hemisphere and southern Europe dominates the $10 category, both in quantity and in quality. California does better in the $12-$15 and $18-20 ranges -- but that's not much consolation for someone who wants to drink Spanish wine instead of California wine.

On the wine beat

Green wine: Producers are touting their green credentials these days, even if the wine isn't organic. The Wine Group, a California packager, is promoting its box wines because the box is more carbon efficient than glass. No word in the release about whether the wine tastes good.

http://www.star-telegram.com/food/story/303080.html


**4. Historic Whiskey Could Go Down Drain**

**Here's a sobering thought: Hundreds of bottles of Jack Daniel's whiskey, some of it almost 100 years old, may be unceremoniously poured down a drain because authorities suspect it was being sold by someone without a license.**

Joe Edwards

*The Associated Press*

November 15, 2007

Officials seized 2,400 bottles late last month during warehouse raids in Nashville and Lynchburg, the southern Tennessee town where the whiskey is distilled.

"Punish the person, not the whiskey," said an outraged Kyle MacDonald, 28, a Jack Daniel's drinker from British Columbia who promotes the whiskey on his blog. "Jack never did anything wrong, and the whiskey itself is innocent."

Investigators are also looking into whether some of the bottles had been stolen from the distillery. No one has been arrested.

Authorities are still determining how much of the liquor will be disposed of, and how much can be sold at auction.

Tennessee law requires officials to destroy whiskey that cannot be sold legally in the state, such as bottles designed for sale overseas and those with broken seals.

"We'd pour it out," said Danielle Elks, executive director of the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission.

The estimated value of the liquor is $1 million, possibly driven up by the value of the antique bottles, which range from 3-liter bottles to half-pints.

One seized bottle dates to 1914, with its seal unbroken. Elks said it is worth $10,000 on the collectors market. Investigators are looking into whether the liquor was being sold for the value of the bottles rather than the whiskey.

"Someone was making a great deal of profit," she said.

Tennessee whiskeys age in charred white oak barrels, but the maturing process that gives them character mostly stops when it is bottled. A bottled whiskey can deteriorate over a long period of time, especially if it is opened or exposed to sunlight and heat.

Christopher Carlsson, a spirits connoisseur and collector in Rochester, N.Y., said old vintages of whiskey in their original containers are highly prized.

"A lot of these bottles are priceless," he said. "It's like having a rare painting. It's heavily collected."

The raids, prompted by a tip, were conducted at two warehouses and a home in Lynchburg, about 65 miles southeast of Nashville. Another raid was at a Nashville hotel room where drinks were being served and bottles were being sold.

For now, the whiskey is being stored in a Nashville vault.

Elks acknowledged that pouring out the whiskey would not be a happy hour for her.

"It'd kill me," she said.

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**5. US Airways Denied Permit to Sell Alcohol**
**US Airways has been denied a permit to sell alcohol to passengers in New Mexico, the state Regulation and Licensing Department announced Thursday.**

*The Associated Press*November 15, 2007

Tempe, Ariz.-based US Airways had received a 90-day license after the state cited it in January for serving liquor to an intoxicated man who later crashed his car, killing himself and five others.

The license expired in June, and the department later rejected the airline's request for an extension. An application for a permanent license still was pending.

In issuing the denial order, the department said it "cannot reasonably find that approval of application will protect the public health and safety or that it is in the public interest."

The denial means US Airways cannot serve alcohol while its airplanes are flying over New Mexico or while grounded in the state, said Bob Hagan, a spokesman for the department.

A spokeswoman for US Airways, Andrea Raider, said Thursday the airline is reviewing the order and will make a decision based on that review.

"We don't believe that our flight attendants violated any of our procedures, and we think they behaved correctly," she said. "We continue to back the actions of our crew members. That's been our position from the beginning and will continue to be our position."

US Airways was cited in January in connection with Dana Papst, who drove the wrong way on Interstate 25 near Santa Fe, colliding with a van carrying a Las Vegas, N.M. family.

After the deadly crash last November, the state prohibited US Airways from serving liquor on New Mexico flights until it received a state liquor license.

The airline subsequently was granted the 90-day temporary license.

US Airways had served alcohol to Papst, even though witnesses said he appeared to be intoxicated. Police have said Papst also bought beer at a Bernalillo convenience store after getting off the flight in Albuquerque.

In May, the state cited US Airways again after Ernest Wright, 49, of Albuquerque was arrested soon after leaving Albuquerque's airport. Wright, whose blood alcohol was twice New Mexico's legal limit for intoxication, told authorities he had been drinking at the Phoenix airport and on his flight to Albuquerque.

Hagan said the state had sent a letter to US Airways offering to resolve the citation through a settlement, but the airline never responded.

``That citation is still open, it's never been dealt with,'' Hagan said.

Those two incidents and a third in which state employees witnessed US Airways flight attendants serving alcohol to a visibly intoxicated man while on board a flight from Phoenix to San Diego on Nov. 6, weighed heavily on the state's decision to deny the permit, Hagan said.

``That obviously is not a violation of New Mexico law because they weren't in New Mexico air space, but we took that as an indication US Airways is a questionable candidate for a New Mexico liquor license,'' Hagan said.

Raider said it's too early to say whether US Airways would again apply for a liquor license in New Mexico, though nothing under state law would prevent it.

Hagan said the state would not be prejudice against US Airways should it decide to reapply.

``We would expect the airline to demonstrate that they were prepared to meet New Mexico standards in their practices,'' he said.

**6.** **Congress Aims to Put out Cigarettes**

**Congress is taking new whacks at the cigarette industry, banning tobacco sales in Senate buildings and — more importantly seeking a significant federal tax increase on cigarettes.**

Charles Babington

*Associated Press*

November 10, 2007

The industry, once a lobbying behemoth, is quietly working against the tax bill. But it lacks the clout it once wielded.

Several key lawmakers said they have had no recent contacts with tobacco lobbyists. And both houses have signaled a willingness to raise the cigarette tax if other provisions of a children's health bill can be resolved.

"I think the industry has tried to do things more quietly, largely because they obviously know how popular a tobacco tax is," said Ron Pollack, executive director of Families USA. The health advocacy group supports a proposed $35 billion increase in the State Children's Health Insurance Program, which a higher cigarette tax would finance.

House and Senate negotiators are trying to craft a veto-proof version of the bill. President Bush says he would veto it because it calls for a 61 cents-per-pack increase in the federal excise tax on cigarettes, taking it to $1.

The House came within about a dozen votes of overriding Bush's veto of a similar bill last month. The bill's supporters are offering to change program eligibility rules in hopes of picking up enough Republicans to make the revised bill veto-proof. The proposed cigarette tax increase is not at issue, leaders of both parties said.

Philip Morris USA, the nation's largest cigarette maker, sponsors a Web site, mailings and a toll-free number urging people to ask Congress to sustain Bush's veto. "Taxing smokers is unfair," the materials say, adding that states have increased sales taxes on cigarettes 73 times since 2000.

"We are sharing our position with legislators," Philip Morris spokesman Bill Phelps said in an interview. The company also has encouraged tobacco growers, retailers and wholesalers to get involved, he said.

But tobacco's critics say health concerns have deeply eroded the industry's influence in Congress.

"The country and elected officials have really made a turn," said Bill Corr, executive director of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Cigarette companies, he said, "don't have the opportunity to go in and push members as much."

The tobacco industry gave $3.5 million to federal campaigns and candidates in the 2006 election cycle, ranking 64th among major industry groups, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Ten years earlier, it gave $10.5 million, ranking 26th.

Some Democratic lawmakers have groused that House Minority Whip Roy Blunt, R-Mo., is married to a lobbyist who has worked for Philip Morris' parent company. Blunt, who is monitoring the children's health negotiations, says his wife no longer lobbies on tobacco issues.

In a landmark 1998 settlement of many lawsuits, four major tobacco companies agreed to help states pay for smoking-related health care costs. They paid $52.6 billion from 2000 to 2005, the government reported.

In some ways, tobacco's presence on Capitol Hill is literally waning. The Senate Rules Committee recently ordered shops in the Capitol and all Senate office buildings to end cigarette sales by Jan. 1.

Cigarettes are still sold in the Longworth House Office Building. But last January, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., banned smoking in the ornate Speaker's Lobby, just off the House floor.

"The days of smoke-filled rooms in the United States Capitol are over," she said, citing the risks of cancer and respiratory diseases.

Other congressional actions could have a far greater impact on the industry. A Senate committee recently approved legislation that would, for the first time, allow federal regulation of cigarettes. The bill, also pending in the House, would require the Food and Drug Administration to restrict tobacco advertising, regulate warning labels and remove hazardous ingredients.
<http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5gCWPSPlgZS5xB8jhFZnElg4JejBgD8SQMGTG1>

 **II. INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**7. Attitudes to Alcohol in Europe**

**The number of people in their late teens and early 20s being treated for alcohol-related illnesses is growing.**

Christian Fraser

*BBC News*

November 13, 2007

Is the problem as serious in other European countries and what do they do to reduce the incidence of binge drinking?

**SWEDEN**

For many decades Swedes - including young Swedes - have had a rather low alcohol consumption when seen from a European perspective.

This has been due to a consistent national alcohol policy with a state monopoly on the sale of alcoholic beverages, strict rules on sales of alcohol to minors (defined in Sweden as fewer than 20) and high alcohol prices.

Despite this, the trend has been upward ever since Sweden entered the EU in the early 1990s - due to increased access to cheaper alcohol in neighbouring countries.

However, in the past couple of years Sweden has seen a decrease in the level of teenage alcohol consumption.

The non-governmental organization, the Swedish Council for Information on Alcohol and Other Drugs, publishes an annual survey of the drinking habits of ninth-grade students (aged 15 to 16).

For 2007 the statistics suggest that more than 30% of the students claim that they do not drink alcohol.

This is up from 20% non-drinking 15 to 16-year-olds in the late 1990s.

In real figures, the council has found that on average boys of that age drink 3.0 liters of pure alcohol, dramatically down from 5.3 liters at the peak year 2000 - girls consumed 2.2 liters in 2007, also down from 3.2 liters in their peak year 2005.

However, this decline is not seen among the slightly older Swedes. Young men in their early 20s in particular drink a great deal, and a great deal more than young women.

Young men between the age of 20 and 25 consume on average 14 pints of strong beer weekly while women of the same age group half as much.

**FINLAND**

Since the government cut tax on alcohol by one third in March 2004, deaths and diseases from alcohol have all jumped by similar amounts in hard-drinking Finland.

The cut was made due to cheap alcohol imports from neighboring Estonia.

Some young Finns have taken advantage of cheaper booze and now, although overall consumption among young people is declining, binge drinking is on the rise.

"Among young people aged 16 to 17 years, binge drinking is more and more visible and definitely increasing," said Christoffer Tigerstedt, a senior researcher at social research institute Stakes in the capital, Helsinki.

The Finnish love affair with the bottle shows no sign of abating. Alcohol-related diseases and alcohol poisoning taken together were the leading cause of death of working-age Finns last year, Statistics Finland said earlier this month.

In an attempt to deal with the growing problem, the government has introduced adverts aimed at the young designed to shock them into more responsible drinking.

"This new campaign has had an impact - some people have been moved to think before they drink. But what we really need is a change in the whole culture of alcohol in Finland and more public debate on the issue," Tigerstedt said.

**SPAIN**

Spain's problem with alcohol is minor compared with countries like the United Kingdom.

The relative size of drinks in Spain is a good guide to the scale of the problem. When you order in a bar, the standard serving of beer is a caña - a glass with a volume of 200 millilitres, just over a third of the size of a British pint.

Many people start drinking in their early teens in Spain, but not just with their friends - often with their parents.

There's a high social tolerance for alcohol consumption and the atmosphere in which drinking is done - in bars, restaurants - is usually relaxed and more suited to slower drinking than in some other countries. It is rare to see alcohol-fuelled violence.

That is not so say that Spain is immune from alcohol issues.

The Ministry for Health says about 5% of Spaniards has an alcohol-related problem.

And, a phenomenon known as Botellon (Big Bottle), where young people meet and consume alcohol on the street is a cause of concern for some Spaniards who say it encourages binge drinking. Botellon has been banned in some cities.

But you only have to go out at night in Spain to see that, generally, alcohol is well under control.

**GERMANY**

Earlier this year, in March, a 16-year-old German pupil died after drinking over 50 tequila shots.

His death brought attention to the rising problem of teenage alcoholism in Germany and led to some legislative changes.

The bar owner who served the boy was arrested and is awaiting trial. He is charged with causing grievous bodily harm resulting in death.

The government also decided to ban "drink all you can" parties, where guests could pay a certain amount to drink until they literally drop. It was at such a party where the 16-year-old had died.

Although the overall consumption of alcohol here has declined during the past years, some now drink more than ever. German teenagers are number two consumers of alcohol in Europe, topped only by British youth.

The problem is blamed on the fact that drinking is still a big part of German culture and that the alcohol industry is specifically targeting young people as new customers.

**ITALY**

While Britain's teenagers have gained notoriety for binge drinking, their Latin cousins have always been renowned for their restraint.

The quickest way to lose respect of your Italian friends and neighbors is to get drunk in public. Drinking on the streets is considered disrespectful.

But in the past few years, this more reserved, continental etiquette to drinking has been changing.

Over the summer the Italian government commissioned a series of reports which reveals a worrying new trend.

According to figures from the health ministry 17% of the Italian population are binge drinking at least once a month. One in five teenagers admits to being drunk regularly.

In 1996 there were 19,000 alcoholics in Italy receiving regular treatment - now there are 54,000.

And this, says Emanuele Scafato, from the Italian Institute for Health, is merely the tip of iceberg.

"Young people no longer drink for enjoyment," he said. "They drink to get drunk.

"The relationship with alcohol is very different to what it was 10 years ago.

"We blame the growth in the sale of alcopops, the way the industry encourages young people to drink to be 'cool'. These days you can't be 'part of the gang' in Italy unless you drink.

"The second problem - is the breakdown of the traditional family unit. Drinking in moderation was something you learned from your father.

"Young people were encouraged to enjoy a glass of wine at dinner. Now parents work longer hours, the rhythm of life is changing and so is the father son relationship."

The authorities in Rome have tried to crack down on binge drinking and the related violence, forcing bar owners to close early and to sell drinks in plastic beakers instead of glasses.

Last month the Ministry for Transportation forced through new changes to the law. It is now illegal to sell alcohol in discos after 2am.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/7093143.stm>

**III. IOWA NEWS****8. More PAULAs Issued After 21 Vote**

**83 tickets issued last weekend, compared with 14 week before**

Lee Hermiston

*Iowa City Press-Citizen*

November 13, 2007

If 19- and 20-year-olds had any delusions of being able to get away with drinking in Iowa City's downtown bars after the defeat of the 21-only ordinance, those thoughts should be vanquished after this weekend.

From Friday to Sunday, Iowa City Police issued more than 80 possession of alcohol under the legal age, or PAULA, tickets. Of the 83 tickets issued, all but three were dished out within downtown bars. A majority of the citations, 67, were given from Friday night to Saturday morning.

By comparison, only 14 PAULAs were doled out from Friday, Nov. 2, to Sunday, Nov. 4.

Twenty-two PAULA citations were issued Oct. 26-28, the weekend of the last home football game before this weekend's contest against visiting Minnesota.

Most of the police department's administrative staff was out Monday for the Veteran's Day holiday and unable to comment on the number of citations. Sgt. Kevin Heick said he did not work the weekend and was unaware whether the influx of PAULA citations was the result of a concerted effort by police or not.

"I don't have any information on it," Heick said.

The flurry of ticketing came less than a week after the 21-only measure, which would have prevented underage patrons from being in any drinking establishment after 10 p.m., was defeated soundly. A heavy turnout of student voters has been attributed to helping defeat the proposal in an election that saw a record number of voters.

In addition to the PAULAs, 14 people were charged with public intoxication and 11 were charged with trying to use someone else's identification to obtain alcohol. Three people younger than 19 were cited with being in a bar after 10 p.m. and one person was charged with public urination by the Iowa City police.

Although it would seem that police were swarming the downtown area Friday night and Saturday morning, a look at the arrest blotter indicates otherwise. A majority of the citations were issued by two officers, Mike Smithey and Gabe Cook.

Of the PAULAs issued, three bars accounted for a majority of the offenses. Leading the pack was Vito's, where 20 tickets were issued from Friday to Saturday. The Sports Column came in next with 14 citations and rounding out the top three was the Union Bar, where 12 people were cited.

The owners of the three bars could not be reached for comment Monday.

<http://www.press-citizen.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071113/NEWS01/711130324/1079>

**9. Weekend Turns into Ticket City**

**While the Iowa Hawkeye’s cracked down on the Minnesota Golden Gophers last weekend, the Iowa City police were doing some cracking down of their own.**

Samantha Miller and Melanie Kucera

*The Daily Iowan*

November 12, 2007

Officers ticketed more than twice as many underage individuals Nov. 9 through Nov. 11 when compared with any other home football game weekend this year, though officials say the increase wasn't due to an intentional police effort.

More than $23,800 in violations were accumulated last weekend in Iowa City, racking up the highest total in fines yet this year. This total is $14,750 higher than the amount collected during the last home game weekend, Oct. 27.

Police doled out 124 violations this past weekend with the highest number of PAULAs given out since the first home game.

The 75 PAULAs issued is a huge increase compared with the 18 total during the last home game.

A break down of the citations given were 75 PAULAs, 22 public intoxications, 16 unlawful uses of fake IDs, five OWIs, three counts of presence in a bar after hours, one marijuana possession, and an open container possession, according to a Daily Iowan analysis.

There was also a large jump in the number of underage people receiving tickets. During the last home-game weekend, Oct. 26 through Oct. 28, only 31 underage citizens were issued fines, while 61 more received them last weekend.

Iowa City police Sgt. Vicki Lalla said to her knowledge, the increase wasn't due to police force.

"As far as I know, [police officers] weren't doing anything different," she said.

UI junior Megan Gallagher received a PAULA on the night of Nov. 9 while at Vito's, 118 E. College St.

Gallagher said that while she personally didn't witness an increase in officer’s downtown, two of her friends, who also received PAULAs, noticed a greater police presence.

"I can't believe we all got them," the student said, adding though that she believed she deserved the $200 ticket.

<http://media.www.dailyiowan.com/media/storage/paper599/news/2007/11/12/Metro/Weekend.Turns.Into.Ticket.City-3094477.shtml?refsource=collegeheadlines>

**10. Bar Sheds Rowdy Past, Adopts ‘Drake Only’ Rule**

Tom Barton

*Des Moines Register*

November 15, 2007

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| photo |
| Chris Chew, assistant manager of the Doghouse Sports Bar and Grill, 2222 Forest Ave., waits outside to check IDs of patrons entering for karaoke night last week. Formerly known as Double Deuce, with an older crowd and a rowdy reputation, the bar reopened Aug. 23 as a “Drake only” establishment. |

The Double Deuce bar near Drake University had a well-earned reputation. That's why Rachael Stanger wouldn't go near it.

"It was a 'townie' bar full of shady people and lots of fights," she said. "I didn't feel safe."

So why did the Drake junior celebrate her 21st birthday there this fall? And why was she back recently, beer in hand and friends in tow?

"They don't let in people we would be afraid of anymore," she explained. "Now, I feel safe."

"They" are brothers and co-owners Steven and John Day, who briefly closed the Double Deuce, 2222 Forest Ave., and reopened it Aug. 23 as the Doghouse Sports Bar and Grill, a "Drake only" place for students who show a valid school identification card and proof of age.

Steven Day said the move was an effort to supplant the Double Deuce's older crowd and rowdy reputation, both synonymous with the neighborhood's rise in crime and violence, which culminated when Dennis Stigler, 37, was shot to death near the bar July 13.

"It was a monthly thing when police would be called to the bar to respond to crime. Back when it was the Double Deuce, Drake students would walk in and turn right around," Day said.

The business is located in one of Des Moines' poorer neighborhoods, according to 2000 census figures compiled by the city for the Drake, Kirkwood Glen, Carpenter and Drake Park neighborhoods and the southeast portion of Beaverdale. Roughly 52 percent of residents rent. In addition, about 20 percent of those 18 and older had not completed high school; 45 percent had a high school diploma, with 37 percent earning an associate degree or higher, according to the census figures.

Now it's the bar that has turned around. Des Moines police have been to the Doghouse a handful of times since opening, but for nothing more serious than a noise complaint, said Des Moines Police Sgt. Vince Valdez. That compares with the drug arrests police made near the bar in August and the bar fight three days before the Double Deuce closed that left a gash on John Day's head from a beer bottle, according to police reports.

About a year ago, Stephanie Nicole Starling, 22, of Des Moines was arrested for allegedly stabbing Gregory Defell, 29, of Chicago in the 2200 block of Forest Avenue. Police said Defell was outside the Double Deuce when he was stabbed.

Problems plaguing the Double Deuce are gone, replaced with a karaoke night and off-key performances of Sonny and Cher's "I Got You Babe."

Stanger, a law and politics in society major, and two friends sat at the bar on a Wednesday night and chatted about classes, homework and the latest social event at a nearby sorority. Behind them, a handful of booths were filled with other Drake students and some recent graduates — the Day brothers have relaxed the admission policy some — who debated whether they'd downed enough liquid courage to grab the microphone.

Drake alumni and employees are welcome under the modified admission rule. So are parents of Drake students.

"We are playing it by ear. The neighborhood is in such a positive transition, it could change," Day said. "Right now we don't want to risk having the problems we had before."

Neighbors salute the bar's reversal.

"We never blamed the bar. It was unfortunate events that got out of control. But we are glad it's working out for them," said Robert Grieber, president of the Carpenter Neighborhood Association.

Stanger's friends Jo Pearce, 21, and Lindsay Nemzek, 21, were among about 10 people in the bar about 10 p.m. Three more showed up 15 minutes later. Doghouse employee Chris Chew stopped them at the door. Behind him, a handwritten sign in black permanent marker read: "Drake University students only, student ID required." A scribbled disclaimer added that he "has the right to refuse service to anyone."

Skeptics predicted the Days would have trouble making a profit under the new concept. University officials estimate that only about 25 percent of Drake's 3,150 full-time undergraduates and pharmacy students are 21 or older.

"If we got 50 every night, I'd be more than happy," Day said. "Thirty to 50 is all we need. We definitely think it will stick around for a while."

Day, who also makes money from private parties and Greek functions, said business is good.

"Every weekend, we see slight increases. I wasn't expecting such a smooth transition," he said. "It's a blessing to us we have the Drake students and were able to change the business. Otherwise, the bar would have folded because of the amount of crime driving people away."

Students said they hope the experiment succeeds.

"I think it's a big step up from the bar before," said Miranda Bane, 21, a senior in music education. "It's nice for students to have another option to go to socialize close to campus."

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2007711150392>



**11. NADS Nets Contract to Study Driver Impairment**

**The National Advanced Driving Simulator (NADS) announced the award of a $2.5 million contract from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to conduct an exploratory study of the application of vehicle-based sensors for detecting driver impairment due to alcohol and their possible use in developing effective countermeasures.**

*Iowa City Press Citizen*

November 12, 2007

The study may have far-reaching effects, according to John Lee, director of Human Factors Research at NADS, professor of mechanical and industrial engineering in the UI College of Engineering and lead principal investigator on the study; and Tim Brown, senior team leader of Cognitive Systems Engineering at NADS and project co-principal investigator.

"Alcohol has been a persistent traffic safety problem," says Lee. "In this study we hope to identify how impairment influences the driving performance of individuals to identify reliable, feasible and robust means of detecting impairment."

Although the number of alcohol-related fatalities declined from 1982 through 1992, the rate has remained relatively constant since then. Lee and Brown note that 41 percent of all U.S. traffic fatalities involve alcohol use and that 12,491 deaths annually are attributed to drivers operating a vehicle with a blood-alcohol level of greater than 0.08, the current legal limit.

Karim Malek, NADS director, says: "We are extremely excited to have been asked by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to perform this important, cutting-edge research. As the alcohol-related fatality rate has been stagnant over the past decade and a half, our expectation is that this research will reveal measures that can be used to monitor impaired driving in real-time using appropriate vehicle-based sensors and processors. Understanding driving impairment is one of the research questions best-suited to be answered using the high-fidelity NADS 1 simulation platform."

Since 2001, NADS has researched several areas of major interest to NHTSA, including the effectiveness of electronic stability control systems in vehicles, a technology that has shown strong promise in reducing vehicle rollovers and rollover-related fatalities.

Recently, NHTSA has mandated that electronic stability control be made standard equipment on all light passenger vehicles by the 2009 model year and on all vehicles by the 2012 model year.

<http://www.press-citizen.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071112/NEWS01/711120340/1079/NEWS01>

******12. Still Looking for Answers to Students' Binge-Drinking**

**They never said Iowa City doesn't have an issue with drinking.**

George Sweeney

*The Daily Iowan*

November 9, 2007

"It most certainly is a problem," said Greg Baker, the head of UI College Republicans, which combined with the University Democrats and UI Libertarians to oppose the 21-ordinance.

The UI had a 69-percent binge-drinking rate, according to the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study in 2003.

But now, opponents of the ordinance say it's time for the UI, Iowa City City Council, and the UI Student Government to quench UI students' thirst for alcohol in other ways.

"We need greater resources for late-night, nonalcoholic activities," said Atul Nakhasi, a co-founder of the Student Health Initiative Task Force. "Students do utilize [non-drinking activities] when they exist."

He pointed to Dance Marathon and the Oct. 24 concert at Carver-Hawkeye Arena featuring Bob Dylan, Elvis Costello, and Amos Lee.

"These activities are proven to be successful," he added.

He also said the UI needs to funnel more money to SCOPE and the Campus Activities Board to help them provide more alternatives.

Rick Dobyns, a founder of the Committee for Healthy Choices, which supported the 21-ordinance, said the failure of the ordinance was a big blow to his group's effort to curb binge drinking.

"I thought 21 was the hinge," he said.

Some activity between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. Thursday through Saturday nights is necessary to attract students away from the city's drinking establishments, though they won't be as effective without the 21-ordinance, he said.

Ideally, Dobyns said, the law would have helped "incentives" alternative activities. Without the ordinance, other activities won't seem as appealing, he contended.

The 21-ordinance was a more financially viable solution to the binge-drinking problem, because bigger, more expensive events are necessary to compete with bars when the required entry age is 19, Dobyns said.

He said events such as the Oct. 24 concert as effective, though far too expensive to sustain on a weekly basis. As an alternative, he mentioned something like Planet X, a laser-tag center that used to be in the Old Capitol Town Center, where the UI subsidized students' admission to the center to create an alternative to drinking. But the establishment eventually moved.

Nakhasi said he spoke to city councilors about attracting such as businesses ESPN Zone, a video arcade marketed to adults. He used the laser-tag center as an example of an ineffective alternative activity.

"We can't have 60-year-olds deciding," he said.

<http://media.www.dailyiowan.com/media/storage/paper599/news/2007/11/09/Metro/Still.Looking.For.Answers.To.Students.BingeDrinking-3091589.shtml?refsource=collegeheadlines>

**13. Council to Consider Changes in Noise Rules**

**There will be a public meeting at 6 p.m. Thursday to discuss proposed changes to the city's noise ordinance.**

*Des Moines Register*

November 14, 2007

City Council members have already put a ban on issuance of any more yearlong sound permits until Jan. 28, or until they rewrite the city's 30-year-old noise ordinance. The action came in response to complaints that officials have received from residents, specifically those near Court Avenue, about the loudness of music from the neighborhood businesses.

City employees have recommended officials reduce the noise level allowed from 100 decibels to 85 decibels, measured 50 feet from the property responsible for the noise. Also, amplified sound outside the business would be cut off at midnight and would be allowed only a set number of times a month. Business owners could still amplify music inside their buildings after midnight.

The meeting is at the Central Library, 1000 Grand Ave.


<http://desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071114/NEWS/711140399/1001/NEWS>

**14. Man Stabbed in Back, Abdomen in Bar Fight**

**A Pleasant Hill man was in serious but stable condition at a Des Moines hospital on Sunday following a stabbing and bar fight, police reported.**

*Des Moines Register*

November 12, 2007

Cole Langford, 23, was taken to Mercy Medical Center with a stab wound in the back and another stab wound in the abdomen.

Officers were sent to D's Maingate tavern, 2956 E Grand Ave., at 12:51 a.m. to investigate a report of a fight. By the time police arrived the victim and the suspect were gone.

Langford was taken to the hospital by private car. Police said they located a crime scene in the parking lot. Langford was identified as the victim after he arrived at the hospital. He was being prepared for surgery at the time and officers could not immediately interview him.

No arrests are listed on a report of the stabbing.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071112/NEWS/71112005/-1/archive>

**15. Scared Kids Tell Police Their Driver Was Drunk**

**Children jumped out of a stopped car in fear Sunday night after the allegedly intoxicated driver weaved in traffic, authorities said.**

Tom Alex

*Des Moines Register*

November 13, 2007

Des Moines police officers reported seeing two children hanging out a driver's side window of a vehicle near 21st Street and Franklin Avenue. The children jumped out and flagged down police officers when the car came to a stop. The children said the driver was drunk.

It later was reported that two other children had been hanging out the other side of the car and that they also jumped out.

 John S. Felix, 38, was charged with second-offense drunken driving, child endangerment and careless driving. He was at least three times over the legal limit for consuming alcohol in Iowa, officials said in a report.

Officers said Felix told them he was coming from a bowling alley where he had been bowling with his children, his girlfriend and her children.

Felix denied driving recklessly, police said, but his girlfriend, Tara Smith, who was sitting next to him in the front seat, told officers he "was all over the road."

Smith also was charged with child endangerment, according to the police report.

<http://desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071113/NEWS01/711130376/-1/galleries>**16. SLPD Takes Pledge to Keep Tobacco out of the Hands of Youth**

**The Storm Lake Police Department is to partner with Iowa ABD for Tobacco Education and Enforcement**

*Pilot Tribune*

November 13, 2007

The Storm Lake Police Department has taken a pledge to keep tobacco out of the hands of Storm Lake's youth.

It's called the Iowa Pledge, and it's a partnership with the Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division (Iowa ABD) to educate local retailers and to enforce Iowa's tobacco laws. The Iowa Pledge Program has helped increase statewide tobacco compliance by 22 percent since it began in 2000. By partnering with the Iowa ABD the Storm Lake Police Department will look to do its part in continuing the upward trend.

Throughout the next year, Storm Lake Police Department will be offering free monthly Iowa Pledge Retailer Certification Classes to local tobacco retailers where clerks will learn the fundamentals of Iowa's tobacco laws, as well as how to calculate a customer's age and effectively refuse illegal sales.

Clerks who successfully complete an online exam will be Iowa Pledge Certified and the retail establishment will receive an affirmative defense against a civil penalty if the certified clerk makes an illegal sale.

"The Iowa Pledge Retailer Certification Classes are a great way for clerks to prepare themselves to refuse illegal tobacco sales," Captain Todd Erskine says. "The classes will help retailers maintain a compliant and responsible establishment."

Also as a part of the Iowa Pledge Program, Storm Lake Police officers will be conducting compliance checks on local establishments. Underage customers under the supervision of law enforcement officers will enter establishments and attempt to buy tobacco products.

Clerks who make the illegal sale will be cited on the spot.

Criminal penalties for selling tobacco to a minor include a $100 fine for the first offense, $250 fine for the second offense and a $500 fine for the third and subsequent offenses.

Handing out citations, however, is not the intent of the Iowa Pledge Program.

"By partnering with the Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division, we hope to educate clerks and maintain a compliant retail environment in our community," Captain Todd Erskine says. "Moreover, we pledge to help keep tobacco out of the hands of Iowa's youth."

<http://www.zwire.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=19017880&BRD=1304&PAG=461&dept_id=180486&rfi=6>

**17.** **Prison Week: Inmates Quit Smoking**

**It's not necessarily the place you would expect to find a breakthrough in the healthcare industry. But a group of prison inmates at the Newton Correctional Facility may be on to something when it comes to beating cigarettes.**

*WHOtv.com*

November 13, 2007

Inside the prison walls, inmates gather in a classroom to listen to one of the toughest teachers. They are learning one of the most difficult lessons of their life. How to quit smoking and possibly beat other addictions.

The teacher, Gary Titus, is the same man who made headlines 20 years ago. He is also an inmate at Newton. He's serving a life sentence in the murder of Des Moines teacher Ken Eaton. Now, he's hoping to make a difference in the lives of those behind bars by teaching a smoking cessation course.

Of his decision to teach the class Titus says, "in my situation serving a life sentence I really have no way to pay back for what I've done being convicted of murder there's no other way to give back.

So teaching others how to quit smoking is his way of giving back. Titus is himself an ex-smoker. He along with prison officials developed an anti-smoking course specially tailored to inmates. The program seems to be working. Since the start of the year, 93 inmates have enrolled in the class. More than one-fourth have quit.

But prison officials are seeing more than just a successful quitting rate when it comes to smoking. They find that inmates often put what they've learned to use when they leave prison as well. "

Prison psychologist Marty Marsh says, "I think it connects so much more with addictions in general where typically you're trying to kick that habit and that habit only. In here there's a connection to other habits meth, alcohol cocaine and whatever drug is out there. "

For that reason, other prisons around the state and around the country are taking a look at Titus' program. Titus hopes to help write the curriculum for those programs so its success can be seen at locations other than the Newton Correctional Facility.

<http://www.whotv.com/Global/story.asp?S=7355099>

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**18. Tobacco Tax Cuts Into Smokers' Ranks**

**The tobacco-tax increase is causing smokers to dump the habit, according to a poll released Monday.**

Samantha Miller

*The Daily Iowan*

November 6, 2007

The tax, which was raised in March from 36 cents to $1.36 a pack, is a driving influence for more than 50 percent of Iowans who dropped the puffing habit this year, according to research compiled by the American Lung Association of Iowa, Iowans for Wellness and Prevention, and the American Heart Association.

The poll also pointed to an overall strong desire by Iowans to quit smoking - 65 percent of smokers reported to either be trying or likely to try to quit.

Sandra Quilty, Iowa Wellness and Prevention co-chair woman said the poll illustrates that the cigarette tax is working, and Iowan smokers want to quit.

"We now have a better idea of what helps smokers quit, and we must look for ways to get them the help they need," she said in a statement.

The poll also pointed to an longing by Iowans for methods to assist quitting. Research reported that 54 percent of smokers on the track to cease smoking thought that Food and Drug Administration-approved cessation-treatments covered by health-insurance plans would make it easier for them to quit.

For UI sophomore Nick Koch, his decision to quit has been largely affected by a lighter wallet in recent weeks - a irritating reality not aided by the increased cost to the smoking sticks.

As he became more concerned about his financial situation, he realized his smoking habit was burning up all his cash.

"I actually tried to cut down on the price by going to cheaper brands," he said. "It was still too expensive."

But the pinch in the pocket isn't the driving concern for all prospective quitters.

UI senior Heston Roewe said he's trying to kick the habit - but for health, not money, motivations.

"The whole cost of cigarettes thing doesn't bother me, as long as it's not completely outrageous," the smoker of about 18 months said. He added that he believes that the tax will only influence a small number of smokers to quit.

Though Roewe admits that higher price of cigarettes hasn't cut his smoking habit, the concept behind such taxes irks him.

"It is just stupid to tax more for something just because a few people think it's wrong," he said.

<http://media.www.dailyiowan.com/media/storage/paper599/news/2007/11/06/Metro/Tobacco.Tax.Cuts.Into.Smokers.Ranks-3081455.shtml>**19. Oenophiles make, take Wine Home**

Tom Perry
*Des Moines Register*
November 10, 2007

Grape vines entwine themselves on the latticework of a pergola that shades a flower-trimmed brick patio behind the house. Meanwhile, about a quarter of his cellar is dedicated to winemaking.

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| photo |
| Eric Welch, owner of Vines to Wines, built the pergola and grape arbor at the 105-year-old home in Sherman Hill. |

If not a little piece of Italy, the operation is at least a 21st-century echo of the homespun shrines built in America by generations of European immigrants. As circumstances allowed, they grew their own grapes, made their own wine and were able to cling to a little of the old ways in a new world.

Welch and his wife, Jane, are more interested in sharing old-world ways than simply clinging to them.

They've spent about the past 18 months modifying their Sherman Hill property to launch a small business - Vines to Wines, a winemaking center that caters to clients who have heeded the advice, "Don't try this at home.''

Scores of customers - some oenophiles interested in making their own wines, and others interested in a different night-out experience - already have visited the Welches' backyard and basement.

"People get a chance to come here and make their own wine without going through the hassle of buying equipment or messing up their own homes,'' Eric Welch said.

It took a bit of doing for the Welches to convert part of their property into a micro-winery.

Their house at the western edge of the historic Sherman Hill district was built in 1902. Like so many homes in the district, it fell on hard times before being rescued.

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| photo |
| Eric Welch, right, helped Doug Willyard pour four gallons of grape juice concentrate into a bucket. Deb Willyard is at left. They were making an Australian Grenache/Mourvedre wine. |

The house "was really rundown, but had been fixed up quite well before we bought it,'' Welch said.

The previous owner's improvements made the house impressive. But Eric and Jane wanted to build an outdoor area for guests as well as set aside room for making wine.

The plan was for the Welches to do make most of the wine-related modifications on their own. As it turned out, they did much of the work themselves, Welch said.

Eric had experience constructing a pergola. He had built one in their backyard when they lived Urbandale.

"I learned a lot from that,'' he said.

So in June 2006, Welch converted a section of driveway south of a small garage into a patio similar to those he'd seen while traveling through Italy.

"I started shoveling out all the gravel between the garage and the neighbor's fence where the pergola is now and realized it was going to be such a big job,'' Welch said.

"I wound up calling a guy with a Bobcat, and he scraped everything up in about 15 minutes and put it in a pile.''

About 18 tons of dirt and sand later, the area, which sloped, was ready to become a brick patio.

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| photo |
| Eric Welch, far right, owner of Vines To Wines, talked about different wines with people gathered to make their own wine last May. They took advantage of the nice weather to sit on the outside patio behind Welch’s wine cellar. |

"I got about 1,000 bricks put down last year and another 1,000 this year,'' Welch said. "The toughest part was getting everything prepared for putting the bricks down.''

Some of those bricks have a local history. Several hundred were purchased several years ago when the state made bricks from razed buildings available during the I-235 project in Des Moines, Welch said.

"I had bought 400 or so for about a quarter a piece from the Drake Neighborhood Association,'' he said.

During warm weather, Welch said, the 60-foot-long patio is pleasantly shaded. And it's on the southwest side of the property, which helps during cooler weather.

Flowers grow in abundance around the pergola. Along the back stairs to the house, a robust herb garden features thick sprays of lavender, parsley, rosemary and basil.

You have to walk past the fragrant herb garden to get to the wine cellar.

Basements in old houses tend to be ideal for converting into wine cellars.

"I really wanted to keep the basement old and rustic looking so you could get the feeling that you were going into an old bootlegger's place,'' Welch said.

"I definitely didn't want people to have the feeling that they were going into an antiseptic retail strip mall,'' he said. "I wanted people to feel as though they were making wine at home, even though they're not at home.''

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| photo |
| Jane Swanson added toasted oak to floating wood chips in a four-gallon bucket of grape juice concentrate. Jane and her husband, Mark, were making Spanish Tempranillo/Cabernet Sauvignon wine. |

The winemaking area of the old cellar features a fermentation room. To build the room, Welch took advantage of a wall already in place. Welch figures that, at some point, the basement had an area for coal storage.

"I built the cabinets along the back wall so, as you walk in, you can see all the different-colored wines,'' he said.

Beyond that, there was some intense cleaning and painting. But the basement has served as a perfect place for Vines to Wine to accommodate about 14 wine-making guests per session.

The Welches' small business is a sideline.

The idea is that they might make enough extra money to afford European vacations, said Welch, a 61-year-old computer programmer.

Eric began making his own wine in 1992, after being introduced to the hobby by a neighbor in Urbandale.

"In the beginning we made a lot of bad wine and threw out a lot,'' he said. "But I also learned a lot.''

Over time his wines began winning awards, including best of show at the Iowa State Fair in 2003.

Today, he stays busy with repeat customers and new business generated mostly by word of mouth.

Judy McClure of Des Moines calls the Vines to Wines experience "delightful.''

The challenge, she said, is "waiting for the wine to achieve a good age before consuming it.''

Vines to Wines customers first get a crash course in making wine. They mostly use grape juice concentrate and make wine in batches. Then they return two months later to bottle, cork and label the wine they made. Many of the wines then have to age for at least several months.

Welch said he has heard from customers that waiting to taste the wine is the toughest part. He's not surprised, he said.

"In our current age, we're used to instant gratification,'' he said. "But this you do have to wait for, and that's what brings back a little bit of the old ways.''

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2007711100301>

**IV. OTHER STATE NEWS****20. Hospitality Industry Argues Against Doubling Alcohol Tax in Fairbanks (Alaska)**

**The hospitality industry is fighting a proposal to double Fairbanks’ alcohol tax.**

Chris Eshleman

*Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*

November 14, 2007

Alaska Cabaret, Hotel, Restaurant & Retailers Association chairman Glenn Brady told city officials this week that his organization thinks casual and frequent drinkers already pay enough through taxes, passed-through license fees and other sources to cover the costs linked to alcohol abuse in the Fairbanks area.

Brady said the city should urge state and federal governments to share revenue from their alcohol taxes — the state’s excise tax is the highest in the country — instead of hitting Fairbanks consumers for more money as it looks to fill budget gaps.

“Responsible consumers of alcohol clearly pay their way when it comes to the burdens that the abusers of alcohol place on governmental services,” Brady wrote to city leaders Monday. Brady also is a brew master and president of the Fox-based Silver Gulch Brewing and Bottling Co. “Increasing taxes on a relatively small group of consumers to fund basic government services for the benefit of the larger majority is inherently unfair.”

Outgoing city Mayor Steve Thompson, who included the tax measure in a three-pronged effort to erase budget shortfalls, defended his plan. City officials estimate alcohol is a contributing factor in more than two-thirds of all police calls, including 90 percent of domestic-violence calls.

“Those are staggering numbers,” Thompson said. “We want to be able to fund our city government, so I don’t have any problem with taxing it from alcohol use.”

Brady wrote that while the vast majority of taxes on alcohol in Fairbanks are collected by state and federal governments, most problems related to drinking occur at the local level, suggesting the current tax structure could be improperly composed.

The association estimated the cost of alcohol abuse in and around Fairbanks to state coffers at almost $37 million a year. It then compared that cost to revenues collected by the state through excise taxes, garnished state dividends and other sources and concluded costs associated with alcohol-related issues are regularly offset.

Brady said the industry acknowledges that substance abuse has real costs to the community, including the price of policing or prosecuting drunken driving cases.

But he pointed to an estimated $32 million in state and federal alcohol excise taxes collected by businesses in northern Alaska last year, saying those and other costs are already picked up by buyers in the form of higher prices at the cash register.

Brady suggested the city should look to state and federal governments to share their wealth from alcohol taxes instead of tapping drinkers in Fairbanks to pay more.

“It’s not getting to the right place,” he said. “We could be funding double the entire Police Department, and then some.”

Thompson applauded Brady’s effort to compile solid statistics surrounding alcohol abuse, but noted his analysis focused largely on state-issued services, not city services. The city, he said, spends millions through its police force to combat the impacts of alcohol, while its current 5 percent alcohol tax falls short of covering that cost with approximately $1.2 million in annual revenue.

“The argument goes right along with mine,” he said. “I’m standing behind this, and I hope we see it pass.”

The proposal would raise the city’s alcohol tax rate from 5 percent to 10 percent. It is scheduled for a Fairbanks City Council public hearing Monday night, the same night another pair of tax measures also will be considered.

Fairbanks North Star Borough Mayor Jim Whitaker has said it would “make sense” to increase the borough’s alcohol tax if the city’s passes. While an increase in the city rate could be approved by the City Council, a hike in the borough rate would require voter approval.


<http://newsminer.com/2007/11/14/9890> **21. Underage Drinking is Target of New Program (Arizona)**

**Underage drinking is the most devastating substance problem facing Arizona's children, according to Gov. Janet Napolitano.**

*Tucson Citizen*

November 13, 2007

Kids are drinking on a regular basis by about age 14, according to the 2006 Arizona Youth Survey. Nearly one-fourth of eighth-graders reported drinking within the last month, according to the survey.

Parents have the most influence over their children when it comes to preventing underage drinking, according to Napolitano.

She recently launched Draw the Line, a campaign aimed at reducing teen drinking.

Organizers want parents and teens to know that underage drinking is not a "rite of passage" and that alcohol permanently damages a developing brain

The Web site offers strategies, including prewritten text messages to send your kids through the site, reminding them that you love them and encouraging them not to drink.

<http://www.tucsoncitizen.com/daily/local/68553.php>

**22. Campaign Launches in California Opposing 1,550% Tax Increase** **(California)**

**Diageo, the world's leading spirits, wine and beer company launched a statewide campaign opposing tomorrow's vote by California's Board of Equalization to reclassify Flavored Beers, such as Smirnoff Ice, as distilled spirits thus imposing a potential 1,550% tax hike on this small segment of the beer market. Thursday's vote, which is expected to be 3 to 2 for reclassification, is based on the erroneous notion that taxing flavored beer will curb the problem of underage drinking.**

*Diageo*

November 14, 2007

Guy L. Smith, Executive Vice President, Diageo North America said, "Underage drinking is a very serious issue, but raising taxes and falsely claiming it will address the issue is fiscally irresponsible and socially misguided. If the Board of Equalization votes to reclassify then the outcome would affect law-abiding consumers, distributors and retailers in an already fragile market."

California's Board of Equalization consists of four members and the State Controller, who each serve four-year terms. This is the nation's only elected tax commission, and according to the Board's website, this ensures citizen accountability.

However, research conducted by Diageo concluded that vast groups of California citizens do not agree that taxing flavored beer would curb underage drinking.

Therefore, Diageo's campaign against the reclassification and the 1,550% tax increase focuses on encouraging Californian's to join the conversation through talk radio segments, state-wide print advertisements and the newly launched website \www.whataretheydrinking.com.

By logging on to \www.whataretheydrinking.com Californians can write to Board of Equalization members Betty Yee and Judy Chu and California State Controller, John Chiang -- the BOE members who plan to vote for reclassification -- and let them know this vote and the tax it would impose are misguided.

Research commissioned by The Century Council, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to fighting drunk driving and underage drinking, reveals that 65% of underage youth who drink obtain alcohol from family and friends.

Equally important, only 7% of youth report that they obtained alcohol from retailers who failed to check for identification. The American Medical Association and the National Academy of Sciences have also come out with research strongly supporting these findings.

As the leader in the industry, Diageo adheres to a self-imposed marketing code that is one of the most stringent in the industry. Diageo is a founding member and major supporter of The Century Council, an organization funded by the country's leading distillers committed to developing programs to combat drunk driving and underage drinking.

<http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/11-14-2007/0004705977&EDATE>=



**23. Veto in DeKalb: Bars May Pour till 4 am (Georgia)**

**County commission had voted to ban alcohol after 2:30 a.m., effectively closing bars then**

Ty Tagami

*The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*

November 13, 2007

Nothing changed Tuesday in the ongoing dispute over bar closing times in DeKalb County — patrons can continue to buy drinks into the wee hours and neighbors can continue to complain about noisy nightclubs that wreck their sleep.

Chief Executive Officer Vernon Jones vetoed, as promised, a measure that would have rolled back last call in DeKalb to 2:30 a.m. Jones acted just hours after county commissioners voted 4-3 for earlier alcohol pouring times in bars and nightclubs in unincorporated DeKalb.

Commissioners also nixed by a 4-2 vote a proposal by Jones that would have required new establishments to pay a little more for the right to pour until nearly 4. The developments mean DeKalb establishments can continue serving drinks until 3:55 a.m. most mornings.

Jones said he opposed a rollback because it would reduce the county's take from the 3 percent tax on alcohol sales. Nightclub owners and employees also said they would lose money and jobs if they had to close earlier.

"My job is to maintain a prosperous DeKalb County," Jones said.

Earlier, at a public hearing that filled the county assembly hall, Jones traded barbs with the bill's four supporters — commissioners Jeff Rader, Burrell Ellis, Kathie Gannon and Elaine Boyer.

Jones accused the commissioners of trying to "regulate" people's lives.

The commissioners accused the Jones' administration of failing to enforce laws that are supposed to keep unruly nightclubs in check.

"How about people who are trying to sleep so that they can get to their jobs in the morning," Rader said. Ellis ridiculed Jones' stance on the alcohol tax, saying that if county finances were dependent upon it "then our county is much more fragile than I ever imagined."

While the officials battled, hundreds of protesters from both sides watched, or tried to. The crowd exceeded the auditorium's capacity, and dozens were locked outside during the public hearing.

Proponents of the rollback wore T-shirts with the word "yes" emblazoned in red. The opponents who wore "no," chose pink or green lettering.

Calvin Simms, who lives near Redan High School, near Stone Mountain, spoke in favor of earlier closing times. He said violence, even murder, is associated with nightclubs, alcohol and drugs, and "something has to be done."

Rhonda Holcombe, a waitress at Hairston's on South Hairston Road near Stone Mountain, said the loss of two hours of business each morning would cut her income. "If you take that from me, you're taking $200 out of my pocket a night," she said.

Rader was the original proponent of the rollback, but the commission ended up voting on a substitute forwarded by Ellis, whose proposal would have turned off the tap at 2:30 a.m. for businesses that opened in DeKalb after 2004. Atlanta rolled back its bar hours to 2:30 a.m. most days in December 2003.

After the vote, when it was clear that a Jones veto would not be overridden, Rader vowed to try again. To succeed, he and his allies will either need to strike a compromise with Jones or win the support of one more commissioner. It takes five to override a veto.

Jones said he would not support any legislation that cut into the alcohol sales tax revenue, which just about any rollback would do.

****<http://www.ajc.com/sports/content/metro/dekalb/stories/2007/11/13/dekbars_1114.html>

**24. Smoking Rules Could Affect Beer Gardens, too (Illinois)**

**Proposed rules for the state of Illinois smoking ban call for no smoking within 15 feet of the entrances and exits to enclosed buildings - including the entrances and exits to beer gardens and outdoor patios.**

Chris Wetterich

*Gate House News Service*

November 12, 2007

Some bar owners are still unsure of exactly how the rules will affect them when the ban takes effect Jan. 1. However, establishments with large beer gardens apparently will have few changes to make, while those with narrow or small beer gardens may see smoking snuffed out even outside.

The rules, which still must be approved by the General Assembly's Joint Committee on Administrative Rules can be commented upon until Nov. 19 at the state Department of Public Health's Web site: \www.idph.state.il.us/rulesregs/proposedrules.htm.

http://www.chicagosuburbannews.com/woodridge/state\_news/x1375680234

**25. Injunction Granted in Liquor Sales Ban (Kentucky)**

*Wave 3*

November 9, 2007

There were late developments Friday in the controversial ban of alcohol sales in some Louisville neighborhoods. A Court of Appeals has granted an injunction which will allow stores to continue selling alcohol for now.

Voters in four west Louisville precincts voted to ban liquor sales in an election held September 11th.

The ban was supposed to take effect this Saturday at midnight. Business owners say voters were misled, so they filed an appeal.

<http://www.wave3.com/Global/story.asp?S=7339232>

**26. Underage Drinking Party 3rd Bust in Castine This Fall (Maine)**

**Only a week after an alcohol-related crash killed a Maine Maritime Academy student, authorities on Monday night broke up another underage drinking party involving MMA students.**

Eric Russell

*Bangor Daily News*

November 14, 2007

It was the third such bust in Castine this fall semester, and the trend has left members of the Hancock County Underage Drinking Task Force frustrated.

"This is particularly disturbing in light of some of the recent activity down in Castine," Hancock County Sheriff’s Deputy Christopher Thornton said Tuesday. "It’s getting increasingly frustrating to keep going back there. What are they waiting for, for somebody to die? Well they just had a death over there."

Thornton was referring to an accident on Sunday, Nov. 4, on a road near the MMA campus involving three MMA students. The three were traveling in a vehicle when the driver, 18-year-old Brett Gould of Benedicta, lost control.

The car flipped over, killing Gould instantly. Two passengers in the vehicle avoided serious injury. Speed and alcohol were factors, police said.

On Monday night, police arrested two people and issued summonses to eight others after an off-campus party that night. All but one were MMA students.

Michael Moulton, 22, of Cape Neddick was charged with providing a place for minors to consume alcohol. Jacob Bartol, 22, of Charlotte, N.C., was charged with furnishing alcohol to minors.

The following MMA students were issued summonses for possession of alcohol by a minor:

Christopher Hodgkins, 20, of Northeast Harbor; Cory Brynes, 19, of Standish; Derek Belanger, 20, of Presque Isle; Jordan Bartol, 19, of Charlotte, N.C.; Travis Johnson, 19, of Robbinston; Tabor Johnson, 19, of Stonington; Stephen Reroacr, 20, of York.

Nicole Marcotte, 20, of Sabattus also was charged but is not an MMA student.

"There are way too many of these cases right now," Thornton said. "[Monday], we issued summonses to some who were on their second or third offenses."

Attempts to reach a Maine Maritime Academy spokesperson on Tuesday were unsuccessful.

Thornton acknowledged that some of what the task force is seeing is just college students being college students, but he said he’s seen enough to know that underage drinking often leads to worse trouble.

"Alcohol is the introductory drug, everything spins off that," he said. "Assaults, sexual assaults, increased drug use — it all blends together. Then you add that to all these OUIs and alcohol-related crashes, and it’s a lot bigger than just kids drinking."

Thornton said he believed that if authorities had not broken up the party Monday night, many of the participants would have driven home drunk.

"How do we send the message?" he said. "If our deterrent factor doesn’t work, I don’t know what else we can do. People are getting caught two or three times and it doesn’t seem to bother them."

Deputy Thornton responded to the party with several other members of the underage drinking task force, a multi-jurisdictional unit with members from all Hancock County police agencies.

The underage drinking task force works with MMA security, but Thornton pointed out that school authorities can only police what happens on campus. Most of the recent underage drinking parties have occurred off campus.


<http://bangornews.com/news/t/hancock.aspx?articleid=156489&zoneid=178>

**27. State Lawmaker wants all Cigarettes Sold in State to be Fire-Safe (Massachusetts)**

**A state lawmaker is expected to introduce legislation Monday that would require all cigarettes sold in the state to be fire-safe, meaning they extinguish automatically when not being smoked.**

*Associated Press*

November 11, 2007

"It not only saves lives, but it will save property and prevent significant burns," Sen. Judy Robson, D-Beloit, said of the bill she plans to introduce.

If the measure is enacted, Wisconsin would become the 23rd state in the country to require the modified cigarettes, according to Coalition for Fire-Safe Cigarettes, a project of the National Fire Protection Association in Quincy, Mass.

"This is something that is catching on in more states, said Karmen Hanson of the National Conference of State Legislatures in Denver.

But some, including state Senate Minority Leader Scott Fitzgerald, R-Juneau, say the legislation is unnecessary.

"It's another way of trying to save people from themselves," said Fitzgerald spokesman Ryan Murray.

From 2002 to 2005, about 13,300 home structure fires and 680 deaths nationwide were attributed to unattended cigarettes, ashes or butts, according to a fire-protection association study.

New York was the first state to enact a law requiring fire-safe cigarettes. Since the law went into effect in June 2004, the number of cigarette-related fire deaths has declined.

There were 22 deaths blamed on cigarettes in New York in 2006 and 28 deaths in 2005, according to the New York Department of State's office. From 2000 to 2002 there were an average of 42 deaths per year. Records for 2003 and 2004 are incomplete.

Robson said she expects to see a similar reduction in the number of cigarette-related fire deaths in Wisconsin if her proposal becomes law.

Fire-safe cigarettes are designed to extinguish themselves when not being smoked. In the typical fire-safe cigarette, up to three bands of thicker paper encircle the tobacco, blocking continued burning when left unattended.

Cigarette maker Philip Morris USA has said it wouldn't oppose Robson's bill if it's similar to the law in New York. Robson said she tried to fashion the bill after the other laws, including New York's.

Robson introduced similar legislation in 2005 without success. She said she expects the revised version will have a better chance to pass the Senate for three reasons: Democrats are now the majority party, other states have passed similar bills in the last two years, and the cigarette industry isn't opposing it.

If the measure is enacted, the law would take effect about 18 months later.

<http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2007/11/11/state_lawmaker_wants_all_cigarettes_sold_in_state_to_be_fire_safe/>



**28. Planners Say OK to Beer, Wine at Theater (Michigan)**

**Despite objections by the police department, city planners Thursday approved the Community Media Center's request to serve beer and wine to members of the Wealthy Street Theatre.**

*The Grand Rapids Press*

November 09, 2007

Whether the nonprofit group ever will pour a glass for its members remains to be seen. The group still has to get approval from the City Commission, which rarely rules against the police department on liquor-control issues.

Community Media Center officials said they hope to follow the lead of similar historic theaters in Michigan and offer beer and wine to members. The group assumed control of the 97-year-old theater three years ago after another nonprofit group that sponsored its $2 million makeover went broke.

"This is about sustainability; it's not about running a bar," said Laurie Cirivello, director of the nonprofit group.

More than 25 Community Media Center supporters were on hand Thursday to support the request to the city's Planning Commission.

The group applied for a permit that will allow it to sell beer and wine during special events for members at the theater.

Opposing the proposal was Lt. Richard Nawrocki, head of the Grand Rapids Police Department's Vice Unit. He questioned whether the Community Media Center is the type of club for which the permits were intended.

"Any member of the public can attend an event there," he said. "We think it's more of a public entertainment venue than a private club."

Selling temporary memberships to sell booze would be illegal, he said.

Theatre Manager Erin Wilson said the group cannot afford the $100,000-plus it would cost to purchase a liquor license that would allow it to serve the general public. He said the group would not sell temporary memberships to skirt the regulation.

After the meeting, Cirivello said she hoped to meet with Nawrocki to resolve their concerns before taking the request to the full City Commission.

<http://www.mlive.com/grandrapids/stories/index.ssf?/base/news-39/1194619668196890.xml&coll=6>

**29.** **Hospitals Going Tobacco-Free (Mississippi)**

**As cities step up indoor smoking bans, Northeast Mississippi hospitals are taking the next big leap.**

*Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal*

November 15, 2007

Today Baptist Memorial hospitals in Oxford and New Albany go tobacco-free on their entire properties. Employees, visitors, patients and volunteers are asked to not smoke or chew tobacco even outside the building.

"We're asking them to respect us and respect our patients so we can provide a healthier environment," said Melinda Gordon, director of marketing and physician relations for the Oxford hospital.

In January, Oktibbeha County and Baptist Memorial Hospital-Booneville will follow. All North Mississippi Health Services property - including North Mississippi Medical Center hospitals, clinics and offices - will put out the smokes and chews in July.

Several hospitals in south and central Mississippi already have gone tobacco-free, and other kinds of companies, including Tupelo's Cooper Tire Plant, have pushed smoking off their property. It mirrors national trends toward tobacco-free workplaces.

"It's the right time and the right thing to do," said Rodger Brown, vice president for human resources for North Mississippi Health Services.

The NMMC system buildings have been smoke-free inside since 1991, but the new policy, developed by a task force that included smokers, will keep patients and visitors from having to walk through cigarette smoke to enter buildings, Brown said.

Going tobacco-free doesn't happen overnight; it takes months of preparation. In addition to preparing visitors and patients, all the hospitals have offered more tobacco cessation classes to employees, including free or discounted mediations like Chantix. They've also targeted other concerns that smokers might have.

"We even offered some weight management classes," said Cynthia Travis, human resources supervisor at Oktibbeha County Hospital in Starkville.

The real test for employees will come today when they have to face an eight- or 12-hour shift without tobacco. The Baptist hospitals are discouraging employees from leaving the property for smoke breaks.

At McAlister's Deli in New Albany, it may be hard to tell if they are getting extra smokers in its outdoor smoking area. Because the restaurant is across the street from the hospital, many of its customers work at the hospital or are visiting patients.

"It will depend on how cold it is tomorrow," said Cole Verrell, restaurant manager.

In Oxford, hospital officials had delivered notices to their neighbors to let them know the hospital does not condone folks walking across property lines to puff.

Across the street, Jean Gentry, manager of Phillips Grocery, has two small tables outside for customers who smoke. Jean Gentry, the restaurant's manager, isn't sure what to expect.

"We're fixing to find out," she said.

<http://www.djournal.com/pages/story.asp?ID=258349&pub=1&div=News>



**30. The Glass is Half-Full for Drinking Prevention (New Jersey)**

**This message was brought to Linwood Middle School last week in an attempt by the township Municipal Alliance Committee to deter underage drinking.**

*North Brunswick Sentinel*

November 9, 2007

Councilwoman Cathy Nicola, who is the council liaison to the committee, Lou Ann Benson, who is the township affiliate, and Danielle Garback, who is the high school representative, handed out over 800 wristbands to the school's seventh and eighth-graders on Oct. 29 with their stated motto; the sixth-grade students will receive their own bracelets within the next week or so.

As part of a character-building session at the school, Nicola spoke over the public address system about the dangers of underage drinking. She said that 46 percent of seventh- and eighth-grade students have used alcohol, 40 percent who have used alcohol by age 13 will become addicted and 27 percent of New Jersey high school students binge-drink. She said that underage drinking is becoming an epidemic in our country.

"Step up and be the class that says no. Step up and be the class that makes a positive change. Step up and wear your bracelets proudly by making smart choices," she said.

The students also signed pledges to remain alcohol-free, to encourage their peers to do the same, and to act as role models to avoid dangerous, unhealthy lifestyles.

In addition, later that evening, Garback hosted a roundtable discussion with members of the township Youth Council about the effects and prevention of underage drinking.

"As a demographic, adolescents are very, very impressionable and so in order to fit this mold that society has cultivated, they feel inclined to rebel and to conform, and so to that end, in order to do that, students make a valiant effort to fit in and decide to drink and to compromise their morals," said Youth Council member Christina Pierpaoli. "We live in a society that certainly condones this heinous behavior so, as students, we are morally and ethically inclined to dispel any rumor that it's OK to drink and that it's OK to compromise your morals in that fashion."

The teens spoke about walking away from peer pressure, whether or not religious ceremonies should allow alcoholic homages, what age drinking is acceptable and how the media should limit the advertisement of beer and liquor.

"Underage drinking isn't just a problem in North Brunswick; it's a problem all over the country. It's wrong no matter where it is, no matter how it's done," said Youth Council member Bryan Gaeta.

One step the township has taken is the passage of a house party ordinance earlier this year, which prohibits any drinking on private property by minors and enacts consequences upon the offenders themselves, instead of their parents.

"I think this compels our demographic, the adolescent demographic, to start taking responsibility for their wrongdoings in every facet of their life," Pierpaoli said.

Another key component of prevention is education.

"I think with the Youth Council, along with the Municipal Alliance Committee and any other organizations in town, we are certainly moving toward educating the younger generations and we're making good progress," Garback said. "Underage drinking should not be allowed and it's wrong and we want to promote a healthy lifestyle for all children our age. Kids should not be doing this."

The other Youth Council participants were Jennifer Chung, Brittany Fuerstenberg, Ross Kurtz and Christopher Lynch. The discussion was taped by Roy Minieri and Peter Kenny and will be televised on Cable Channel 15.

<http://nbs.gmnews.com/news/2007/1108/front_page/020.html>

**31. School May Spur Athletes to Tackle Drinking Problem (New Jersey)**

**There is no teenage group more at risk for alcohol abuse than athletes, perhaps the aristocracy of high school society.**

*Asbury Park Press*

November 13, 2007

Rumson-Fair Haven Regional High School, which educates children of some of the Shore's most well-to-do, and sometimes well-known, families, is where educators are tackling the issue of underage drinking honestly, and talking with candor about the effort.

Last year, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism reported that one in four students are exposed to alcohol abuse in their homes and that 10 percent of all alcohol purchased in the United States is being consumed by underage drinkers, said Suzanne Fico, student assistance counselor specializing in substance abuse at Rumson-Fair Haven.

"The incidence of substance-abusing teenagers does not decrease among schools of higher socioeconomic status," Fico said before a meeting of coaches late last month. "Our high school has been in session for six weeks, and seven students have required intervention, addressing concerns specifically related to drugs and alcohol."

Once the Board of Education gives its approval, Rumson-Fair Haven is poised to become the first high school in New Jersey to test a code of conduct program entitled, "The Life of an Athlete."

The program, created by a physiologist and former Olympic coach, is based on the premise that rather than attempting to exert control over a particular social group, getting the group to accept a so-called "social norms agreement" is far more effective.

Fico said each student-athlete would sign a contract before the start of their season, agreeing to conduct himself or herself in an honorable manner that best represents the school and promotes "positive chemical health," including abstaining from alcohol. The penalties for violating the contract would range from counseling to suspension from the team.

Fico said that if the program succeeds in modifying athletes' behavior, the example will spread to the entire student body.

The two towns also would be asked to enact a "social host law," Fico said, comparable to the one Ocean Township has on its books, which would allow police to break up an underage drinking party on private property and make arrests.

**Drinking impairs ability**

John Underwood, president and founder of the American Athletic Institute in upstate New York, believes that if coaches can show their athletes how even a single night of partying can affect their performance on the court, mat and on the field, then perhaps school officials can reach the most at-risk demographic for alcohol abuse within an age group already at a high risk for alcohol abuse.

"Is there any coach that thinks there is not one person on the team who is family?

Underwood asked during a cafeteria meeting with Rumson-Fair Haven coaches last month. None of the officials raised their hands. "Guess what? You just kept my batting average in 29 states at 1,000 percent."

During sophomore and junior years in high school, statistics show that student-athletes party at a higher average than the general population, and are prone to binge drinking, Underwood said.

"Is there any form of peer pressure that is greater than being on a team or with teammates?" Underwood asked, this time rhetorically. "Not many. Probably the only power greater than that is family, the power of relationships in a family.

But just one night of heavy drinking can have severe repercussions on performance, said Underwood, who used a Power Point demonstration with graphs, charts and high-tech art to demonstrate impact.

"What is the residual effect? You think you drink, you have a hangover and then the next day you're back to normal, but it's not that simple. The hangover is pretty much the beginning," he said. "The biggest problem with alcohol is how

quickly it crosses all barriers and enters all systems in your body."

Thirty to 40 minutes after a period of moderate drinking, the blood alcohol content begins to subside in the bloodstream. But binge drink five to 10 drinks in one night, and the blood alcohol content does not peak for two hours after the last drink.

"If you drink heavily from 8 o'clock to midnight, your BAC continues to go up until about 2 in the morning and it starts to go down four hours later. After 10 beers, at 10 a.m., the blood alcohol content is still too high to operate a motor vehicle," Underwood said.

For athletes, the effect is even more extreme. One night of heavy drinking can erase the equivalent of 14 days of physical training. That's because even when the hangover goes away, the body's metabolism is still healing from the cascading damage caused by intoxication.

Thirty-six hours will pass before blood-sugar levels return to normal. Heart rate and respiratory functions also must work at elevated capacities after a night of heavy drinking. And because the brain shrinks from dehydration, like a dry sponge, the mind must draw on other areas to send coherent-enough signals through the nervous system in order to perform simple motor skills.

**A metabolic poison**

"In order to establish a reason for them not to get involved in this stuff, we have to show them that first, alcohol is a metabolic poison, that is what it is classified as in chemistry," said Underwood, who has taken his message to 148 colleges in the last four years.

"We have to get these kids to realize that what they're doing in their spare time is undermining everything they're doing as athletes," Underwood said. "You know, the average high school season, if you go all the way through, is about 12 weeks. Do it once, you lost a sixth of your time, do it twice, you lost a third of your time … think of the waste of all of that time."

"It comes down to so many teenagers thinking they're invincible," said Christian de Laszlo, 17, a junior at Rumson-Fair Haven. De Laszlo is on the swimming team and a member of Straight Edge, a national youth movement that originated in the 1980s and is associated with a punk rock subculture that abstains from alcohol, drugs, sex, and among some purists, meat.

However, in truth, the Rumson group is not affiliated with the movement and

adopted the name for its support group because it espouses many of the same values, minus the musical tastes and the fashion. The group meets about every other week on campus and has Fico as an adviser.

"People think they're pressured because they're insecure and they want to fit in. Some of the kids who drink, drink for the social security. I know other kids who are secure with themselves and like to drink," de Laszlo said.

Neither is a good reason, de Laszlo said, because they don't understand or appreciate the health risks at this age.

Carolyn Hodge, 17, another Straight Edge member, said her choice to make a commitment to live a clean life comes down to having the conviction to stand up for what is right.

"I'll respect you for your decision if you respect me for mine," Hodge said.

"It shows who your friends really are. And if somebody is going to hold it against you that you drink and you don't hold it against them (that they do), maybe they're not worth being around anyway."

When parents are away

"It seems like such a cliché, "Oh, my parents are away for the weekend, let's party at my house,' but that's really what goes on," said Amy Hendricks, 17, a junior, and another Straight Edge member.

"Adults, parents don't understand that either," de Laszlo said. "I know so many parents who think, "Oh yeah, my kid drinks, but all right, so he has a couple beers' … Noooo … they have no respect for the amount of alcohol they're consuming. Kids don't understand how much they're drinking.

"I think us being in Straight Edge all comes from … we all have pretty good relationships with our parents and we've had decent upbringings," de Laszlo said.

"They're not incredibly proud, like … "Oh, that's so amazing' … because their parents don't expect them to be like an alcoholic at 16," Hendricks said.

"They're like, "Oh, good you don't do drugs.' It's about making a decision not to do that."

Over the last 17 years, Fico has worked at four different high schools as a mental health counselor in this field. When she was offered the position at Rumson, many of her colleagues suggested she was taking an early retirement.

The idea being that upscale Rumson does not have a drug and alcohol problem.

"What is your picture of a teen who abuses alcohol?" Fico said. "Do you imagine an adolescent disheveled in appearance, creating problems in their classroom? Lying, stealing, and fighting?

"Although some substance-abusing adolescents exhibit behavior problems such as lying, stealing, fighting and truancy, more are good-looking, charismatic, approval-seeking kids," Fico said.

<http://drugpolicycentral.com/bot/article/app6062.htm>



**32. End of the Line for Alcohol Advertising on Public Transit (New York)**

**NY State Assemblyman Felix Ortiz Introduces Legislation to Ban Alcohol and Tobacco Ads From New York Public Transit.**

*PR Newswire*

November 8, 2007

Marin Institute, the national alcohol industry watchdog group, joined New York State Assemblyman Felix Ortiz (D-Brooklyn), a group of students from Hunter College, City University of New York, and Bruce Carmel of the Brooklyn youth development nonprofit, Turning Point, at a news conference today on the steps of New York City Hall. They came together to release a new report and demand an end to alcohol advertising on New York's public transit systems.

"New York City is a world class city and a leader in so many ways; but when it comes to protecting its youth from being targeted by the alcohol industry, the Big Apple is falling behind," said Michele Simon, research and policy director at Marin Institute.

"Our public transit systems are not the appropriate places for alcohol or tobacco products to be displayed," stated Ortiz. "Young people and teens travel these systems regularly and we know that they are negatively affected by these images." Mr. Ortiz introduced two bills in Albany to outlaw alcohol and tobacco ads on New York mass transit facilities. The legislation also imposes fines against advertising companies who violate the new policy.

California-based Marin Institute's new national report, entitled 'The End of the Line for Alcohol Ads on Public Transit', documents how in the midst of an epidemic of underage drinking, astronomical costs of alcoholism, and a chronically under-funded health care system fueled by alcohol-related problems, New York, Boston, and other public transit systems still allow public advertising of alcohol. "The connection between youth exposure to alcohol ads and underage drinking is well documented," Simon said. "New York and Boston should join Chicago, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Seattle, and many others in saying no to alcohol ads on public transit, it's legally possible, and commonsense policy."

"Millions of New Yorkers under the age of 21 are exposed to alcohol advertisements every time they take a subway," said Nicholas Freudenberg, DrPH, Hunter College. "By allowing the alcohol industry to advertise on New York City subways and busses, the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) contributes to underage and problem drinking and imposes health burdens on New York City residents and additional costs on New York City tax payers." Professor Freudenberg and Hunter College students conducted a survey of the NYC transit system last summer that lead to the release of 'Alcohol Advertisements Flood New York City' Subway System, a Report of the Corporations and Health Watch Project.

"We have a responsibility to protect vulnerable populations from exposure to harmful images regarding alcohol and tobacco," added Ortiz. "Underage use of these substances is not OK. We don't need alcohol and tobacco companies advertising attractive and appealing lifestyles to our youth."

<http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=109&STORY=/www/story/11-08-2007/0004701178&EDATE>

**33. Whitehall Mulls 'Social Host' Law (New York)**
**A recent rash of underage drinking parties has village officials looking into a law that would make it easier to hold hosts of those parties accountable.**

Don Lehman

*Post Star.com*

November 13, 2007

The Village Board is looking into enacting a "social host" law, similar to that enacted by the village of Hudson Falls earlier this year.

Whitehall Police Chief Richard LaChappelle said his department has broken up, or heard about afterward, a number of underage drinking parties in recent weeks.

Included among them was a situation over the weekend where a 27-year-old, Shane R. Marino, was charged with two misdemeanor counts of unlawfully dealing with a child, the chief said.

Marino was arrested after he was found in a vehicle with a bottle of liquor, containers of beer, an 18-year-old woman and a 16-year-old girl, both of whom had been drinking, the chief said.

"We've been having trouble with underage drinking the past few weekends," he said. "There have been a couple of house parties we're aware of."

LaChappelle said he is researching the viability of a "social host" law, which allows police to file a non-criminal charge against a person whose property is used for a party where underage drinking occurs, whether the adult is aware of the gathering or not.

The law argues the person should have known that the property was being used, thus targeting people who contend they did not know their children were hosting an underage drinking party.

"It will give us a little more leverage with some of these parents," LaChappelle said.

The charge is a non-criminal violation, equal to a traffic ticket. It is punishable by a fine of up to $250 and up to 15 days in jail.

Hudson Falls passed a social host law in May, but did not charge anyone with violating it in the first six months it was on the books, said Hudson Falls Deputy Police Chief Randy Diamond.

"It's nice having it as a tool to use, kind of like the (youth) curfew," he said. "You are responsible for what goes on in your home."

No vote has been scheduled on the proposal in Whitehall.

Mayor Pat Norton could not be reached for comment Monday.

<http://www.poststar.com/articles/2007/11/13/news/local/13079743.txt>



**34.** **New Wine-Bottling Rule Will Help Area Wines Improve Quality (Oregon)**

**That next bottle of homegrown syrah or tempranillo you buy might have some extra oomph on the palate, thanks in part to an increase in varietals blending now allowed by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.**

*Newsreview.com*

November 8, 2007

For the past 30 years all Oregon wines had to be comprised of 90 percent of a single grape variety to earn a label distinction for that variety on the bottle. California and Washington wines have only had to abide by a federal minimum requirement of 75 percent.

A petition from the Oregon Winegrowers Association, however, persuaded the OLCC to allow 18 of the state’s 72 varieties to meet the 75 percent content standard. The new rule gives winemakers the flexibility to stay competitive on national and international markets, the commission said.

The varieties that can now blend at the 75 percent threshold are syrah, tannat, tempranillo, zinfandel, carmenere, durif, grenache, marsanne, mourvedre, roussanne and sangiovese, including seven others that had the distinction before.

“They’re all handled that way in Europe,” Earl Jones, owner of Abacela Winery in Winston, said of the varieties.

The change, made Oct. 19, is aimed mainly at wine producers outside the Willamette Valley. The petition preserves the 90 percent minimum requirement for pinot noir, pinot gris, chardonnay, Riesling and varieties dependent on that region’s particular climate.

Jones said wine quality will improve in southern and eastern Oregon with the loosened rule, now that they can blend more. He compared blending for better product to the mixing of metals for stronger alloys.

Abacela is known for its tempranillo wine, originally a Spain variety, where blending is not the exception but the rule, Jones said.

The Abacela owner also predicts a huge expansion of the wine industry in southern and eastern Oregon due to the rule change.

There were fewer than three dozen wineries in Oregon in the 1970s when wine rules were adopted. Most of them existed in the Willamette Valley.

Today there are 340 wineries across Oregon.

Before the petition, only Bordelaise varietals were allowed the 75 percent minimum content for labeling. They included cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc, merlot, malbec, petit verdot, semillon and sauvignon blanc.

Ted Farthing, executive director of Oregon Winegrowers, said the original standards were adopted by a small group of winemakers to shape the future of the Oregon wine industry. However, the new changes will allow the entire industry to mature and compete on the world stage.

The Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau currently recognizes 267 wine grape varieties that can be legally labeled with a varietals’ name with a minimum of 75 percent varietals content.

<http://www.newsreview.info/>

**35.** **Bush Has the Answer (Oregon)**

**Oregonians who are still struggling to understand why the state’s voters so handily rejected a fat tobacco tax increase that would have paid for health insurance for more than 100,000 children need struggle no more: President Bush knows why Measure 50 failed.**

*The Register-Guard*

November 15, 2007

“(Oregon) voters rejected the plan to raise tobacco taxes to further enlarge a government health program,” Bush proclaimed on Tuesday at a speech in Louisville, Ky.

Soon, all those old faded blue “No Blood for Oil” bumper stickers will be replaced with bright red new ones that say “No Taxes for Socialized Medicine.”

And you thought Measure 50 went down because of objections to putting the tax into the Oregon Constitution. No, wait, that wasn’t you. You’re the one who thought it was unfair to make smokers pay for a health care program that should be supported by all taxpayers.

Wrong again? Were you the one who felt like the tobacco tax was too regressive because smokers generally have lower incomes than the population at large? No? That it was an unsustainable revenue source?

Then what was it? Are you a smoker? Libertarian? Does your 401(k) have a lot of Philip Morris and R.J. Reynolds stock?

Did you actually believe those false TV ads from the tobacco companies saying that Measure 50 gave the Legislature a $65 million blank check? No need to be embarrassed about that. Big Tobacco has made billions by using misleading advertising to convince people that they were suave individualists as they committed suicide using tobacco products.

The tobacco industry pumped a record $12 million into the successful effort to keep Measure 50 from eating into its profits. Anyone who thinks that didn’t play a substantial role in killing the measure is badly underestimating the best message manipulators on the face of the Earth.

By the same token, anyone who thinks President Bush’s off-the-wall theory that objections to “government health programs” played a significant role in Measure 50’s failure probably believes that any day now weapons of mass destruction will turn up in Iraq.

Bush weighed in on Oregon’s Measure 50 defeat because it mirrors his standoff with Congress over the reauthorization of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program. The SCHIP bill would provide health insurance for more than 10 million children at a cost of $35 billion over five years. Like Oregon’s Measure 50, the SCHIP expansion would be funded by a big increase in tobacco taxes, in this case by adding 61 cents to the federal excise tax on every pack of cigarettes.

As promised, Bush vetoed the bill, claiming it was too expensive and — stops us if you’ve heard this one before — it would “enlarge a government health program.” He also objected to the fact that the SCHIP expansion offered coverage to families with incomes up to three times the federal poverty level, the same level proposed in Measure 50.

About a dozen votes shy of the two-thirds needed to override a veto, Democratic leaders in the U.S. House have been working on a compromise that would attract enough Republicans to thwart a second veto. Despite winning concessions that address many of his concerns, the president maintains that he will veto any bill funded by a tobacco tax increase.

That’s the crux of Bush’s elation over Big Tobacco’s big win in Oregon. The president was so thrilled at the tobacco tax defeat in this traditionally Democratic stronghold that he called Republican Rep. Greg Walden the morning after the election to congratulate him. Walden was the only member of the Oregon congressional delegation to vote against the SCHIP bill.

It’s lonely out there on the front lines of the war against children’s health care, so Walden obviously was relieved that his side had won the battle in Oregon. “The question I have is, if voters were opposed to Measure 50, why would they like its twin sister that we’re considering here?” Walden said of SCHIP.

Here’s why: Because it’s a national disgrace that the United States has 46 million uninsured citizens, and the very least a compassionate society could do — the absolute minimum — is to provide health care to its children.

The vast majority of Americans are more than willing to “enlarge a government health program” to accomplish that goal.


<http://www.registerguard.com/csp/cms/sites/dt.cms.support.viewStory.cls?cid=22594&sid=1&fid=1>

**36. Crash Spurs Debate on State's DUI Laws (Pennsylvania)**

Bobby Kerlik

*Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*

November 13, 2007

Prosecutors' attempts to prove a Cranberry ambulance driver caused a deadly crash because she was drunk -- even though a blood test an hour later showed she was under the legal limit -- could force the courts to clarify Pennsylvania's drunken driving laws, lawyers said.

Shanea Leigh Climo, 22, of Evans City, who faces a preliminary hearing Friday, is accused of having a blood-alcohol content of 0.092 percent on Sept. 23, when police say she raced her ambulance through a red light and crashed into a car, killing two Mercer County men.

A blood test an hour after the crash put her blood-alcohol content at 0.07 percent -- under the 0.08 legal limit to drive.

Allegheny County District Attorney Stephen A. Zappala said his office, using an extrapolation formula, can prove it was 0.092 percent at the time of the collision.

Several defense attorneys, including Climo's, say that would be unfair because a 2003 overhaul of the state's drunken driving laws essentially stripped them of the ability to use extrapolation as a defense.

Attorney Carl Parise, who handles more than 50 drunken driving cases a year, said the case almost certainly will be appealed.

"I don't have a problem if they want to start using retrograde extrapolation again," Parise said. "It's almost like they want to have it both ways."

Common Pleas Judge David R. Cashman agrees.

"If the DA says he is entitled to present evidence to show what the blood-alcohol (level) was at the time of the crash, the defense should have that same right to show why they weren't drunk (at the time of the crash in all cases)," Cashman said.

"I think it opens the floodgates for defense attorneys in other cases to use extrapolation to show why their client was not drunk."

The law change made it easier to convict people, because prosecutors were no longer required to prove the blood-alcohol level at the time of driving, lawyers said. Instead, anyone who registers a blood-alcohol level of 0.08 or higher for up to two hours after driving can be found guilty of drunken driving.

The change effectively eliminated extrapolation arguments by defense attorneys who could claim a client's blood-alcohol level might have been below the legal limit at the time of an incident only to spike above 0.08 between the arrest and blood test.

The legislation was designed, in part, to eliminate the so-called battle of medical experts in each DUI trial, state Sen. Jane Orie, R-McCandless, said.

Orie said the law wasn't intended to prohibit extrapolation if prosecutors decide it's necessary.

In a statement, Zappala's office said that nothing in the law prevents prosecutors from using extrapolation evidence to prove drunken driving, although the law change made the technique unnecessary in most cases.

Defense attorney Stephen Misko, who represents Climo, said called the prosecution hypocritical.

"If the courts allow this, it opens the door for the defense to again use extrapolation in DUI cases," he said. "If you let the prosecution use it, you have to let the defense use it."

The state Supreme Court did not rule on the extrapolation issue in May, when it upheld the 2003 law in a 4-2 vote that overturned a previous ruling by Cashman.

He declared the law unconstitutional in July 2005 while hearing the case of Bradley Duda, of West View.

Duda was tested an hour after an accident and found to have a blood-alcohol content of 0.081, according to court documents. His attorney argued the state must prove what the level was at the time of driving.

Determining Climo's blood-alcohol content at the time of driving is key because a conviction of DUI-related vehicular homicide carries a three-year mandatory prison sentence.

Climo is facing two counts each of involuntary manslaughter, homicide by vehicle, vehicular homicide while driving under the influence, DUI and other traffic offenses. The crash at Route 19 and Brush Creek Road killed Douglas Stitt, 38, of Jefferson, and Phillip Bacon, 31, of Sharpsville. A patient in the ambulance, described as a man in his 90s with heart problems and a do-not-resuscitate order, died later.

<http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/cityregion/s_537655.html>

**37.** **Better Traffic Enforcement, Stronger DUI Laws Needed (South Carolina)**

**On two different weekends in August beefed up traffic patrols on S.C. 170.**

*Island Packet.com*

November 14, 2007

The ability of law enforcement agencies to conduct such patrols and defense issues raised by drivers arrested for driving under the influence could take center stage in the ongoing debate over South Carolina's DUI laws. At issue is whether our laws are tough enough to keep impaired drivers off the road and whether their complexity serves mostly to keep lawyers who specialize in DUI cases gainfully employed.

South Carolina in recent years has ranked near the top nationally in the rate of alcohol-related traffic deaths, The (Columbia) State newspaper reports. In 2005, 464 out of 1,093 people killed in all traffic wrecks -- or 42 percent -- died in alcohol-related crashes, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

A bill passed by the House during the 2007 legislative session would toughen existing DUI laws by tying penalties to a driver's blood-alcohol level and prior record -- the higher the level and more prior offenses, the stiffer the punishment. The bill is now in the Senate's hands.


<http://www.islandpacket.com/opinion/story/78893.html>

**38. Possible Campaign to Lower Drinking Age (South Dakota)**

**A Flandreau lawyer is considering a possible signature campaign to let South Dakota voters decide if the legal age to drink low-point beer should be reduced.**

*Associated Press*

November 12, 2007

N. Bob Pesall believes the drinking age for beer that's no stronger than 3.2 percent alcohol should be 19 instead of the current 21 for all alcoholic drinks.

For nearly two decades, states have required people to be at least 21 before they could legally drink alcohol. South Dakota was the last state to change its law in 1988.

Pesall has drafted a possible petition measure that could put the issue on the ballot, but he's unsure if he'll pursue it.

He says people who believe the drinking age should be lowered should contact members of Congress.

JoDean Joy, a long-time foe of video lottery, says she'd object to 19 as the drinking age for low-point beer because drinking and gambling often go hand-in-hand.

She says a reduced drinking age may tempt more people to begin gambling, too.

<http://www.keloland.com/News/NewsDetail6375.cfm?Id=0,63071>

**39.** **Hospitals to Enforce Strict Tobacco Ban (Texas)**

**Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas is one of 13 Texas Health Resource campuses that will start banning cigarettes and all other tobacco products Thursday, NBC 5 reported.**

*NBC 5i*

November 14, 2007

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| --- |
| 14599887_240X180 |
| A major smoking ban is about to take effect in several North Texas locations. |

The tobacco bans are also taking effect at Harris Methodist and Arlington Memorial hospitals. Some Texas Health Resource hospitals have been smoke-free for some time now, because of city ordinances, but hospital officials said it is important to go an extra step to set a good example.

"There is evidence that snuff and chewing tobacco can have consequences for oral cancer and with the desire to minimize cancer risk, we thought it was appropriate to not only be smoke free but tobacco free as well," said Mark Merrill, Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas president.

The ban includes the entire campus of the hospitals, including medical buildings, outdoor areas, parking lots and there's a tobacco ban at the company's corporate offices in Arlington.

<http://www.nbc5i.com/news/index.html>



**40. Liquor Officials to Consider Changes to Utah Restrictions (Utah)**

**Liquor commissioners are going to look at recommending changes to state laws that currently prevent over-the-counter service to customers sitting at restaurant bars - but probably not at their next meeting.**

Lisa Riley Roche

*Deseret Morning News*

November 11, 2007

The issue is on the agenda for next Thursday's Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission meeting, but the commissioner pushing for the change said Friday she'll postpone the discussion until another meeting when there's more time available.

"That should be something we discuss and do right," the new commissioner, Bobbie Bicknell Coray, said of attempting to ease restrictions on bars in restaurants that sometimes result in glass or other barriers.

At last month's meeting, Coray raised the issue of doing away with the so-called "Zion Curtain" that keeps servers from passing food and drinks, including non-alcoholic ones, over a restaurant bar.

Earl Dorius, regulatory director for the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control, said there are also other ways restaurants technically comply with the law banning service where alcohol is stored or dispensed.

Those include small walls at the end of a bar area between customers and where drinks are poured or even tucking the bartender and the alcoholic beverages back in the restaurant's kitchen, Dorius said.

"Certainly, we don't want to see restaurants become bars," Dorius said, with bartenders mixing drinks in front of customers and passing them directly over a bar as is done in the state's private clubs.

What likely won't change, he said, are requirements that 70 percent of a restaurant's sales be in food and customers drink only if they are also eating. But state lawmakers could consider banning underage customers from the bar area of restaurants, Dorius said.

Coray said that and other quirky Utah liquor laws should be the subject of a public hearing. While that is not on the Thursday meeting agenda, Coray said she expects commissioners to talk about how best to get public input.

Much of the meeting however, will be devoted to a public hearing on how the alcohol content of flavored malt beverages and energy drinks should be labeled. The hearing begins at 9 a.m. Thursday at the DABC office, 1625 S. 900 West, and the meeting follows at 11 a.m.

Commissioners are also looking at a new rule that would take flavored malt beverages, sometimes called "alcohol pops because of their appeal to young drinkers, out of supermarkets and allow them to be sold only in state liquor stores.

[http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,5143,695226778,00.html](http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0%2C5143%2C695226778%2C00.html)

**41.** **Utah Town Allows Sunday Beer Sales (Utah)**

**A store has punched the tab on Sunday beer sales, the first in northern Utah's Cache County.**

*Beverage News Daily*

November 15, 2007

Nibley, Utah, rewrote its ordinance about five years ago and left out a Sunday ban on beer sales. A new Maverik Country Store on Highway 165 opened in October, and a sign on the walk-in cooler declares: "We sell beer on Sundays."

"Sales have been pretty good," said Kerstin Hansen, a manager. "We were running low, so Budweiser made a special trip here last week."

The store appears to be the only one that sells beer on Sundays in Cache County, outside of restaurants.

"It's not by design, but we do not have an ordinance," City Manager Larry Anhder said.

Nibley Councilman Larry Jacobsen said that could change if enough people object to Sunday sales. "This is just like me going to church on Sunday morning and then mowing my lawn in the afternoon," Jacobsen said. "It's not that important to me to mow my lawn if it offends my neighbors."

Former Logan Municipal Council member John Harder bought gas, a hot dog and beer at the store Sunday to show his support. A store owner in Hyrum plans to ask his city leaders to change their ordinance.

"It's going to have a huge impact on Logan," Municipal Council member Steve Thompson said. "The ability to sell beer on Sundays is one of the things a grocery store vendor like Costco would look at. I hope that it does spark some discussion on where we are as a city and where we would like to go," he said.



**42.** **Police Op Finds Minors Often Served Alcohol (Wyoming)**

**Minors during an undercover police operation successfully bought alcohol from Casper merchants nearly 40 percent of the time, a police official said Tuesday.**

Joshua Wolfson

*Jackson Hole Star-Tribune*

November 14, 2007

The minors were able to buy alcohol at 38 percent of the 45 businesses that have been checked in the operation since its start on Oct. 5, said Sgt. Mark Trimble.

"It is inexcusable that it should be that high," he said.

The compliance checks, funded by a grant from the Wyoming Association of Sheriffs and Chiefs of Police, are conducted annually by law enforcement agencies across the state. The current Natrona County operation will run though May and Trimble expects the 38 percent figure to fall as business owners crack down on employees who sell alcohol to underage customers.

Last year, merchants turned away undercover minors about 81 percent of the time during compliance checks throughout Wyoming, said Byron Oedekoven, the association's executive director. That figure stood at about 80 percent during the 2005-06 operations.

"We know alcohol compliance is greater where management takes an active role in server training," he said.

Mike Moser, executive director of the Wyoming State Liquor Association, was out of the office Tuesday and unavailable for comment.

In Natrona County, police use men and women ages 18 to 20 for the operations. They are recruited through the Casper College criminal justice program or are sometimes friends and relatives of people within the police department, Trimble said.

The minors work with two plainclothes officers and wear wires to record conversations with alcohol sellers. They don't pressure the merchant to sell alcohol, Trimble said.

If a person does sell to the undercover minor, officers issue citations that typically result in fines. Each establishment with a liquor license -- including bars, liquor stores and restaurants -- will be checked at least twice during the current operation.

Although the initial results of the latest operation have raised some eyebrows, a survey of more than 2,300 Casper high school students completed this year found that less than 2 percent purchased alcohol from a store, restaurant or bar in the past 30 days, according to Wayne Beatty, safe schools administrator for the Natrona County School District.

Among the students who drank, most got the alcohol from someone else who either gave it to them or bought it for them.

Ernie Johnson, a University of Wyoming criminal justice instructor who worked on a statewide survey of alcohol-related arrests, said he was surprised by the new figures.

"That is not a very good track record," he said. "The other communities that are doing the same thing are doing better."

More training would help reduce the number of merchants who sell alcohol to minors, Johnson said. He also believes owners of alcohol-selling establishments should also be punished when their employees sell booze to underage people. Currently, only the person who makes the sale is ticketed.

"I think the penalty would be much better if it would go against the establishment or owner," Johnson said.

<http://www.jacksonholestartrib.com/articles/2007/11/14/news/casper/d03233980235109d872573930005c828.txt>

